



Our Firm Foundation

Winning (and Losing) in the Courts

Volume 19, Number 2

February 2004

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary



True Repentance

Are you a real Christian? This question is vital, for each of us—laymen, pastors, or leaders—will stand one day before the judgment seat of Christ; possibly in the very near future. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10. See also Romans 14:10.

How will God judge His faithful, loyal, and obedient people in every generation?—By their obedience to all known truth. A Christlike character responds to the great love of Christ in His sacrifice on Calvary for the human family. The obedient, loving Christian then becomes a powerful witness of God’s love.

“Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 331.

What is our first step in developing a Christlike character?—It is repentance without compromise. While there are some things we can only confess to God, we must ask the Holy Spirit to help us prayerfully search our past and make

everything right with God and with our fellow men as far as it is humanly possible.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23–24.

“How shall a man be just with God? How shall the sinner be made righteous? It is only through Christ that we can be brought into harmony with God, with holiness; but how are we to come to Christ? Many are asking the same question as did the multitude on the Day of Pentecost, when, convicted of sin, they cried out, ‘What shall we do?’ The first word of Peter’s answer was, ‘Repent.’ Acts 2:37–38. At another time, shortly after, he said, ‘Repent, . . . and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.’ Acts 3:19.

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life. . . .

“But when the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God’s holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. The ‘Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,’ illumines the secret chambers of the soul, and the hidden things of darkness are made manifest. John 1:9. Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The

sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with Heaven.” *Steps to Christ*, 23–24.

David understood his responsibility in confession and repentance:

“The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness—to be restored to harmony and communion with God. This was the language of his soul:

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no guile.” Psalm 32:1–2.” *Ibid.*, 24–25. See also Psalm 51.

Christ justifies and sanctifies only those who are truly repentant—sorry for sin—and who will covenant with God every day to be overcomers by the power of the Holy Spirit. See 2 Corinthians 7:9–10. This repentance is a spontaneous love for Christ that responds in obedience to all known truth.

I pray that we will seek this experience with all our hearts.



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

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Winning (and Losing) in the Courts

Harvey Steck

What a victory! Portland Adventist Academy—my alma mater in Portland, Oregon—went to court and won the right to play interscholastic sports without violating the Sabbath.

The following news release was published on the “Online Edition” of the *Adventist Review*:

“In what is believed to be the first-ever ruling of its kind in North America, Oregon’s state court of appeals ruled that the state’s high school activities association must make a reasonable effort to accommodate religion when scheduling tournaments.

“According to *The Oregonian* newspaper, the ruling came about after Portland Adventist Academy’s basketball team was barred from playing in the state championships.

“The Portland Adventist Cougars were not able to play in the Class 2A state tournament in March because the team observes the Sabbath—sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Activities association rules say that all teams must agree to play all scheduled games in order to enter the tournament.

“‘What this is about is going to an entity that is nonbiased to settle an issue about inclusion,’ says Principal Matthew Stanfill. . . .

“In a unanimous ruling, the three-judge panel called it ‘illegal discrimination.’ For the OSAA [Oregon School Activities

Association] to require a person to choose between a religious obligation and participation in a covered activity, without first attempting to find a reasonable accommodation for the conflict, is to act in a way that is fair in form but discriminatory in operation,’ the panel said. . . .

“In 1997, the school filed a suit in U.S. District Court alleging that the association had violated students’ civil rights. A federal judge ruled the association did not have to accommodate religious beliefs in scheduling tournaments, and the issue lay dormant until 2000 when the school qualified for the state tournament. Stanfill firmly believes that the students made the right choice in persevering.

“‘I think it’s standing on principle. It came out of the Ten Commandments and I fully stand for it. This will be the measuring stick for what is to come. I’m glad to say that I stood up for something I believe in, and something the kids believe in.’”¹

Friends, let me share with you why, instead of celebrating a victory, we should be weeping, for we have publicly lowered God’s standard in the dust.

This academy has been competing with other schools for quite a few years. In fact, in March 1996 their basketball team won the state championship in their category of schools.

When I attended Portland Adventist Academy in the early

1980s, I remember that competition with teams from non-Adventist schools was promoted as a wonderful way to witness to them. Although our school’s players were known most of the time for their good spirit on the basketball court, I never forgot when I heard my classmates pray before the game (in the math classroom where I was working, adjacent to the gym) that our team would be a good witness to our visitors, and then after the prayer they said, “Let’s go kill ‘em!”

Perhaps that was just the expression of someone immature. If we could just teach our youth to be good sportsmen, would these interschool games not be a good opportunity for witness and fellowship?

Is there any light in God’s Word on this subject? Yes, there is. In fact, after we look at what God says, perhaps you will agree with me that what looked like a victory in the Oregon state court of appeals was actually a terrible loss.

Servanthood: the Spirit of Christ

The Scriptures repeatedly teach that an essential key to true greatness in the sight of God is a spirit of humility, or death to self, which is demonstrated by our living in obedience to God and for the good of others.

“By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and

life." Proverbs 22:4. See also 1 Peter 5:5–6; James 4:10; Matthew 23:12.

Jesus demonstrated a life of self-denial, and we are called to follow in His steps. See 1 Peter 2:21.

In Philippians 2 we have Paul's appeal for us to demonstrate to others Christ's attitude of self-denial:

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Verses 3–4.

Consider for a moment: Would not a true Christian say to his opponent, "Here, take the basketball and try again. I'm anxious for you to do as well at this game as possible. I have no concern about myself; I am more concerned for you and your happiness."

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Verses 5–11.

Jesus demonstrated that it is those who choose a life of humble service to God and others, who are exalted in the kingdom of heaven. Christians of other faiths have written books devoted to exposing the dangers of competitive sports. We Seventh-day Adventists have the added advantage of the writings of Ellen G. White on the subject.

Deciding Questions

There are questions that we should ask ourselves before we

engage in any activity—particularly a form of recreation: "How much time is spent by intelligent human beings in horse racing, cricket matches, and ball playing! But will indulgence in these sports give men a desire to know truth and righteousness? Will it keep God in their thoughts? Will it lead them to inquire, How is it with my soul?" *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 456.

We often hear the argument that we are keeping our youth in our own schools, "in the church," as we bring in the games and entertainment of the world. However, we are destroying their souls in the process, for this worldliness, unacceptable to Christ, will cause our youth to lose their appetite for spiritual things while they will gain a stronger taste for the things of the world.

Jesus demonstrated that it is those who choose a life of humble service to God and others, who are exalted in the kingdom of heaven.

"Every talent of influence is to be sacredly cherished and used for the purpose of gathering souls to Christ. Young men and young women should not think that their sports, their evening parties and musical entertainments, as usually conducted, are acceptable to Christ.

"Light has been given me, again and again, that all our gatherings should be characterized by a decided religious influence." *Messages to Young People*, 391.

Idolatry—at Avondale?

At the Avondale school in Cooranbong, Australia, Sister White was shown the danger of some of the amusements that have become so common in our schools. I would encourage you to read the ac-

counts given in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 348–354.² In brief, April 11, 1900, was set aside to celebrate God's leading and blessing, beginning with a testimony meeting in the chapel. Then the remainder of the day was spent in various activities.

Apparently, the students were quite proud of the events of the day, for we read, "What an exhibition was this to be reported by the students to their distant friends and acquaintances! It was a witness that showed, not what God has accomplished in the school, but what Satan had accomplished. . . .

"The effort to regain that which was lost by the proceedings of that afternoon cost the teachers much labor. They were severely tried. With the students there was seen a desire for further pleasure and less regard for the instruction of God's

word. The Lord of heaven was thus dishonored, and the indulgence of the desires of the human heart in sin and love of pleasure was the education received." *Ibid.*, 352.

The Lord revealed that this event demonstrated a serious lack of spirituality among both teachers and students:

"Hearing a voice, I turned to see who spoke to me. Then with dignity and solemnity One said, 'Is this the celebration for the anniversary of the opening of the school? . . .'

"Turning to the teachers, He said, 'You have made a mistake the effects of which it will be hard to efface. The Lord God of Israel is not glorified in the school. If at this time the Lord should permit your life to end, many would be lost, eternally

separated from God and the righteous.'” Ibid., 350–351.

“Many of the students who come to our schools are unconverted, though they may have been baptized.” Ibid., 353.

Just what were these activities that demonstrated such a low spiritual condition?

“In the night season I was a witness to the performance that was carried on on the school grounds. The students who engaged in the grotesque mimicry that was seen, acted out the mind of the enemy, some in a very unbecom-

exercise through manual training and by letting useful employment take the place of selfish pleasure.” Ibid., 354.

Have we lost our spiritual vision? The victory which some claim to have won in a civil court was actually a major loss for our school, for it “showed, not what God has accomplished in the school, but what Satan had accomplished.” The devil is laughing harder than ever, for he knows that modern-day Israel has gone to court and won the right to practice *idolatry*—outside of Sabbath hours, of course.

The devil . . . knows that modern-day Israel has gone to court and won the right to practice idolatry—outside of Sabbath hours, of course.

ing manner. A view of things was presented before me in which the students were playing *games of tennis and cricket*. Then I was given instruction regarding the character of these amusements. *They were presented to me as a species of idolatry, like the idols of the nations.*” Ibid., 350. (All emphasis supplied by author.)

As was common with divine warnings against a wrong course of action, Ellen White did not close the chapter in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* without giving some wholesome alternatives for recreation:

“In the place of providing diversions that merely amuse, arrangements should be made for exercises that will be productive of good. Students are sent to our schools to receive an education that will enable them to go forth as workers in God’s cause. Satan would lead them to believe that amusements are necessary to physical health; but the Lord has declared that the better way is for them to get physical

At least five years earlier (in 1895), a similar loss was experienced at Battle Creek:

“Many have pursued a course of action inconsistent with the knowledge of truth and the wonderful light through the descent of the Holy Spirit of God in so marked a manner upon hearts in Battle Creek. Great sin and loss resulted from the neglect to walk in the light from heaven. In plunging into amusements, match games, pugilistic performances, *they declared to the world that Christ was not their leader in any of these things.*” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 377.

Lest we think that the label “idolatry” applies only to tennis and cricket, played in a “grotesque” manner, let us review other inspired counsel the Lord has given us regarding competitive sports and other worldly amusements.

Seeking the Conversion of our Students

The atmosphere will be more ideal for the conversion of our stu-

dents where they are not tempted by sports:

“We desire to take the students away from the foul atmosphere of the city. . . . In the country they are not near the temptation of horse-racing and cricket matches. Once in Sydney I saw a great multitude on one of the streets. . . . While men were playing the game of cricket, and others were watching the game, Satan was playing the game of life for their souls. Therefore *we decided to locate our school where the students would not see cricket matches or horse races. We are just where God wants us to be, and many conversions have taken place in this school.*” *The Australasian Union Conference Record*, July 26, 1899.

Can we say the same about our schools today? Are they situated in an atmosphere that is conducive for “many conversions”? Have we located them where our students would not be confronted by worldly entertainment and sports? Or have we insisted on bringing these entertainments *into* our schools—so that we wouldn’t lose our students? Could it be that many of our schools are more instrumental in converting godly students to the world than in turning worldly youth to God?

The Use of Our Talents

We will answer to the Lord for the use of our talents:

“In the judgment a strict account will be required for every misused talent. Those who now engage in horse-racing, cricket matches, gambling, are spending money for that which is not bread. Can they receive the benediction, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?’ Matthew 25:21.” *Signs of the Times*, June 6, 1900.

“The training and discipline you undergo in order to be successful in your games *is not fitting you to become faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, to fight His battles and gain spiritual victories. The money expended for garments to make a pleasing*

show in these match games is so much money that might have been used to advance the cause of God in new places, bringing the word of truth to souls in darkness of error. Oh, that God would give all the true sense of what it means to be a Christian!" *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, 219.

Turning Us From God

Satan uses many methods to turn us away from God. Competition opens the door for Satan and makes of none effect the work of the Holy Spirit:

"When the students at the school went into their match games and football playing, when they became absorbed in the amusement question, *Satan saw it a good time to step in and make of none effect the Holy Spirit of God in molding and using the human subject.*" *Selected Messages*, book 1, 131.

Most athletic sports stimulate a love of domination, pleasure, excitement, and destroy a relish for life's sober realities and tranquil enjoyments. Their influence does not tend toward refinement, generosity, or real manliness.

"Vigorous exercise the pupils must have. Few evils are more to be dreaded than indolence and aimlessness. Yet *the tendency of most athletic sports is a subject of anxious thought to those who have at heart the well-being of the youth.* Teachers are troubled as they consider the influence of these sports both on the student's progress in school and on his success in afterlife. The games that occupy so much of his time are diverting the mind from study. They are not helping to prepare the youth for practical, earnest work in life. *Their influence does not tend toward refinement, generosity, or real manliness.*

"Some of the most popular amusements, such as football and boxing, have become schools of brutality. They are developing the same characteristics as did the games of ancient Rome. *The love of domination, the pride in mere brute force,*

the reckless disregard of life, are exerting upon the youth a power to demoralize that is appalling.

"Other athletic games, though not so brutalizing, are scarcely less objectionable because of the excess to which they are carried. They stimulate the love of pleasure and excitement, thus fostering a distaste for useful labor, a disposition to shun practical duties and responsibilities. They tend to destroy a relish for life's sober realities and its tranquil enjoyments. Thus the door is opened to dissipation and lawlessness, with

"The tendency of most athletic sports is a subject of anxious thought to those who have at heart the well-being of the youth. . . . Their influence does not tend toward refinement, generosity, or real manliness."

their terrible results." *Education*, 210.

How often we see efforts to mix the evangelization of our youth with sports events—despite the fact that we are told that excitement associated with sports destroys the interest in spiritual things:

"When horse-races or athletic sports are in vogue, it seems that there are very few indeed who have any interest in spiritual things, and little can be accomplished. The very atmosphere seems to be polluted with the presence of evil angels, and Jesus, the world's Redeemer, is not in the thoughts of men." *Review and Herald*, March 6, 1894.

"Should Be Vigilantly Prohibited"

In the beginning of our colleges, the Lord indicated that there was to be a strong emphasis upon training in manual skills. God particularly warned against replacing manual training with sports; He instructed that such a course should be vigilantly prohibited.

"The Healdsburg College has been presented to me as being demoralized by disgraceful games. *Games have been allowed such as God disapproves.* It was to prevent this kind of thing that the Lord gave counsel to the effect that students should learn useful trades. . . .

"*Where were these watchmen when these unseemly games and athletic sports, these trials of animal strength and exhibition of physical skill were in progress? Students could have had this class of education at home. . . .*

"Labor should be connected with study, and through following a course of this kind an all-sided, well-balanced education will be the result. This is the rational method through which souls may be barricaded against evil influences. In this way the mind may be preserved in its soundness, and the nervous energies may be regulated. Combining manual labor with the study of the sciences will preserve the living machinery in excellent condition, and by taking proper exercise, the mind may be taxed and yet not sustain injury in any degree.

"But do not substitute play, pugilistic boxing, football, matched games, and animal exercises, for manual training. *All of this stripe and type should be vigilantly prohibited from the school grounds.*" *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 160–161.

Against Church Policy

Some may be amazed to learn of this and other Seventh-day

Adventist schools that are competing in sports, for it is also in direct opposition to the official policy of the church.

On the General Conference web site, we find an “Official Statement” entitled “Activities With Elements of Competition: Perspective and Analysis.” Under the heading “Interschool Sports,” it is stated, “The Seventh-day Adventist Church is opposed to interschool league play (commonly known as varsity athletics) in its educational system.”³

The recent publicity regarding Portland Adventist Academy is not the first time that competitive sports in our schools were given

favorable coverage in the *Adventist Review*.⁴ What are we communicating to our youth—and the rest of our church—when we publicly commend our schools for going contrary to Scripture, the Spirit of Prophecy and official policies?

Stop the Apostasy!

In light of our outright disregard of the Lord’s counsel—yes, *apostasy*—in this area of sports, competition, and amusements as well as in other areas, is it any wonder that the spiritual climate of most of our academies, colleges, and universities has been on a steep decline?

Our only hope for our schools is that we shall choose to follow God’s

leading with an *undivided heart*. Let us pray for our leaders and urge them to make decisions that God can approve, and let us choose for ourselves those forms of physical activities that will aid us in our heavenly journey. ✠

References:

¹ See <http://www.adventistreview.org/2003-1525/news.html>.

² See also Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White*, Volume 4, “The Australian Years 1891–1900,” 441–446.

³ http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/main_stat29.html. This statement is essentially identical to what is stated in the General Conference Working Policy on this subject. See the section under the heading “FE 85 Interschool Sports.”

⁴ For example, see *Adventist Review*, June 21, 2001, 12–16; June 28, 2001, 20–21.

Competitive Sports in Adventist Schools

“Among the youth the passion for football games and other kindred selfish gratifications have been misleading in their influence. Watchfulness and prayer and daily consecration to God have not been maintained. Converse, communion with God, is life to the soul. The light has been beclouded, and it was well pleasing to Satan to have the impression go forth that notwithstanding the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in behalf of our institutions of learning, and the office of publication and the church, they fell back to be overcome by temptation. Satan and evil workers cast reflection upon God, and His name has been dishonored. . . .

“*The instructors ought to have had wisdom to follow the indications of the Holy Spirit, and go on from grace to grace, leading the youth to make the most of the light and grace given. They should have taught the youth that the Holy Spirit, which was imparted in great measure, was to help them to use their time and ability to do the very highest service for the Master, showing forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. But instead of this, many went more eagerly in pursuit*

of pleasure. *There were witnesses upon the pleasure-grounds, heavenly intelligences that made the records in the book of God of transactions that many will not care to meet in the day when every work shall be manifest. Not only were heavenly messengers present, but the synagogue of Satan were on the ground to exult that his ingenious methods had in a great measure thwarted the purpose for which God gave the Holy Spirit. God desired to carry the youth forward and upward that they might understand by experience the words of the inspired apostle, “We are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” 1 Corinthians 3:9. Of how many who exhibited their qualifications in the games could this be said? . . .*

“Use your God-entrusted capital of means to arm and equip men to enlist in the army of the Lord as soldiers of Jesus Christ. Teach them that it is not the indulgence of every whim which youth may suggest that will facilitate their growth in Christian experience. Selfish gratification is the snare and curse of our youth. Their abilities are misapplied. *Through erroneous ideas parents, friends, and guardians—whose money supports them in the school—seek to gratify their desires in order,*

as they suppose, to make them happy. This very course of action is blocking their way; it encourages selfish indulgence; it prevents them from entering the narrow, heavenward path. O that the Lord may anoint the blind eyes, that they may see!

“It is not impressed upon the minds of the young that self-denial, cross-bearing for Christ’s sake, is to be a part of their religious experience. They think it all right for them to be sustained and educated, and to spend money to gratify their desires for selfish indulgence. *There is danger that these poor souls will never understand what it means to follow Christ in self-denial and bearing the cross and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They will be like a reed in the wind. Let the youth consider that they are deciding their own destiny for eternity by the characters they form in this life. . . .*

“The heavenly intelligences are waiting to cooperate with the human agent in reshaping his character according to the divine model. Will the human agent do his God-given work, or will he bend all his efforts toward shaping the character after the worldly pattern? See 1 Corinthians 1:3–8.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, 127–129. ✠

The Study of the Testimonies

John N. Loughborough

At the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference session of 1893, J. N. Loughborough, church pioneer and historian, reviewed some of the experiences which confirmed the authenticity of the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy through Ellen G. White. His sermons were transcribed and recorded in the General Conference Daily Bulletin. We here present the first part of his series, which begins with a one-paragraph introduction by the transcriber. —The Editors.

Immediately following the session conducted by Elder Haskell, Elder J. N. Loughborough opened his series of lessons on the study of the Testimonies. He referred to the various gifts placed in the church, as mentioned in Ephesians 4:11–16, and dwelt particularly upon their effect in producing unity among believers. The speaker quoted the following scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Colossians 2:19; Romans 12:1–8; Ephesians 5:30, 32; Psalm 133:1–3; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Peter 3:8; Romans 15:1–6; John 17:21–23.

All these show the desire and purpose of Christ for unity among His followers. We may expect, then, that prophecy, as one of these gifts, will be aiming at unity, as we find that it did in the time of the first great dissension in the early church, when Judas and Silas, two prophets, were commissioned to go to the churches with Barnabas and Paul, to instruct them and bring them again into a state of harmony.

What was the first aim and effect of the gift of prophecy among us? Our enemies have repeatedly testified that but for the visions our denomination would long since have gone to pieces. Elder Joseph Bates gives this testimony to their effect at the time of the great confusion following the Disappointment in 1844. See *The Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists*, 128:

“I thank God for the opportunity I have had with others to witness these things. I can now confidently speak for myself. I believe the work is of God, and is given to comfort and strengthen His ‘scattered,’ ‘torn,’ and ‘peeled people,’ since the closing up of our work . . . in October 1844. The distracted state of ‘lo here’s!’ and ‘lo there’s!’ since that time has exceedingly perplexed God’s honest, willing people, and made it exceedingly difficult for such as were not able to expound the many conflicting texts that were presented to their view. I confess that I have received light and instruction on many passages that I could not before clearly understand.”

In August 1848, a conference of Sabbathkeepers was held at Volney, Oswego Co., N. Y. “There were about thirty-five persons present, all that could be collected in that part of the state; but hardly two of these were agreed. Each was strenuous for his own views, declaring that they were according to the Bible. All were anxious to advance their sentiments and to preach them. They were told that Elder

White and his wife had not come so great a distance to hear them, but had come to teach them the truth. Mr. Arnold held that the 1,000 years of Revelation 20, were in the past, and that the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation were those raised at Christ’s resurrection.

“As the emblems of our dying Lord were before this company, and they were about to commemorate His sufferings, Mr. Arnold arose and said he had no faith in what they were about to do—that the Lord’s supper was a continuation of the Passover, to be observed but once a year. These strange differences of opinion rolled a heavy weight upon Mrs. White, especially as Mr. Arnold spoke of the one thousand years as being in the past. She well knew that he was in error, and great grief pressed upon her spirits, for it seemed that God was dishonored. Some feared she was dying; but Elders Bates, White, Chamberlain, Gurney, and Edson prayed for her, and the Lord mercifully heard the prayers of His servants, and she revived. The light of heaven rested upon her, and she was soon lost to earthly things. While in this state she was shown some of the errors of those present, and also truth in contrast with their errors, showing that these discordant views which they claimed were according to the Bible, were only according to their own opinions of the Bible, and that they must yield their errors and unite upon the third angel’s message. The meeting ended gloriously;

truth gained the victory. Those who held these strange diversities of opinion confessed their errors, and united upon the present truth of the third angel's message, and the Lord greatly blessed them." *Ibid.*, 137–138.

The writer of the proverbs said, "Where there is no vision the people throw off restraint." Proverbs 29:18, RV. In harmony with this testimony are the following words from Sister White:

"I was pointed back, and saw that in every important move, every decision made or point gained by God's people, some have arisen to carry matters to extremes, and to move in an extravagant manner, which has disgusted unbelievers, distressed God's people, and brought the cause of God into disrepute. The people whom God

aged in discharging these painful duties, lays down the cross, and withholds the pointed testimony. His soul is shut up in darkness, and the church suffers for the lack of the very testimony which God designed should live among His people. Satan's object is gained when the faithful testimony is suppressed. Those who so readily sympathize with the wrong consider it a virtue; but they realize not that they are exerting a scattering influence, and that they themselves help to carry out Satan's plans." ¹

"Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action,

"Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is in God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course, independent of their brethren." ²

"The travels of the children of Israel are faithfully described; the deliverance which the Lord wrought for them, their perfect organization and special order, their sin in murmuring against Moses and thus against God, their transgressions, their rebellions, their punishments, their carcasses strewn in the wilderness because of their unwillingness to submit to God's wise arrangements—this faithful picture is hung up before us as a warning lest we follow their example of disobedience, and fall like them. . . . Has God changed from a God of order? No; He is the same in the present dispensation as in the former. Paul says: 'God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.' 1 Corinthians 14:33. He is as particular now as then. And He designs that we should learn les-

The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf.

is leading out in these last days will be troubled with just such things. But much evil will be avoided if the ministers of Christ will be of one mind, united in their plans of action, and united in effort. If they will stand together, sustain one another and faithfully reprove and rebuke wrong, they will soon cause it to wither. But Satan has controlled these matters very much. Private members and even preachers have sympathized with disaffected ones who have been reprovved for their wrongs, and division of feeling has been the result. The one who has ventured out and discharged his disagreeable duty by faithfully meeting error and wrong, is grieved and wounded that he receives not the fullest sympathy of his preaching brethren. He becomes discour-

and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the co-operation of the heavenly messengers must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can co-operate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder. All these evils are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy courage, and prevent successful action.

sons of order and organization from the perfect order instituted in the days of Moses for the benefit of the children of Israel.”³

We can no more disconnect the work of the Spirit of God from the third angel’s message than we can have a live body without nerves or muscles, or get life out of a marble statue. God has been speaking to His people from the beginning of this cause, and I praise Him that the testimonies still come from Him, and come warmer and warmer.

Some may say, Why haven’t you evangelized the world during the forty years you have been at work? Look at your publishing houses and other institutions. Yes; but these were not in existence forty years ago. At that time we did not have one sixty-four page tract. We published one paper, about a quarter as large as the *Review* now is. All of Sister White’s Testimonies made less than one hundred pages. A man who gave five dollars to the cause was thought to be giving us quite a lift. But now we have the machinery, and we will see more done in one year now than could be done in twenty years then.

Notice how it was back in the first angel’s message. A letter written by Elder J. V. Himes, and published in the *Midnight Cry*, of September 12, 1844, makes this statement: “When we commenced the work with Brother Miller in 1840, he had been lecturing nine years. During that time he stood almost alone, but his labors had been almost incessant and effectual in awakening professors of religion to the true hope of God’s people, and the necessary preparation for the advent of the Lord, as also the awakening of all classes of the unconverted to a sense of their lost condition and the duty of immediate repentance and conversion to God, as a preparation to meet the Bridegroom in peace at His coming.” For nine years, as he said, he stood almost alone, but in 1843–1844 there was a wonderful stir made all over the earth. God opens the way very quickly for a great work when things

come round in readiness for it. That was the way it was at that time, and it will be so now.

Your attention was called last Friday to the effect of the work of God in producing unity in the church. Extracts were read showing how the Testimonies produced harmony among the brethren in the early days of the cause. This morning I wish to call attention to some other points. We are told to take the prophets as an example of suffering affliction and of patience. James 5:10. If we know the manner of God’s working through the prophets in one age of the world, we know how He will work through them in other ages. 1 Corinthians 10:11, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written

sure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. Sister White has also a thorn in the flesh; she has continually had great difficulty with her heart, yet she will not have the brethren pray that she may be relieved of this trouble, for she said it was to remain by her, and to be manifested whenever she was in danger of becoming exalted.

Going back to the case of Balaam, we read in Numbers 24, verses 3 to 5, “And he took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: he hath said which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but

*God opens the way very quickly for a great work
when things come round in readiness for it.
That was the way it was at that time,
and it will be so now.*

for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

We will notice some points about the work of the Spirit of God in connection with these ancient prophets. First notice the case of Balaam, as recorded in Numbers 22:38, “And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say anything? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.” When God took the prophet in His hand he had to do just exactly as God wanted him to do. Connect this with a case in the New Testament: The apostle Paul tells us, in 2 Corinthians 12, of the visions and revelation which were given to him. He says he did not know whether he was in the body or out of the body. At such times he was entirely lost to all surrounding circumstances; and he tells us that lest he should be exalted above mea-

having his eyes open: How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!”

Balaam, when in vision, had his eyes open. Notice now the case of Daniel (Daniel 10:17–19). The prophet said, “For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, . . . Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.” Daniel had no strength or breath left in him, and he was strengthened by an angel, and he says, “And when he had spoken unto me I was strengthened,” indicating that he had superhuman strength.

I have seen Sister White in vision about fifty times. The first time

was about forty years ago, when Brother Oswald Stowell was very sick, and expected to die. It was on the Sabbath, the first Sabbath I ever kept. Brother Stowell wanted his case commended to God, and desired the brethren to pray for him. In answer to their prayers he was healed and went to work again two days later. Brother White, who was present at the time, said to me, "Ellen is in vision." I looked at her and saw her kneeling by the bed and looking up toward heaven, and she soon began to shout praises to God. Brother White said, "There is no breath in her body." Eyes open, no breath, yet her pulse beating naturally, and everything else in a normal condition! Her eyes seemed intently fixed upon something off at a great distance.

who have seen her at such times, can testify.

The first indication that she is about to be taken off in vision is that she loses all strength, like a person suddenly falling down. This state continues not more than five seconds, when she suddenly rises to her feet. She herself says that the first thing she knows an angel stands by her side and touches her and she receives strength. This is just as it was with Daniel. She has been examined while in vision, by skillful physicians, and we have testimonials from them which declare that the phenomena of her visions are beyond their comprehension. A remarkable evidence of the super-human strength which Sister White has while in vision was given during her third vision, when she held

with Moses, at the burning bush. The bush seemed to be burning with fire, yet not a twig or a leaf of it was consumed, so that Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." Exodus 3:3. When Moses turned aside God called to him and said, "Moses, Moses. . . . Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Verses 4-5. This was only the first step, which led on to greater manifestations of God's power, till the terrible exhibition when God thundered His law from Mount Sinai.

God designed by this exhibition of power to show that the work was altogether superior to that of any human agency. Another effect was to call the attention of the people to them, so that they began to make inquiries around in different places, and desired that Sister White would come and visit them.

At another time Sister White held this same kind of a Bible open in one hand, above her head, at an angle of forty-five degrees, for half an hour, while she turned from text to text, and repeated the words to which she pointed. The spectators stood on chairs to examine the texts as she pointed to them. Some of them tried to hold a Bible in their hands at this angle, and could not do so, but the Bible in her hand seemed to be as firm as if the two had been glued together.

People who never saw Sister White in vision, say they can explain all about it, that it is only the result of disease, hysterics, and so on, but the testimony of skillful physicians who have examined her at such times is altogether different. We are happy to acknowledge the working of God for us in connection with these manifestations. ❀

To be continued.

References:

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 212-213.

² *Ibid.*, 649-650.

³ *Ibid.*, 652-653.

*She held on her arm a Bible
eighteen inches long, eleven inches wide,
and four inches thick, and weighing
eighteen and a fourth pounds.*

On one occasion Elders White and Andrews, and myself, were awakened at midnight, and called to come and pray for Sister White. She had fainted, and all efforts to revive her were unavailing. We had a season of prayer, and she seemed to revive and was taken off in vision. Some of our opponents say, "Yes, that is always the way, she is always sick and faints away before she has one of her visions." But this is not true. The first one I saw her have was at the close of a meeting, when she was well enough to take a long journey. Her last open vision was in 1884, on the campground at Portland, Oregon. She has visions at the present time, but they are not open visions in a public assembly. It is a heavenly place to be in, where there is an open vision, as some of those here

on her arm a Bible eighteen inches long, eleven inches wide, and four inches thick, and weighing eighteen and a fourth pounds. It was published by Joseph Seale, of Boston, Massachusetts, in 1822. This she held out at arm's length, her eyes meanwhile looking straight up, and her hand turning from text to text for more than half an hour, pointing to the texts with her finger and repeating them. I have conversed with those who examined every text as she pointed to them, and they testify that she repeated every one correctly. This was an indication that the power of God was connected with that work.

When God has a special work to do, He sometimes starts out by bringing to view something of a startling character, to show that it is above human power. So it was



Preparation for the Judgment, Part 1

Ellen G. White

“**A**nd I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:11–15.

Here is presented before us the great and solemn day when the judgment is to set and the books be opened, and the dead are to be judged according to the things that are written in the books. I have questioned in my mind, as I have seen the people in our cities hurrying to and fro with business, whether they ever thought of the day of God that is just upon us. Every one of us should be living with reference to that great day which is soon to come upon us.

The inhabitants of the old world had the message of warning sent

to them 120 years, but it did not suit their inclination to heed that warning, therefore they turned away from the message of truth which God sent to them. It was for their interest to heed that message and find a refuge from the coming storm of God’s wrath.

Do we consider from day to day that a record is going up to heaven of all our actions here? If we would take heed to our ways, and if we would have the fear of God before us, our lives would be far better than they are today. We are here as probationers, on trial. God is testing us; God is proving us to see what characters we shall build up. Angels of God in heaven are sent to our earth to weigh moral worth. And our heavenly Father has sent us the message of warning, that we shall get ready for that day of final reckoning. He has bid us to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation that surrounds us. He has bid us to “search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39.

It is our privilege to understand the great responsibilities that God has placed upon us, so that we shall not be in darkness as to what is coming upon our world. We cannot afford to meet that day without a preparation. But when we think of this great and solemn event of

Christ’s coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, we should live in great humiliation before God lest we fail of the grace of God and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life. When we see that the world is given up to the seeking of pleasure and the indulgence of appetite, we should weep between the porch and the altar, crying “Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach.” Joel 2:17.

An Eye Like a Flame of Fire

We see that the world at large have no thoughts of this great day, and many of them do not care to hear anything about it. But we must meet the record of our lives. We must remember that there is a witness to all our works. An eye like a flame of fire beholds us in all our actions of life. Our very thoughts and the intents and purposes of our hearts are laid bare to God’s inspection. As the features are produced upon the polished plate of the artist, so are our characters upon the books of record in heaven.

We ask you, “How stands your character in the sight of God today? Are you preparing your souls for the grand review, that you may have the white robe of character in that day?” You cannot afford to indulge in sin and iniquity; you cannot afford to be found a trans-

gressor of God's great moral rule of righteousness.

If God had no law as a moral standard, whereby every case must be judged, there could be no judgment, and the cases of men and women could not be tried. If we have not been found in harmony with God's requirements in this life, we will not be in harmony with His requirements in the future life.

What excuses have we today that we are not in harmony with the laws of God's government? And what excuse can we render in the day of God for the disobedience of His requirements? Will you say "The whole world was in disobedience to the law of God, and I thought I would not be singular"? In that day, this excuse will not be

judgment seat of Christ. The deeds and acts which we have thought to have been done in secret where no eye could see, are made known. There was an eye that saw and registered the deeds done by man.

When Belshazzar had his great sacrificial feast, there was a witness present which he did not discern. They were drinking their wine and having their luxurious feast, and praising the gods of silver and gold, extolling their own wisdom, but right over against the wall facing the king a bloodless hand traced the terrible characters testifying of his true condition. The message came, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Daniel 5:27. Now the Lord is weighing characters in the sanctuary, and the

Here are youth right here in our midst in this large city, but do these youth appreciate the powers that God has given them, that they should return Him service for all that He has done for them? The future of society is indexed by the youth of today. Some of the youth are making their aim high, as did Joseph. They have aimed to keep themselves unspotted from the world. The Lord God of heaven is looking upon the children of men with intense interest, and what are we doing? Are we keeping, as did Abraham, the ways of the Lord? Are we teaching our children to love and obey God? We want to be in such a position that we can educate these young men brought within the reach of our influence, and leave them a good example. We should be in such a position here that the notes of counsel and warning will be given them as from God, and that what God has given them through His messengers, may come back to Him in souls saved.

But suppose these youth frequent the saloon, and take their drink of beer and wine and strong drink? Nadab and Abihu were in holy office and they drank wine and strong drink. The influence upon them beclouded their perceptive powers so that they could not discern sacred things. Those who are forming habits of intemperance are beclouding their reasoning powers so that they cannot discern between truth and error. It is the great work of Satan for this time to tempt the appetite so that error shall be placed on a level with truth. We want all the sharp powers of our intellect to be engaged in the work of conflict against the deception of Satan, and we must keep the spiritual and moral powers unperverted, so we will know what is truth. God asks for all the entrusted capabilities and talents He has lent us. Will you give them to Him?

Our sisters cannot afford to use their God-given time on unimportant things which will give them

We must keep the spiritual and moral powers unperverted, so we will know what is truth.

accepted. You may present excuses now, but you will not venture to present them before the judge of all the earth, for just as soon as the books are opened and the characters that are written there are brought out, every mouth will be stopped, for the guilt of all stands as plainly revealed to themselves as to God. Everyone then will see just where he departed from the right way. Everyone will then discern the influence he had upon his fellow-men by his own departure from God's righteousness, to turn them away from the ways of truth and right. Everyone then will understand just what he did to dishonor the God of heaven by breaking His law.

Everyone who comes forth from the dead when Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, and those who are living, will stand before the

deeds of those who are careless and indifferent, rushing on in the paths of sin and iniquity, are being registered in the books of heaven.

More Solemn to Live Than to Die

The God of heaven has given us reasoning powers and intellect, and He wants us to use them. He has given us this body which He wishes us to preserve in perfect health so that we can give Him perfect service. The Lord God is an ever present witness to the deeds of wickedness done among the children of men upon this earth. How does He look upon men and women for whom He has paid an infinite price but who yet refuse to obey His laws? They refuse to be saved in His appointed way, which is entire obedience to His commandments.

no spiritual strength, but will, if they continue, separate them from God. It is a solemn thing to die, but it is a far more solemn thing to live. Here is a world that is lying in wickedness around us, and what are we, as men and women who claim to be sons and daughters of God, doing to save the souls of those around us? God requires that we shall give back to Him in willing service all the powers that He has given to us. Let us look forward to the day of final reckoning. How will our case stand in that day. Will it make us unhappy then that we have served God and kept His commandments? God has given us rules to regulate our lives so that we shall have His care and protection in this life.

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

The lawyer came to Christ and asked Him, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Luke 10:25. This was a positive question, and was just as decidedly answered. "What is written in the law? How readest Thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Verses 26–28. This means to keep the first four commandments, which show the duty of man to his God, and the last six which show the duty of man to his fellowmen.

Here is the work that is before us. The soul anxiously inquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" is answered. The way is laid open. It is to love God above all things, and our neighbor as ourself. We ask you, Are you doing this? Are we who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, imitating His life? Are we following His example? If we are, we are in such a position that we can have a living connection with heaven. We are channels of light to the world.

Christ said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14–16. It may seem to you that you have shown great self-denial and self-sacrifice in obeying God's law. Does He require more self-denial on your part than He has shown for you, that you should not perish but have eternal life? He has led the way, will you follow? He says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." John 15:10. Will you keep the commandments of God? He left the royal throne in heaven, and changed the crown of glory for one of thorns. He placed His feet in the blood-stained

to follow Him? Oh what love, what matchless love, has been displayed by the Son of man! And all this the Son of God endured that He might bring many sons and daughters to glory. Who is willing today to be on the Lord's side?

We cannot wait until the judgment before we consent to deny self and to lift the cross. We cannot then form characters for heaven. It is here in this life that we must take sides with the humble, self-denying Redeemer. It is here that we must overcome envy, strife, selfishness, love of money, and love of the world. It is here that we must enter the school of Christ, and learn of the Master the precious lessons of meekness and lowliness of mind.

Does Christ require more self-denial on your part than He has shown for you, that you should not perish but have eternal life?

path which led the way to Calvary. He has told us that those who will be partakers with Him in His sufferings, will be made partakers with Him in His glory also.

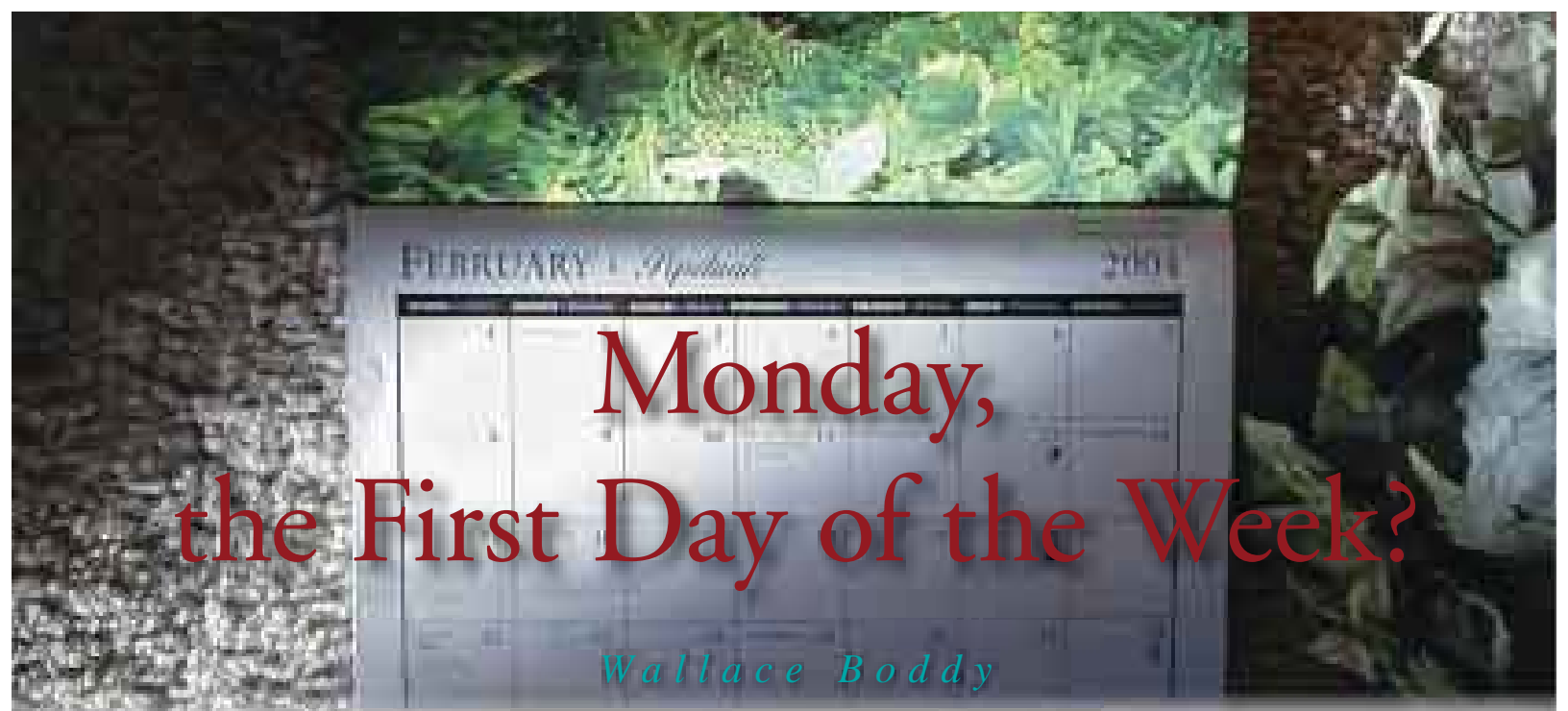
We may never have to suffer as He did; but we should ever keep before us the Author of our salvation, and never exalt self, never be lifted up in pride or self-sufficiency.

He was despised and rejected of men. Those He came to save could not see in Him anything that they should desire in Him. Should He come into our world today without earthly honor or princely power, who would receive Him as the King of glory, the Majesty of heaven? How many proud church members would be so ashamed of Jesus and the reproach that would be likely to be attached to them should they accept Him, that they would refuse

And here it must be our aim and earnest effort to be loyal and true to the God of heaven by obeying all of His commandments and thus be fitting up for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love God. Christ says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1–3. Now the mansions are being fitted up in heaven. Are we being fitted with pure elevated holy characters for those mansions? ✠

To be continued.

Sermons and Talks, vol. 1, 25–31 (a sermon by Mrs. E. G. White, June 27, 1886, at Orebro, Sweden).



Monday, the First Day of the Week?

Wallace Boddy

Quietly and inexorably something is happening—almost unnoticed. Behind the scenes, in many locations now and in increasing numbers, businesses are posting revised hours of operation on their front doors and in their advertisements, showing Monday as the *first* day of the week. Surprise! This, of course, makes Sunday the *seventh* day, which the Bible says is the Sabbath. The deceivers and their poor deluded adherents can now presume to find comfort in yet another insidious desecration of God's holy law. Who's kidding whom?

This brainwashing effort of Catholicism and apostate Protestantism now goes even further. Have you also noticed on the Sunday news talk shows that when the analyst or news correspondent refers to something happening beginning on Monday, the next day, he or she may now say, "... beginning *next week*"?

The synagogue of Satan is working in every conceivably cunning manner to misguide the minds of men. Years ago in countries of Europe, the weekly cycle was peremptorily changed on printed calendars so that Sunday appeared as the seventh day. The United States, upholding the principles of harmony and justice, has not yet elected

to make this obviously contrived manipulation of the weekly cycle.

Apparently, as more inquiring minds have found it puzzling and/or downright nonsensical that the Seventh-day Sabbath commandment does not square with the practice of observing the first day of the week, leaders of the churches of Babylon are finding it necessary to fabricate yet one more deception in order to nullify this manifestly clear argument in favor of God's true Sabbath. Amazing how convincingly the human mind can be deceived when it surrenders to the forces of evil!

The many arrogant pronouncements by spokesmen of the Papacy that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week "by the divine power and authority of the Catholic Church" has, up until now, apparently sufficed, to the satisfaction of this apostate power, to answer any and all statements questioning the apparent disparity of days.

"Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep the first day of

the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church."¹

Even with this end-time attempt of Satan's to obstruct the truth of God, wondrous will be our witness as we follow, with our own eyes, the marvelous power and working of God through His Holy Spirit, in finishing His work of salvation in righteousness. Praise God for His promises!

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not." *The Great Controversy*, 605.

Some readers may find that visiting establishments that have posted the incorrect sequence of days of the week is an excellent opportunity to start a conversation with the owner—asking questions such as, "Why do you list Monday as the first day of the week instead of Sunday?" This conversation could lead to the sharing of books, tabloids, Bible studies, and so forth. ✠

References:

- ¹ T. Enright, C.S.S.R., President, Redemptorist College (Roman Catholic), Kansas City, MO, February 18, 1884.



The Principle of Two Israels

Ron Spear

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Romans 9:6–8.

All through the history of Israel there were two groups. There were the Israelites of the flesh, who were constantly rebelling against God’s rule, and there were the children of the promise—the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal and who were not in rebellion to God—a very small remnant compared to the church’s membership of more than one million. “Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.” Isaiah 1:9.

The seven thousand were the true worshippers of the Most High God—spiritual Israel. They were obedient to all truth without a single compromise. They believed that Moses was God’s true prophet. They accepted his words, his leadership as God’s plan for their journey to the Promised Land. The

large group were Israelites of the flesh—professors, not true believers.

“For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” Romans 9:3.

“As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” Galatians 6:12–16.

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Philippians 3:3.

Saved By Faith

The Jews in Paul’s day believed that, because they were the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they were saved by their birth in the

flesh. But that which was accounted for righteousness to Abraham was his faith in the promises of the Messiah, which bore fruit in his obedience to all truth.

“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Galatians 3:6–8.

The Pharisees and Sadducees could not be saved in the flesh. The salvation of the obedient who composed spiritual Israel was based upon their faith in the Messiah as their Redeemer, their Saviour.

John the Baptist understood this important doctrine of faith in the Messiah: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Matthew 3:1–3.

“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them,

O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is

to keep them from all sin. Our fitness for heaven is determined by our character, not the placing of our names on the church books.

In the sanctuary service, and the Day of Atonement, we find there was a careful preparation to be made. Every sin was to be confessed and repented of. Any Israelite who approached the Day of Atonement with sins unrepented of was cast out of the camp—disfellowshipped. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has accepted the Biblical doctrine of the Investigative

increasing as the people backslide from God. It is all through our ranks, all over the field. But few know what our churches are to experience. I saw that at present we are under divine forbearance, but no one can say how long this will continue. No one knows how great the mercy that has been exercised toward us. But few are heartily devoted to God. There are only a few who, like the stars in a tempestuous night, shine here and there among the clouds." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 75–76.

The prophet tells us, we have done worse than the Israelites of the flesh because of our rejection of the great light God has provided us in the Spirit of Prophecy.

"But very few of those who have received the light are doing the work entrusted to their hands. There are a few men of unswerving fidelity who do not study ease, convenience, or life itself, who push their way wherever they can find an opening to press the light of truth and vindicate the holy law of God. But the sins that control the world have come into the churches, and into the hearts of those who claim to be God's peculiar people. Many who have received the light exert an influence to quiet the fears of worldlings and formal professors. There are lovers of the world even among those who profess to be waiting for the Lord. There is ambition for riches and honor. Christ describes this class when He declares that the day of God is to come as a snare upon all that dwell upon the earth. This world is their home. They make it their business to secure earthly treasures. They erect costly dwellings and furnish them with every good thing; they find pleasure in dress and the indulgence of appetite. The things of the world are their idols. These interpose between the soul and Christ, and the solemn and awful realities that are crowding upon us are but dimly seen and faintly realized. The same disobedience and failure which were seen in the Jewish church have characterized in a

"But few are heartily devoted to God. There are only a few who, like the stars in a tempestuous night, shine here and there among the clouds."

mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Verses 7–11.

The Message of Repentance

Repentance was the message of the Baptist and the message of Jesus. Repentance is the message to be given by every true spiritual Israelite.

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Verse 17.

Jesus is well pleased with every Seventh-day Adventist who gives the straight testimony warning.

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:24.

The preaching of Christ was to turn the minds of the leaders of the church—the priests and members of the Sanhedrin—and the laity to the understanding of God's requirements for salvation—obedience to the sacred law of God by faith in their Messiah and belief in the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit

Judgment—the antitypical Day of Atonement which began in 1844—which separates us from the other denominations. Read Leviticus chapters 16 and 23.

Following Israel's Example

Let us now compare the Seventh-day Adventist church with the church in the wilderness and in Christ's day: "I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God's peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord's displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe.

"I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies has been steadily

greater degree the people who have had this great light from heaven in the last messages of warning. Shall we, like them, squander our opportunities and privileges until God shall permit oppression and persecution to come upon us? Will the work which might be performed in peace and comparative prosperity be left undone until it must be performed in days of darkness, under the pressure of trial and persecution?" *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 456–457. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 129.

There are more than a dozen similar statements in *Testimonies*, vol. 5 alone, that tell us we are walking in the very same rebellion as did Israel. See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 72–77, 94, 99, 160, 226, 297, 535, 601.

The Faithful Seven Thousand

Inspiration also describes for us the experience of the true and faithful Seventh-day Adventists who compose spiritual Israel:

"True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right—because right doing is pleasing to God." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 97–98.

Those who are faithful are also contrasted with those who merely profess the truth in Christ's parable of the wise and foolish virgins found in Matthew 25: "While they [the foolish virgins] went to buy, the procession moved on, and left them behind. The five with lighted lamps joined the throng and entered the house with the bridal train, and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins reached the banqueting hall, they received an unexpected denial. The master of the feast declared, 'I know you not.' Verse 12. They were left standing without, in the empty street, in the blackness of the night." *Ibid.* 406.

A True Conversion

From Abel to the Calebs and Joshuas of Moses' day to those who

received the Pentecostal experience of the early rain in Christ's day, the names of all the faithful were recorded and kept in the Book of Life, for they had received the circumcision of the heart: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Romans 2:28–29.

the writers of the Old and New Testament.

"Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" John 1:47.

Salvation has always been assured to those who are circumcised of the heart, repentant, seeking after truth in the study of the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy, seeking an experience in righteousness, not in the flesh, but a willing obedience to God's way, not man's way.

The devil is very angry with all who are faithful commandment keepers and believe in the testimony of Jesus—the Spirit of Prophecy—as God's guidance for His church.

We must understand that baptism is very important, that joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church is important, but these will not save us. "If you lower the standard in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then make this increase a cause of rejoicing, you show great blindness. If numbers were evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for in this world his followers are largely in the majority. . . . It is the virtue, intelligence, and piety of the people composing our churches, not their numbers, that should be a source of joy and thankfulness." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 31–32.

No Guile

Who are the real Seventh-day Adventists? Only those who have been circumcised of the heart, who are seeking for truth will all their heart and soul; who have the faith of Jesus according to Revelation 14:12, Galatians 2:20, and Romans 10:17; who believe that Ellen White is a prophet of the Lord, equal in inspiration and authority to Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, and

"These [believers in Berea] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11.

These are the true Israelites, the true remnant of the final generation, the real Seventh-day Adventists who will be ordained by the power of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain and will give the loud cry.

The devil is very angry with all who are faithful commandment keepers and believe in the testimony of Jesus—the Spirit of Prophecy—as God's guidance for His church. See Revelation 12:17. But he is pleased with those who are Seventh-day Adventists in the flesh, and not in the Spirit—professors, not believers.

May each one of us examine our own hearts and confess our waywardness and rebellion. May we be a part of true, spiritual Israel—part of that seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal—by consecrating ourselves to a life of obedience by faith in Christ. ✽

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The Scandal of a Book, Part 1

The Diagnosis

Ralph Larson

When we look out at the Seventh-day Adventist Church today, what do we see? *We see confusion bordering on chaos.*

We see theological debate and controversy. We see brazen and bold rebellion against the Spirit of Prophecy. We see more and more criticism and challenging of the Scriptures. We see some persons even trying to bring the idiocies of evolution into our faith. We see collapsing church standards, and rapidly increasing worldliness. Our schools are no longer “Cities of Refuge” for the young.

What ever happened to our church? What caused all of these changes? The answer to this question is so simple that you will find it hard to believe. These momentous and tragic changes were caused by a book.

Yes, you read it correctly, a book. A book that was produced and published under the name, *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions On Doctrine*. It is now more commonly referred to as *Questions on Doctrine*, or just by the initials, QOD.

Judged by its devastating, worldwide, impact on our church, it would have to be seen as *one of the Devil’s greatest masterpieces of all time.*

It shattered our precious theological unity. It created widespread contempt for the Spirit of Prophecy. It created the necessity of dividing the years of our church’s history into Pre-QOD and Post-QOD.

These are two very different historical periods. Those of us who have lived in both periods can testify that the differences were and still are *enormous.*

Questions On Doctrine was published in the year 1957. I had joined the church in 1936, so I lived in the Pre-QOD era for 21 years. I entered the ministry in 1945, so I ministered in the Pre-QOD era for 12 years. In my evangelistic work during those Pre-QOD years I used to assure the new members whom I brought into the church that they could go anywhere in the world, find a Seventh-day Adventist Church, open the door and step inside and say, *I am home.* This was thrilling to them.

In that Pre-QOD era, when two Seventh-day Adventists from different parts of the world met, there was an instant bonding. They knew a great deal about each other, even though they had never met. They had similar religious convictions, similar worldviews, and similar hopes, dreams, and plans. They even wore similar clothes and ate similar foods. And they knew some

of the same world leaders of the church. It was wonderful, it was precious. It was Pre-QOD, before *Questions On Doctrine.*

But now it is gone. As you well know, when two Seventh-day Adventists from different parts of the world, or even from the same country, meet, in our time, they have to carefully and cautiously explore each other’s thinking before there can be any real fellowship like we used to have. For we are now in the *Post-Questions On Doctrine* years of controversy, from 1957 until the present, 2004.

Where did this tragic book, *Questions On Doctrine*, come from? It was prepared by our own Ministerial Association and printed in our own Review and Herald publishing house. So, it was a self-inflicted wound. This makes it harder to understand, but it is the awful truth. The grisly events developed like this:

In the early 1950’s Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, editor of *Eternity*, a magazine for Evangelical (Calvinist) ministers preached a radio sermon. A Seventh-day Adventist minister, J. T. Unruh, heard the sermon and wrote Barnhouse a letter of appreciation. Reminded of the Seventh-day Adventists by the letter, Barnhouse suggested to his co-worker, Dr.

Walter Martin, who was studying cults in America, that he investigate our beliefs. This led eventually to a series of conferences that resulted in the publication of *Questions On Doctrine*.

Just who the Seventh-day Adventists were who participated in these conferences was not officially stated until recently,¹ but various unofficial reports had already made it quite clear. They were Dr. Leroy Edwin Froom, a professor in our theological seminary, Elder Roy Allen Anderson, secretary of our Ministerial Association, Elder W. E. Read, a general secretary of the General Conference, and Elder T. E. Unruh, president

Through no choice of my own, I have had the misfortune of being at a storm center of the controversy. So I was there. This is how it happened with me. This is the story of my own personal journey through the wilderness created by the scandalous book, *Questions On Doctrine*.

I graduated from La Sierra College in 1945, and after a year in Nevada, went to Hawaii, where I ministered for twelve and a half years. I pastored in Kapaa, Hilo, and Honolulu, then spent two and a half years as Hawaii's first full time evangelist.

I was then transferred to Northern California, where I spent

to talk to me," I said. "You can tell them that I am not interested."

He agreed to do it, and I thought that would settle the matter. But that night, to my surprise, I received a telephone call from the Southeastern Californian president, Elder Walt Blehm. He spent some time telling me all of the nice things about the Campus Hill Church. I was trying hard to be respectful and courteous, and yet to be firm in my position that I did not want to make the change, and leave my project in Arizona.

Then he mentioned the name of the Union Conference president, Elder Cree Sandefur. That startled me. I said, "Walt, is Sandefur with you on this?" He said, "Yes, he certainly is." I sighed deeply. That put a completely new face on the matter. I said, "Walt, will you let me talk to Sandefur? If I call him early tomorrow morning, and then get back to you, would that be alright?" He said, "Yes, that will be fine."

At eight o'clock the next morning, I walked into my church office, and the telephone was ringing. It was Sandefur. He had not waited for me to call him. He was calling me. As soon as I heard his voice, I knew that the game was over. I could not say "No" to Sandefur.

This was not only because he was the Union president. It was also because I owed him an enormous personal debt of gratitude. When he had been president in Hawaii, he had let me leave the pastorate of the Honolulu Central Church and go into full time evangelistic work. That was the beginning of fifteen years of evangelism, which I will always think of as the best years of my life.

Even today I would say, "Give me a summer evening, and a big tent pitched on a vacant lot, with a crowd of people softly singing the sweet songs of Zion, and I will tell you, 'This is as good as it gets in this world. Nothing can surpass this.'"

Sandefur didn't press me. That was not his style. He just said that he would appreciate it if I would

*Through no choice of my own,
I have had the misfortune of being
at a storm center of the controversy.*

of the Pennsylvania Conference. Some reports indicated that Dr. Edward Heppenstall, a teacher in our seminary, was also involved. The Calvinist theologians were Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse and Dr. Walter Martin.

Barnhouse and Martin had proposed to the Adventist representatives that if they would repudiate our teaching that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of fallen man, and make some other changes, they would stop telling the world that we were a "cult," and accept us into their "fellowship."

Incredibly, our men agreed to do this, and the results are now before us in the present confusion and controversy in Adventism. The methods used by the small Adventist group to accomplish this purpose are utterly shocking, and defy all explanation. They appear to have been done by men bereft of their reason. As you will see, they were simply *scandalous*.

seven years in evangelism. I loved evangelism, but I had to recognize that an evangelist must of necessity preach the same truths over and over, and he must spend much time visiting homes to answer Bible questions. This leaves him very little time for advanced study. I therefore started working some study time into my program, and in a few years, I had earned two Master's degrees, and a Doctorate. Then I accepted a call to pastor the Glendale Church in Arizona, and conduct an evangelistic experiment that I was interested in.

Then one afternoon I received a telephone call from my Conference president, Elder Frank Sherrill. He said that the administrators of the Southeastern California Conference wanted to talk to me about coming to their Conference to be senior pastor of the Campus Hill Church in Loma Linda.

I responded (reacted) immediately. "There is no need for them

come over to Southeastern to take a look at the situation and discuss it with Walt Blehm. I agreed, and made the trip, and the later move. I felt that I had no choice.

I tell you this so that you will know how it happened that I got involved in the controversy that was raging throughout our church. Strangely, it had not come to my attention before I moved to Campus Hill. But when I got there it started hitting me from all sides. I felt like I was in a "combat zone."

Two different theologies were being taught in the Sabbath school classes in Campus Hill Church. One was our true theology, being presented in the lesson quarterlies and our church literature. The other, I learned, was being called "New Theology," and was being strongly promoted by a teacher at Pacific Union College, whose name was

Desmond Ford. Church members were becoming increasingly concerned and confused.

So I was forced by the circumstances to investigate the "New Theology," and was appalled by what I found. It was nothing but centuries-old corrupted Calvinism. Our pioneers had known it and rejected it in their time, and in my evangelistic work I had encountered it many times. It was all written up in standard textbooks of Calvinist theology.

Let me explain that the two major points of Calvinist theology that are very different from our beliefs are (1) that Christ came to this earth in the human nature of the unfallen Adam, and therefore was altogether different from us, enjoyed great advantages over us, and should be seen only as our substitute and not as our example. The other (2) was a

natural result of the first. If Christ had such great advantages over us, it would be unreasonable and unfair for God to expect us to live as He lived. So God does not expect or require us to stop sinning. He saves us *in* our sins, not *from* our sins. It is a doctrine of *salvation in sin*, that Christians can not and need not stop sinning.

It was a shock to me to hear these Calvinist falsehoods being presented as truths in a Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath school, to the great confusion of the people. I felt that it was my duty to defend the sacred truth, so I did. Then the fireworks *really* started. ✠

References:

- ¹ See the General Conference announcement entitled "World Church: *Questions on Doctrine* Book Annotated, Republished," (<http://www.adventist.org/news/data/2003/10/1069166562/index.html.en>).

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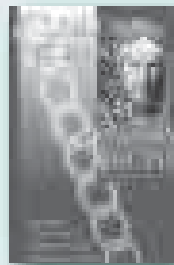
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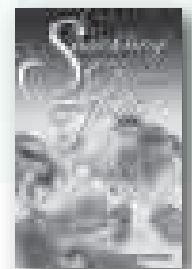
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Sparkling Gems of Truth

This book examines the sparkling gems of gospel truth found in sacred writings. These pages were written to stimulate youth and adults alike to study and to experience true



conversion and sanctification. The stories presented will touch your heart, and the truths will bring conviction to your soul.

Paperback, 139 pages, 2002, Regular price: \$10.00
BERL-SGOT \$7.49

Rosenvold, Lloyd / Rosenvold, Leola

Adventist Carnivals

Examines various forms of worship that are becoming more and more prevalent in mainstream Adventist churches. Do we not have a responsibility to heed God's instructions and warnings?

Paperback, 130 pages, 1991, Regular price: \$4.25
BERL-ACAR \$1.99

Battle for the Mind, The

When people claim to receive heavenly messages, and have the power to cast out demons, how can we know whether or not these manifestations are from God? *The Battle for the Mind* examines the Scriptures to answer these questions and more.

Paperback, 327 pages, 1987, Regular price: \$6.00
BERL-BFMI \$2.69

Saving Relationship, A

A plain presentation of the teachings of Inspiration contrasted with some of today's popular theology — particularly those found in the book *To Know God*, by Morris Vendon.

Paperback, 100 pages, 1989, Regular price: \$3.95
BERL-SREL \$1.99

Separation and Unity

When will God's church militant be purified through the removal of the tares, and the chaff from the wheat? Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold go to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy for the answers to this question and others.

Paperback, 160 pages, 2001, Regular price: \$10.95
BERL-SUNI \$2.99

Shorter, Gwen / Shorter, Rick

Thy Nakedness

Discusses the sensitive issue of dress, based on the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. A call to come up higher.

Paperback, 260 pages, Revised, 1997, Regular price: \$12.95
BESG-TNAK \$9.49





Sparks, Vernon, M.D.

And This Gospel of the Kingdom

God entreats us to "search the Scriptures." Each one of us must understand for ourselves the eternal truths of God's Word. This easy-to-understand book reveals the golden chain of truth that is woven through the Scriptures, enabling the true seeker to know God.

Paperback, 154 pages, 1995, Regular price: \$7.25

BESV-TGOK \$2.99



Could It Be Apostasy?

Times have not changed. We are repeating the sins of ancient Israel. Ellen White referred to their sins as apostasy. What about today?

Paperback, 80 pages, 1993, Regular price: \$4.50

BESV-CIBA \$1.99

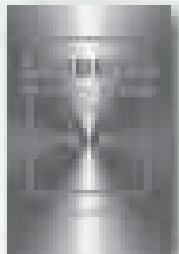


Golden Links of Truth

A fresh study on the nature and character of Christ and how these important truths fit into the plan of salvation—insight which helps us to understand our fallen nature and God's plan to restore us to the divine blueprint.

Paperback, 142 pages, 1999, Regular price: \$8.00

BESV-GLOT \$5.99



Laodicea: Her Authority, Organization, and Destiny

Examines many of the problems related to organization and authority that have arisen in the Adventist Church—both in leadership and laity. Addresses these issues in a clear and effective manner, drawing from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Paperback, 380 pages, 1995, Regular price: \$10.75

BESV-LHAO \$4.99

Spear, Ron D.

Counterfeit and the Genuine, The

This book is excellent for outreach. Share the genuine Bible truth of the Adventist message with friends, relatives, and others!

Paperback, 123 pages, 1987, Regular price: \$3.50

BESR-CGEN \$1.99

Does God Kill?

From the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, this booklet answers the question, "Can God be a loving God and still have His character vindicated at the end of the millennium?"

Paperback, 17 pages, Regular price: \$1.00

BESR-DGKI \$0.29

Issues at the End

A response to the report issued by the Examination of Hope International Committee submitted to the General Conference ADCOM, April 2000.

Paperback, 96 pages, 2000, Regular price: \$3.95

BESR-IAEN \$1.39

Message of 1888, The

What was the precious message God gave to Elders Waggoner and Jones in 1888 that brought down the fourth angel of Revelation, chapter 18 to give the loud cry? Was this message accepted or rejected by leaders, pastors, and laity? What does it mean today?

Paperback, 15 pages, Regular price: \$0.65

BESR-MO18 \$0.35



Personnel Needs

We are looking for workers to fill two positions at Hope International:

- (1) We need a maintenance man to take care of our buildings, grounds, vehicles, and equipment.
- (2) We need someone who is knowledgeable in computers, has a good command of the English language, and is able to help with editorial or desktop publishing work.

There are no doubt many readers with just such capabilities—and if we could hire a married couple who could fill both of these needs that would be all the better!

We are looking for solid Christians, people who love the Lord and those for whom He died, and believe in the work that Hope International is doing.

If you feel you qualify, please give us a call at 309-343-1844, write us at P.O. Box 220, Knoxville, IL 61448, or e-mail Joe Olson at executivedirector@hopeint.org.

Join us for Hope International's Spring 2004 Illinois Convocation

April 9–11, 2004 • Friday, 7:00 p.m., through Sunday Noon

All of our speakers are lined up. We are preparing a real banquet of spiritual nourishment!

Our speakers will be the board members of Hope International:

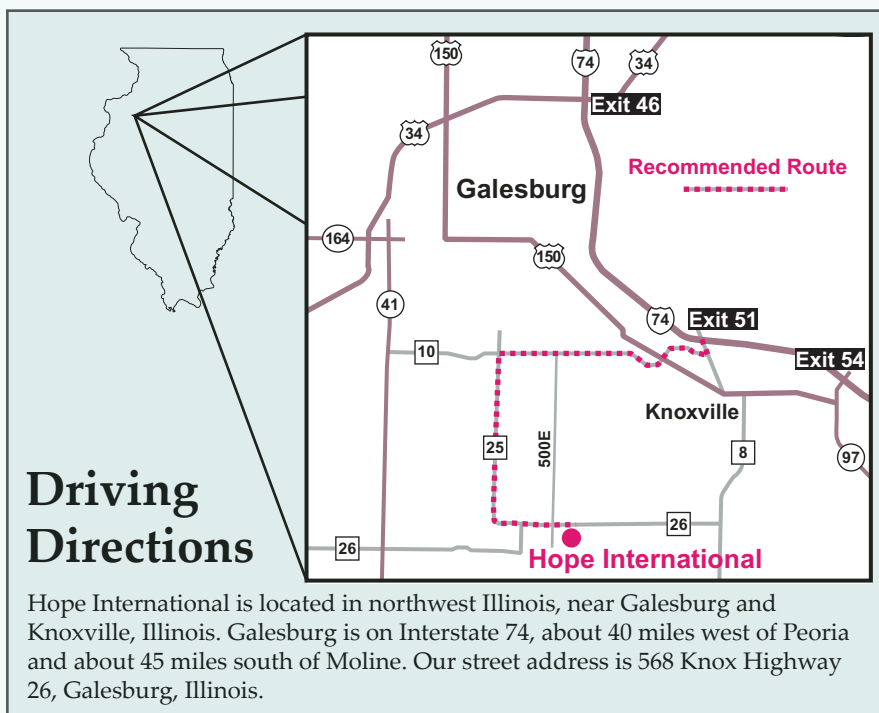
- **Ron Spear**—ordained SDA minister, international speaker, executive editor of *Our Firm Foundation* magazine, retired field secretary for the *Review and Herald*, and author of over 20 books
- **Clark Floyd**—ordained SDA minister, attorney, radio talk show evangelist, and international speaker
- **Lee Forbes**—business man, radio talk show evangelist, and speaker
- **Wallace Boddy**—retired business man, retired east coast distribution manager of *Earth's Final Warning* and *Behold He Cometh* tabloids, and speaker
- **J.C. Perozo**—an ordained SDA minister, former missionary to Inter- and South America, international speaker, and assistant to the president of Hartland Institute
- **Joe Olson**—Executive Director for Hope International, chairman of the board, and speaker

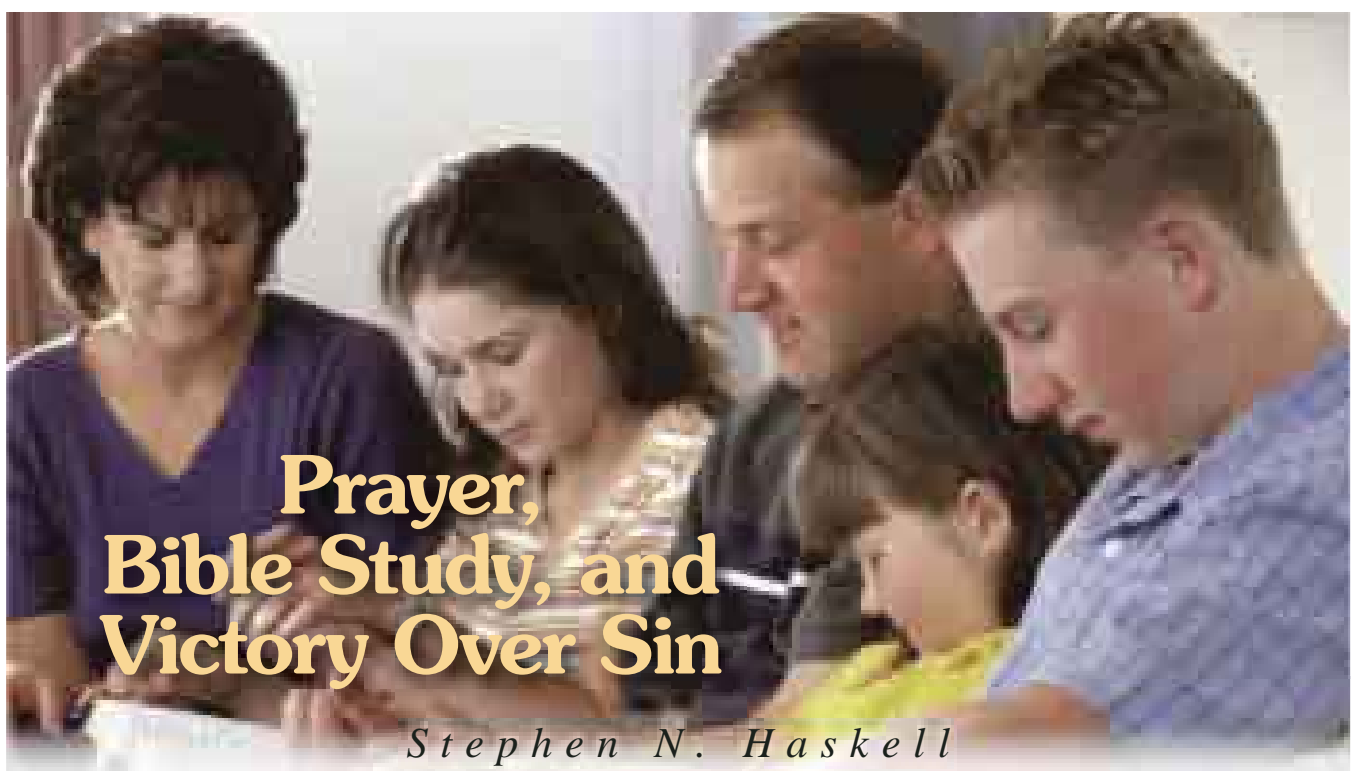
You won't want to miss this opportunity to hear all of these men at one location on one weekend! Take advantage of our new central location and hear messages that will stir, encourage, and uplift your souls!

We are going to be ready for a deluge of people to attend this convocation. Our eight-acre corn field is now a lawn and will provide plenty of space for those interested in camping.

We will provide a shuttle service from the local motels and campgrounds if needed.

Please call 1-800-468-7884 if you need more information regarding local campgrounds or motels.





Prayer, Bible Study, and Victory Over Sin

Stephen N. Haskell

The Lord talks to His people through His Word, and they talk to Him in prayer. Prayer is only a response to the voice of God as He speaks to us by the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the Word that He has given us. Where the written Word is unknown, God speaks to His people through nature. In this enlightened land we have the written Word, and it is the infallible voice of God speaking to us as much as if with our own ears we heard Him speak the words. We do not appreciate the preciousness of the Bible because we do not always obey its precepts. We need to place a higher value upon the Scriptures than we have in the past, for therein is revealed the will of God to man.

When Satan met Jesus weakened by the forty days' fast in the wilderness, and tempted Him by suggesting that He command the stones to be made bread, Satan was met and defeated with the text of Scripture, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. The passage of Scripture the Saviour referred to included every blessing that comes to men in this life. That text, if believed, would defeat every attack of Satan, physically, temporally, and

spiritually. Notice how it reads: "He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that *he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.* Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy *foot swell*, these *forty years.*" Deuteronomy 8:3-4. (All emphasis supplied by author.) This blessing came because they followed the cloud.

Whenever God speaks it is the duty of His people to respond; and were it necessary in order for them to obey, one suit of clothes would last for forty years, neither would any disease come upon them, and God would feed them with manna rained from heaven. If we hope to pass through the trying times before us, we need to learn *now* to trust more fully in the Word of God; for that is what will save us then.

Sitting at Jesus' Feet

The Bible represents God to the person who takes it by faith and applies it to the soul; and our attitude to the Bible is our attitude toward God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1.

In the Word is God's voice; it contains all the power, intelligence and wisdom of God Himself. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. Jesus was simply the Word clothed in humanity that we might behold it lived out from a human standpoint. Christ used no divine power that is not accessible to the weakest child of God. In Christ dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The same may be said of the Holy Spirit. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. In the Bible the Trinity meet, and our relation to the Bible is simply a manifestation of our relation to God, the Holy Spirit, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

If we love to study the Bible and receive from it daily food for our soul, then we shall love, like Mary, to sit at the feet of our Lord and listen to His gracious words; but if we neglect to study our Bibles, like Martha we shall be so cumbered with our daily cares we shall have no time to receive instruction from the Saviour were He to visit us in person. "The word of God is quick [or living], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is

a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12. The Word of God is the only avenue by which mortals can connect with the throne of the Deity; this privilege comes through the righteousness and merits of our Saviour, who died for us. God in giving His Son gave all heaven for a lost race. The Holy Spirit convinces us of sin, and prayer is the response of the soul; the Holy Spirit then presents our petitions before the God of heaven. Our invisible God is in a measure made visible to us in the Word He has given us.

How shall we obtain the victory over sin?—By studying the Word, believing it, and appropriating it to the heart by faith. This will imperceptibly change the heart. It will unconsciously bring victory to the soul. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being *born* again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God*, which liveth and abideth forever. . . . And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:22–23, 25. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may *grow* thereby." 1 Peter 2:2.

Prayer

Prayer is the expressed desire for help from the Lord to appropriate the Word to our hearts by faith. When we take the Word into our souls, we appropriate the power and character of our divine Lord and Master. By beholding the beauties of the Word, we are changed. Those characteristics of the divine life that we love to contemplate become a part of our own character. By beholding we become partakers of the divine nature.

But, alas! this secret is not experienced by everyone who professes to be a disciple of Christ. It is believed in theory, but not always practiced. We look at it as

a wonderful thing, and truly it is wonderful, but in all cases it is not made use of. It is within the reach of every soul, but it is not practically taken hold of, because we fail to spend time daily beholding the beauties of God's Word.

We should daily learn something from the Scriptures; but we should come to them with humility of heart, and prayer that the Lord will enlighten us, and give us an understanding of His Word.

Seek After God As For Silver

One reason why many do not get more out of the Bible is that they do not search for the truth as for hid treasures; they do not seek after God in and through His Word as for silver, for then they would understand the fear of the Lord

We may have a profession as high as heaven, but without victory over sin and selfishness in all its forms, and an abiding love in the heart for souls for whom Christ died, our souls will be as barren as the hills of Gilboa.

and find the knowledge of God. See Proverbs 2:3–6. There is too much surface work in Bible study. We may have learned the theory of present truth, but real acquaintance with God is another thing. There is too much relying upon theory; too much going to the Bible for some special doctrine which we believe is true.

It is quite important to have a correct theory, but the most perfect theory will not of itself save one soul. We may have a profession as high as heaven, but without victory over sin and selfishness in all its forms, and an abiding love in the heart for souls for whom Christ died, our souls will be as barren as the hills of Gilboa. When we

tell others of the Word, our faith in it will produce an effect on their hearts. The faith we have in the Word, and the love we have for souls, make the Word effectual.

I was the first Seventh-day Adventist that ever visited Basutoland, South Africa. I had letters of introduction to a native who had been educated by the missionaries to translate and print for them, and also to the paramount chief and to certain missionaries. But my letter made an unfavorable impression on the missionaries, for the one who gave it to me had been disfellowshipped for immoral conduct. This I had not known.

A native by the name of Kalaka, who had been educated by the French missionaries to translate the Bible into the native language,

was engaged to carry me in his conveyance through the country to visit the different mission stations. Knowing the prejudice that existed against me on account of my letter of introduction, and also because of the doctrine of the Sabbath, I did not in a single instance suggest to this native missionary one argument in favor of any point of truth. But we read the Scriptures together for an hour or more each day, and I selected portions that taught our faith. When reading, I often reread verses and emphasized certain words to make an impression on his mind.

For a month and a half we were together, and not by a word or a look could I discern that the read-

ing had any effect on him. One day as we were near the end of our journey we stopped by a little brook to rest and feed our horses, and he remarked, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Acts 8:36. I at once replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." He answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Verse 37. Had there been sufficient water I should have baptized him without question.

The sequel of it was, this man, Kalaka, had taken in every point of doctrine, and he at once began translating *Steps to Christ* into his language. He then went to Cape Colony, where he was baptized and became one of the first missionary workers who helped to establish our work in Basutoland. He remained faithful until his

death, and I understand that his son has also been a faithful worker.

Victory By Faith

More than once I have seen the power of the Word manifested on the hearts of individuals, and it will accomplish like changes in our own lives if we study it. Many of us remember how earnestly we studied our Bibles when we first received the message, and how that study changed the whole course of our lives. God designed that work to continue day by day until we reflect the divine image. Who has continued it? How many of us study our Bibles as earnestly and with the same love as when we first believed? The one who does this will have the "first love" ever abiding in his heart. Through

the divine agency of the Word of the Lord, secret sins can be overcome, and victories gained, through the strength and merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Bible is a wonderful book. Our God is a wonderful God. The divine power of the Word can captivate and subdue the hardest heart and bring victories that all the power of hell cannot prevent. We see our need; we apply the remedy, and God makes it effectual.

Jacob's history is an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been betrayed into sin, if they return unto Him with true repentance. It was only by self-surrender and confiding faith that Jacob gained the victory in God that he failed to gain in his own strength. God thus taught His servant of the divine power that is in the Word, and that grace alone could give him the blessing he craved. Thus it will be with us who live in the last days. The greatest victories to the church of Christ, or to the individual Christian, are not those gained by talent or by education, by wealth or by the favor of men; they are those gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing prayer lays hold upon the mighty arm of power.

God overthrew the king of Assyria and all his host in answer to the prayers of two faithful men of God. 2 Kings 19. Daniel's prayer of faith moved the king of Persia to issue the decree for the deliverance of God's people. We are nearing more troublous times than any in past history. Great victories will be gained by the people of God in the closing of the work. Who is exercising that faith in God's promises now that will enable him to walk by faith when no human help is nigh and we have only the promises by which to walk? ❀

Review and Herald, November 12, 1914.

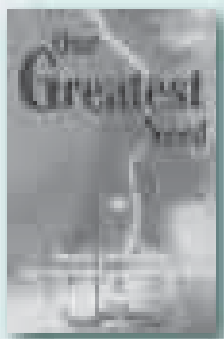
Our Greatest Need

By Ron Spear

This book deals with the remedy for the ills of our church. It is one thing to rehearse all the problems in the church, but if you have no solution, you have simply wasted time. This book tells the solution!

Elder Spear has brought together in this volume the pertinent scriptures and Spirit of Prophecy quotations to make it crystal clear what our need is and how to satisfy it.

Elder Spear's books *Retreating Toward Egypt* and *Rebellion* show us where we are and how we got there, but this book is most essential toward repairing the breach that we have caused between ourselves and our God. It points us to the divine remedy and reveals to us, in no uncertain terms, what we have to do to get back to a saving relationship with our Redeemer!



Paperback, 160 pages, 2003
Product code: **BESR-OGNE**
Regular Price: \$4.75
Price: \$1.99



It seems like it was more than twenty years ago that I received *Our Firm Foundation* in the mail. I knew, after I had read it, that I wanted to send for a subscription. I am an avid reader, and I have read very much of the Spirit of Prophecy. I thought to myself, They believe like I have been studying about—overcoming and victorious living by the power of God’s grace, and many other topics.

You know, there are not many people at church that one can even discuss the fulness of the sanctuary message with. So the articles in *Our Firm Foundation* are such an encouragement to me. Surely every wind of doctrine is blowing. We must all be Bereans, for truth and error are surely being blended. So I thank you for your ministry there at Hope International.

MP, California

By God’s grace, keep up the great work you are doing for the Lord. May Jesus be with us always, show us what His will is, write His law on our hearts, and then give us His heart, love, and character and all the grace we need to do His will and keep His law without compromise.

ML, Washington

Thank you for sending a copy of *Our Firm Foundation*. Enclosed is \$40 for a subscription for me and for someone else who cannot afford it.

AA, California

You asked how we first heard about Hope. Well, right around 14 years ago we began growing more in Christ and becoming more aware of last-day events. I began being troubled over wanting to send my

title where truth was being taught and the three angels’ messages were being proclaimed.

Some of the older people in our church pointed you out, and my family and I went to San Bernardino to hear Ron Spear and others from Hope at a weekend camp meeting. Elder Spear got up to speak, and he was very tired, but God’s Holy Spirit gave him power that was very obvious, and he spoke with strength from above. My heart was touched by so many blessings there and over the years.

DS, California

I praise God the Nehemiahs as yourselves are still standing on the walls of Zion.

When I came to America from Antigua, I was looking for Seventh-day Adventists like I left back home. I found none, and I soon fell asleep, living the Adventist lifestyle of going to Church and having a good time in Miami, Florida.

A friend introduced me several years ago to *Our Firm Foundation*. I read one article and I quickly called on the phone to get my subscription started. Praise God for this monthly magazine. My interest in spiritual things was aroused and my life has changed—including diet, dress reform, and studying the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

God has moved me out of the city into the country. It was not easy financially, but the Mighty King Jesus is in control. Praise his name.

BL, Florida

I can’t begin to tell you how richly my daughter and I have been blessed by *Our Firm Foundation*. We praise and thank God for all those who are working so hard to get the truth of the Three Angels’ Messages to the people. We had no idea of

how rampant false doctrines are being upheld as truth by church leaders. We don’t think we would have been aware of the false teachings about the sanctuary, the nature of Christ, and of the celebration services coming into the church if we had not been warned by the excellent articles *Our Firm Foundation* prints.

This magazine has literally been a “life saver” for us. We can’t wait until the next issue comes. We read every page first, then we study very carefully to see whether there are any false doctrines. We used to just read, but after reading that we need to study and search our Bibles and E. G. White’s writings to see and find out for ourselves what is the truth, we don’t take anyone’s word as truth—even if they are pastors. We have never found one untruth in any of the articles printed. Praise God.

AK, California

We first leaned about Hope through a friend who loaned us *Rebellion* because of our church situation. We are thankful for our experience at camp meeting.

TL, Illinois

What a wonderful magazine! I’m extremely glad to have found a magazine that involves so much of Sister White’s writings. I believe that’s the key! This magazine is one of the few I know of that call so strongly for the purification of the Lord’s remnant. If only this magazine could hang on for a while and continue to not be afraid of “criticizing” the church, then I believe this could spark other Adventist literature and help greatly with Christ’s peculiar people that He has so patiently waited for. This magazine is a wonderful blessing to me, Praise the Lord!

CD, Internet

An Appeal to Church Leaders

In April 2000, a report regarding Hope International was presented to the General Conference Administrative committee by one of its subcommittees. It was subsequently published in the August 2000 issue of the *Adventist Review*.

An Appeal to Church Leaders was initially written in response to that report; however, the several documents that compose this book continue to be of timely interest—not only to church leaders, but also to other members of God's church who are serious about fulfilling the mission God has given to His remnant church.

The Lord has sustained the ministry of Hope International despite the negative publicity, and we believe this book will be of continued interest to many readers because

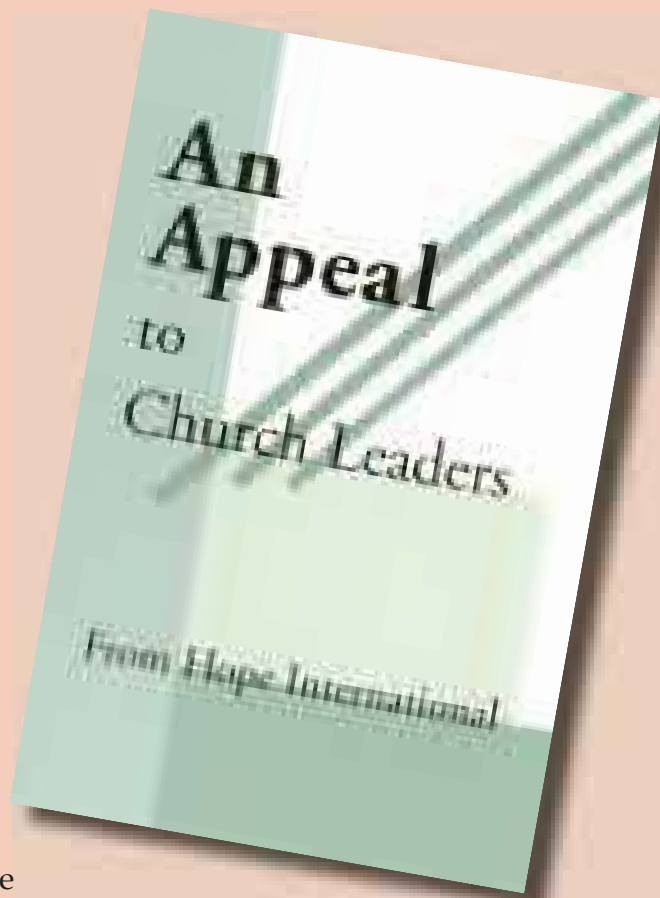
- The book presents concise answers to most of the charges in the General Conference report, which continues to be a primary reference in efforts to discredit the voice of reformation in the church;
- One chapter of the book addresses an issue that many have sought to brush aside—"A Church in Apostasy—or—Apostasy in the Church"; and
- The last two chapters of the book were authored by some of our church's greatest thought leaders—C. Mervyn Maxwell and Robert H. Pierson.

As you are praying for the thought leaders in your local church and at the higher levels, we urge you to share a copy of this book with them as well. It is our prayer that it will be used by the Lord to call many to repentance.

Paperback, 96 pages, 2001 • Product code: BEHI-ATCL • Regular price: \$6.75

Order copies of *An Appeal to Church Leaders* from Hope International—just \$2.49 each.

Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.



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