The Woman at the Well

Also in this issue...

THE BIBLE MUSEUM OPENED
FILL MY CUP, LORD

WHY HEBREWS?
WHO WAS BELSHAZZAR?
A TIME OF TROUBLE
In the book, Tortured For Christ, published by Hayfield Publishing Co. in 1970, at page 15, Richard Wurmbrand gives his testimony of his conversion experience:

“I was an atheist, but atheism did not give peace to my heart. At this time of inner turmoil—as I discovered afterwards—in a village high up in the mountains of Rumania, an old carpenter prayed like this: ‘My God, I have served you on earth and I wish to have my reward on earth as well as in Heaven. And my reward should be that I should not die before I bring a Jew to Christ, because Jesus was from the Jewish people (notice that his prayer is totally unselfish). But I am poor, old and sick. I cannot go around and seek a Jew. In my village there are none. Bring Thou a Jew into my village, and I will do my best to bring him to Christ.’

“Something irresistible drew me to that village; I had nothing to do there. Rumania has twelve thousand villages. But I went to that village. Seeing I was a Jew, the carpenter courted me as never a beautiful girl had been courted. He saw in me the answer to his prayer, and he gave me the Bible to read. I had read the Bible out of cultural interest many times before. But the Bible which he gave me was another kind of Bible. As he told me afterwards, he prayed for hours together with his wife for my conversion and that of my wife.

And the Bible he gave me was written not so much in letters, but in flames of love fired by his prayers. I could scarcely read it. I could only weep over it, comparing my bad life with the life of Jesus, my impurity with His purity; my hatred with His love; and He accepted me to be one of his own.”

“Soon after me, my wife was converted too. She brought other souls to Christ, and those other souls brought still more souls to Christ.”

Over many years, Pastor Wurmbrand and his wife, not only suffered great persecution under both the Nazis and the Communists for their faith, but brought many new believers into the fold of Christ.

I ask myself, do I pray as the carpenter prayed; do I seek to outreach not only to the Jews, but also to those with whom I come into daily contact? Do I have a love for souls and a desire to bring many into God’s fold? Do you, dear reader?

Ellen White remarks: “There is a mighty work to be done in our world. The Lord has declared that the Gentiles shall be gathered in, and not the Gentiles only, but the Jews. There are among the Jews many who will be converted, and we shall see the salvation of God going forth as a lamp that burneth.

“There are Jews everywhere, and to them the light of present truth is to be brought, that they may have an opportunity to accept it. There are among the Jews many who will come to the light, and who will proclaim the immutability of the law of God with wonderful power. The Lord God will work. He will do wonderful things in righteousness.” 1MR 314

In the feature article this month, we see Jesus reach out to the woman at the well. With Him being a Jew, and her, a Samaritan, she sought to avoid any contact, but Jesus knew the way to her heart, and would that all men and women be saved. (see 1 Tim. 2:4) Do we have those that we avoid, or do we reach out to all? We don’t have the insight that our Lord has in regard to people’s hearts, but, if we maintain that close connection with Jesus and are obedient, we can have the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all our dealings with those around us.

I truly believe that we are very near the end of time. I would like to encourage each of our readers to be more involved in their outreach to others, whether it be in the form of reading materials that we place in different locations or hand to people, or if it be in the form of direct verbal contact. Remember that even the carpenter’s prayers were answered in bringing Pastor Wurmbrand to him.

How serious are you, dear reader, in winning souls to Jesus?
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Cover Image: Reen Swindle
Many spiritual lessons may be drawn from the Bible. May we draw those lessons that our own walk with the Lord Jesus Christ might be enhanced.

**Jehoiakim’s Knife**

If the shadow of a curse could ever be said to lie on the inanimate instrument employed by man to work his evil will, surely it lies upon this, the first, as far as we know, ever used in the attempt to destroy a portion of God’s holy Word.

On the dethronement of his brother by the King of Egypt, Jehoiakim had mounted the throne of his father Josiah, and for eleven years he reigned in Jerusalem. The sins of this wicked monarch drew down upon himself and his people the wrath of the Lord. For many years had the Prophet Jeremiah uttered the voice of solemn warning; sadly had he foretold the coming desolation. “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of my people! This whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years.”

The solemn announcement of coming ruin, though it led not, as in the case of Nineveh, to national repentance, yet excited interest and alarm. The princes of Judah sent for Baruch, and at their desire he again, in their presence, read aloud the prophecies of Jeremiah. Fear fell on the nobles; “we will surely tell the king of all these words,” said they unto Baruch; but aware of the storm of anger which might be roused in the monarch’s breast, the princes counseled that both the prophet and the scribe should conceal themselves, and let no man know their hiding-place.

Then was Jehoiakim informed of the prophecies written against himself and his guilty land; and he sent Jehudi to fetch the roll, and read it in his presence where he sat in his winter palace, with all his princes assembled around.
the spirit of josiah was not in his son

Striking and solemn must that scene have been! There would be deep stillness in the royal chamber, broken only by the voice of the reader, uttering words of living power, which would fall on the ears of such of the silent listeners as had faith in prophecy, much as the voice of the judge pronouncing sentence of death falls on the ear of the criminal. The nobles would watch the effect of the reading on the countenance of their king; would he, like Ahab, rend his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh, and by humbling himself before God avert the threatened judgments at least for a time? Would he, like Josiah his father, go up into the house of God, call around him the priests and the people, both small and great, and read to them the Word of the Lord, honouring it, and mourning because of the curses written in the Book? To Josiah a message had been sent, “Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou hearest His words against this place,.....behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place.”

But the spirit of Josiah was not in his son. Instead of repentance and humiliation, anger and stubborn resistance to the will of the Almighty might be read on the darkening countenance of the King of Judea. He would not even suffer Jehudi to read to the end of the roll; Jehoiakim grasped it, and cut it with his knife, and not satisfied with this open insult to the Word of God, this defiance of the terrors of the Almighty, the king flung the mutilated roll into the fire which was burning before him, as if with the blackening parchment he could destroy that Word which abideth for ever! In vain two of the nobles present endeavoured to stay the rash hand of the king, entreating him not to burn the prophetic roll; the rage of Jehoiakim was not satisfied by the crime which he had committed, he wished to wreak his fury on the living witnesses for God, as well as upon His inspired Word; he commanded the seizure of both Jeremiah and Baruch, but the Lord hid them from the anger of the king.

the first attempt to mutilate scriptures

What availed it to the wretched Jehoiakim that he had consumed to ashes the writing of the prophet against him? The Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, “Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the King of Judah hath burned, and thou shalt say to Jehoiakim, King of Judah, ‘Thus saith the Lord; thou hast burned this roll,.....therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.’ Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch, who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Book which Jehoiakim had burned in the fire, and there were added unto them many like words.”

Such was the result of this first attempt to mutilate the Scriptures, and stop the free course of the Word of God. It may have been the first, but it assuredly was not the last effort of that kind. Jehoiakim’s knife and Jehoiakim’s fire have but been precursors of other instruments used for the same unhallowed purpose, notwithstanding the awful warning which is found almost at the close of the Revelation. “If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.”
Superstition has been actively employed from early ages in using the knife to mar and mutilate the Scriptures; she has tried to cut away the Second Commandment, to rend from the roll all the texts on which, as emblazoned in light, are written the doctrine of justification of faith. Nay, when she has found, like Jehoiakim, the knife insufficient for the work, she has literally cast the Bible into the flames, and not only the Book, but the bodies of many of those who counted its doctrines more precious than life! But superstition has had no power to destroy one inspired sentence, “The Word of the Lord endureth for ever.”

Heresy, also has diligently plied the knife on various parts of the sacred roll. Here one would cut away the testimony to the Divinity of Him “whose goings forth are from everlasting”, here another would deprive us of the consolation to be derived from the truth that Christ was “in all points tempted as we are though without sin.” But vain has been every wild attempt to destroy any part of the sacred Book, let man or Satan do what they may, “The Word of the Lord endureth for ever!”

In the present day many an eager hand is stretched out to grasp the knife. Now this part--now that part--of God’s truth is fiercely assailed. Unbelief would cut away the record of miracles, would cast aside much of the sacred writings of which He who is the Truth itself said, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.” Skeptics and unbelievers may, like Jehoiakim, draw down on themselves a heavy doom; but they will find at last that the so-called wisdom of man is foolishness with God, and that they have no more power to destroy His Scriptures than passing clouds have to extinguish the sun which shineth in glory far, far above them! “The Word of the Lord endureth for ever!”

Is there no danger of our falling into the sin of mutilating Scripture, though not, like Jehoiakim, with the knife? If we search the Bible in order to confirm our own views on religion instead of to form them, passing lightly over everything there which clashes with our notions, almost secretly wishing that some passages in sacred Writ were not to be found there, do we truly honour God’s Word? There were parts of Jehoiakim’s roll which probably Jehoiakim would have willingly preserved. All would gladly keep the promises, could they put out of sight the warnings and the threats. And so likewise in matters of doctrine: one treasures all the texts which proclaim free salvation through faith, another lets his mind only dwell upon the necessity of a holy life and good works. I was once surprised at the dissatisfied feeling with which an excellent man regarded the Epistle written by St. James, who has been called the apostle of duty. The Christian did not seem to realize the truth which has been well illustrated by one who represented St. James and St. Paul as soldiers fighting back to back, under the same banner, against the same foes to the truth, but necessarily from their position facing different errors; each soldier strengthening and supporting his comrade by guarding him from strokes from behind, where the enemy might have taken him at disadvantage.

Let us receive--honor--and keep the Bible in its integrity, deeming no portion superfluous which God hath thought fit to preserve; waiting for more light from above to reveal its hidden mysteries, and being assured that though heavens and earth may pass away, yet “the Word of the Lord endureth for ever!”
Like the woman at the well I was seeking
For things that could not satisfy;
And then I heard my Saviour speaking:
“Draw from My well that never shall run dry.”

Fill my cup Lord, I lift it up Lord!
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul;
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more—
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!

There are millions in this world who are craving
The pleasure earthly things afford;
But none can match the wondrous treasure
That I find in Jesus Christ my Lord.

Fill my cup Lord, I lift it up Lord!
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul;
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more—
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!

So, my children, if the things this world gave you
Leave hungers that won’t pass away,
My blessed Lord will come and save you,
If you kneel to Him and humbly pray:

Fill my cup Lord, I lift it up Lord!
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul;
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more—
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!
It was hot and dusty and He was hungry and thirsty.
It had been a long journey from Galilee and Jesus was faint from weariness.
They stopped at a well in Samaria to refresh themselves.
Jesus waited by the well while his disciples went into town to buy some food.
Now they are in Samaria, and Jews did not have any dealings with Samaritans if they could possibly avoid it, and the Samaritans acted the same way towards the Jews.
They might buy something of each other if necessity required it, but there would be no friendly talking or visiting or even asking for a favor.
“A Jew would not borrow from a Samaritan, nor receive a kindness, not even a morsel of bread or a cup of water.” Desire of Ages 183

They would conduct their business and depart, without even a cordial smile.
So here is Jesus… a Jew, sitting by a well, all alone, in Samaria.
A woman walks up to the well with her water pitcher to get some water.
John 4:6-7 “Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water…”
The Bible tells us the time of their encounter for a reason.
The sixth hour was 12:00 noon. At noon it is very hot. Most everyone who has to draw water from the well does it much earlier in the day.
Why would this woman be coming to the well at noon?
Why would she come when no one else, or so she assumed, would be at the well?
Why go in the heat of the day, with no one to talk to or visit with?
But she gets there and is surprised to find someone at the well.
And that “someone” is a Jew.
“A woman of Samaria approached, and seeming unconscious of His presence, filled her pitcher with water.” Desire of Ages 183
She doesn’t speak to Jesus; she doesn’t look at Jesus; she doesn’t offer Jesus a drink of water… on a hot day, as He is sitting right there at the well.
This is how the Jews and Samaritans treated each other.
This was normal. This was what everyone did. This was expected.
And then… the unexpected happened.
Jesus speaks to her and asks for a drink of water.
John 4:7 …Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.”
Now you have to understand, when Jesus said it this way, this implied no disrespect or unkindness.
In essence, when He said this, it would be like us today saying, “Would you give me a drink please?”
The woman’s reply confirms it.
She doesn’t get mad, nor ignore Him nor even give Him a glare or a stare.
She’s just surprised.
John 4:9 “Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”
She’s not mad or angry or upset… she’s just surprised.
And instead of granting His request, she forgets all about it, in her interest in determining why He would even speak to her.
“Why are You speaking to me,
much less asking me for a favor,” she is thinking.

Desire of Ages says this…

“Such a favor no Oriental would withhold. In the East, water was called “the gift of God.” To offer a drink to the thirsty traveler was held to be a duty so sacred that the Arabs of the desert would go out of their way in order to perform it. The hatred between Jews and Samaritans prevented the woman from offering a kindness to Jesus; but the Saviour was seeking to find the key to this heart, and with the tact born of divine love, He asked, not offered, a favor. The offer of a kindness might have been rejected; but trust awakens trust.”

Desire of Ages 183

A Jew would rather die than ask for a favor of a despised Samaritan.

She knows this and cannot imagine their conversation taking place.

There has to be something more to this than just wanting some water.

And there was!

Jesus was trying to find the way to reach her for His heavenly kingdom.

He was looking for an opening to talk to her about salvation.

And Jesus, knowing full well what the attitude and prejudices were between the Jews and Samaritans was extremely tactful in His dealings with her.

Did you notice that Jesus did not offer her a favor?

The water pot was no doubt made of heavy clay, and filled with water would have made it even heavier.

And the well was deep, so there would have been a lot of effort to bring the water pot to the top of the well.

He was a man and no doubt possessed more strength.

But He did not offer to help her.

Why not? Because she most likely would have refused, and He would have lost the opportunity to help her.

Sometimes, helping someone is not the way to help them.

Does that make sense to you?

Sometimes you can reach someone far easier if you ask them to help you.

But oftentimes pride will not allow us to ask for help.

We will offer, but we will not ask.

But Jesus, knowing how His offer would have been taken, was humble enough to be willing to ask her for help, that He might disarm her prejudices.

This might open the door. This might break the barrier. This might pave the way for more communication.

And it worked!

She now starts talking to Him.

Now she is asking Him for things.

She has questions.

It is the gift of God to know what to say to encourage a dialogue.

“Why are You talking to me?” is still her unanswered question.

Instead of answering her question directly, Jesus responds by saying, “I have something to offer you.”

John 4:10 “Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”

She didn’t understand what Jesus was talking about, but she did feel that what He was saying was somehow important.

But she still thought Jesus was referring to the well they were next to.

John 4:11-12 “The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?”

She is on the defensive, even though she really did not know what Jesus was talking about.

Have you ever noticed that?

If people do not understand what you are talking about, often they get defensive.

“Are You trying to say that Your water is better than Jacob’s?”

Well, wasn’t His “water” better than Jacob’s water?

Of course it was.

But what would have happened if He had said that?

Her mind would have snapped shut and the conversation would have been over.

The devil would have tempted her to feel that Jesus was saying He was superior, and the way to her heart would have been closed.

But Jesus gives us an example of how we can reach people with a better way.

“In the incident of the Samaritan woman at the well, is shown one of the Saviour’s ways of winning souls… Instead of disparaging Jacob’s well, Christ presented something better.

“If thou knewest the gift of God,” he said, “and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” He turned the conversation to the treasure he had to bestow, which would satisfy the
craving of mind and heart. He offered the woman something better than anything she possessed, even living water, the joy and hope of the gospel of his kingdom. This is an illustration of the way in which we are to work.” The Youth’s Instructor, September 11, 1902 (emphasis supplied)

Jesus was a soul winner.
His goal was not to reform the life only, or to get her to see truth only, but to save her soul!
We are supposed to be soul winners.
In order to reach someone for Christ, you have to offer them something better than they have.
But the devil usually has us go about it in a different way.
Instead of offering them something better, we tell them they are sinning and must stop.
While that may be true, that is not always the most effective way to reach people.
“It is of little use for us to go to pleasure lovers, theaterngoers, horse racers, drunkards, gamblers, and scathingly rebuke them for their sins. This will do no good. We must offer them something better than that which they have, even the peace of Christ, which passeth all understanding. . . “ Evangelism 267

What effect did Jesus’ way of dealing with the woman at the well have?

“As Jesus spoke of the living water, the woman looked upon Him with wondering attention. He had aroused her interest, and awakened a desire for the gift of which He spoke.” Desire of Ages 187

It worked! Jesus offered her something she did not have and something that impressed her that she would want.
John 4:15 “The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

Jesus offered her water that once she drank of it, would thirst no more.
She would not have to keep coming back to the well to draw over and over again, and yet never have her thirst satisfied.
This is the condition of all of those who do not know Jesus as a personal Saviour.
They are never satisfied and cannot be satisfied.

Signs of the Times, March 23, 1904
“There are many who are engaged in a wild chase after worldly pleasure and earthly riches. Thus they think to gain happiness. But pleasure and wealth are powerless to bring true happiness. Fame, genius, skill,—all are equally unable to gladden the sorrowful heart. Games, theaters, horse-races, will not satisfy the longing of the soul. Human beings were not created to be satisfied in this way.”

This is a huge statement!
Human beings were not created to find happiness in “things,” whether they be toys or games or piles of money or whatever.
And yet the search goes on and on and on to find that elusive happiness we all seek.
Jesus is and ever has been the only source of true happiness and comfort.
He is the only thing that will make us truly happy and content.

And this woman is wanting true happiness and contentment.
She has certainly not found it thus far.
And here is where we get to why she was at the well in the heat of the day…

John 4:16 “Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.”

Here we have another huge point in this story of how to reach people with the gospel.
The woman is now convinced that Jesus has something to offer her that she does not have and that she wants.
But, in order for her to receive this gift, she has to learn something.
And Jesus addresses it with His request that she go and get her husband.

John 4:17-18 “The woman answered and said, I have no husband.

Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.”

Uh oh. Now we know why she is at the well in the heat of the day.
She has been with a lot of men and is now living with yet another man, and they are not married.
Do you suppose Jesus was aware of the fact that she was living with a man?
Then why did He ask her to go and get her husband?
So far, she has accepted the idea that Jesus has something better for her.
Many people have been brought to the point of recognizing that Jesus and God and Christianity has something better for them than what they
But rather than deal with it, she does what most of us do, and tries to avoid it altogether.

She doesn’t like what she sees in herself and especially what will happen to her if she continues in her current behavior, so she tries to talk about something else.

This is painful to her. Of course it is. It is painful to all of us!

We don’t want to think about our evil ways, our selfish desires and pursuits and our ugly characters.

So, we usually do what she did, which was to change the subject.

John 4:19-20 “The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

Here we go. Let’s turn this conviction into an argument.

If you have ever talked to someone about Jesus, you have run into this.

When each one of us were talked to about Jesus, we were tempted to do this.

We would rather stifle our convictions and start an argument to get past what we are feeling.

The devil is desperately trying to get her off the subject.

This is hitting waaaay too close to home.

Arguing about something almost always works for the devil.

Nothing like stirring up some controversy to get us off track.

But look at how Jesus dealt with it.

“Patiently Jesus permitted her to lead the conversation whither she would. Meanwhile He watched for the opportunity of again bringing the truth home to her heart.” Desire of Ages 188

He didn’t get mad. He didn’t say, “Forget it.” He didn’t demand that she stay on the subject.

He let her go where she wanted.

This is the kind of God we serve!

This is the way He deals with people.

And this is the way He wants us to deal with each other.

He answers her questions, all the while looking for another opening to reach her heart.

He is kind, and considerate and conscious of her fears and worries.

This is what we should be like when dealing with others.

“Of all the people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous. In their lives should be seen the true goodness of unselfish deeds. The worker who manifests a lack of courtesy, who shows impatience at the ignorance or waywardness of others, who speaks hastily or acts thoughtlessly, may close the door to hearts so that he can never reach them.” Counsels on Diet and Foods 460

Jesus reaches people now, like the woman at the well, through us.

We need the tact and love and patience and kindness that He manifested and showed us when He
was here on the earth.

“There are many who try to correct the life of others by attacking what they consider are wrong habits. They go to those whom they think are in error, and point out their defects. They say, “You don’t dress as you should.” They try to pick off the ornaments, or whatever seems offensive, but they do not seek to fasten the mind to the truth. Those who seek to correct others should present the attractions of Jesus. They should talk of his love and compassion, present his example and sacrifice, reveal his Spirit, and they need not touch the subject of dress at all. There is no need to make the dress question the main point of your religion. There is something richer to speak of. Talk of Christ, and when the heart is converted, everything that is out of harmony with the word of God will drop off. The leaves will reappear. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree, and then the leaves will fall off, never to return.”

Signs of the Times, July 1, 1889

Have you ever tried to take something from a baby?
If you rip it from their hands, what do they do?

However, if you show them something better than they have, what will they do with what they currently are holding onto?

They will drop it immediately.

Show them something better, and they will go for it.

“Do not come at your brethren to pick at their faults, to make a drive at their peculiar traits of character. Educate them to better habits, and better traits, by the power of your own example. If you make it evident that you have come to correct them, you will only arouse their combativeness, and do more harm than if you had not come at all. Reveal Jesus to them, that they may behold him and become like him. If you cultivate fault-finding, and take it upon yourself to correct your brethren, you will soon have no other religion save that of picking flaws and finding defects. You cannot benefit the sinner by coming to him in your own way and in your own strength. Christ alone can save him.”

Signs of the Times, July 1, 1889

What happened when Jesus used tact and care and kindness to reach the woman at the well?

John 4:28-29 “The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

She ended up going to tell others what she had found.

When Jesus really means something to you, you cannot help but go and tell others.

There are “women at the wells” of this life all around us.

They are living in sin and want to be free from it.

They are hurting and longing for a change.

“There are many souls in perplexity, weighed down by a load of guilt. They desire to be delivered from sin. They have wandered from the springs of true happiness, and have poisoned their lives by drinking of the murky waters of transgression. They need the help of a friendly, outstretched hand. Teach them how to reach upward, how to live so that they will gain the respect of their fellow men. Although the will has been depraved and weakened, there is hope for them in Christ. He will waken in their hearts higher impulses and holier desires. They need to hear the words of encouragement, that they may lay hold of the hope set before them in the Gospel. The promises of God’s Word will be to them as the leaves of the tree of life. Patiently continue your efforts until, with grateful joy, the trembling hand grasps the hope of redemption through Christ.”

Signs of the Times, March 23, 1904

The story of the woman at the well is an example of how we are to reach others.

May we learn from Christ’s example and offer people hope instead of discouragement.

Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.
Imagine the difficulty in the minds of the Jewish Christians in the days of Christ, and thereafter, as they tried to handle the transition between two dispensations. The rites and sacrifices of the Old Testament times had been given and observed from Adam and others, even at the gate of Eden on down through Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve tribes. Moses had enhanced these ceremonies in the tent tabernacle and the sanctuary services. David had brought together materials for the building of the temple, and Solomon had built it. And even though the Babylonians destroyed the first temple, it had been rebuilt, and then added to, by Herod.

The God of the Hebrews had manifested Himself at Mount Sinai, at the dedication of the first temple built by Solomon, and on other occasions. And now former fishermen, a former tax collector, a medical doctor, and others that were not doctors of the law were saying that this system was outmoded and being replaced.

**RITES AND SACRIFICES POINTED FORWARD**

The question for the Jews must have been, “If they were good enough for our forefathers, why aren’t they good enough for us now?” Many failed to see that these rites and sacrifices were not able to produce salvation in themselves, but only pointed forward to the salvation that occurred at the cross.

Even today we have a problem which has arisen from the teachings of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, the Wesleys, and others. Most of these men had come out of severe darkness and did not recognize all truth, especially in regard to the Sabbath and the Sanctuary. But their followers often refuse to go beyond the teachings of
Some of the Jews were aware of the upbringing of Jesus in Nazareth and needed to be assured that He was more than human. “Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?” Matthew 13:55 & 56.

A HEBREW OF THE HEBREWS

In order to meet the possibility of a crisis and to build confidence in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and His work, Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews. Paul was the perfect one to write such a book. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law, a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. (see Phil. 3:5, and Acts 23:6).

Notice how cleverly Paul begins the Book of Hebrews by not only giving credence to the past, but turning quickly to his day, showing immediately the credentials of Christ: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” Heb. 1:1-4.

CHRIST TOOK THE NATURE OF FALLEN ADAM

But at the same time, Paul must show that Jesus is fully man, and why. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Heb. 2:9.

We also can see that Christ took the nature of fallen Adam, not Adam before the fall. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Heb. 2:14. (Adam could not be classed with the children, for he was created as an adult.)

Paul continues to establish why Jesus is both fully human and fully God. “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Heb. 2:16-18.

CAUTIONS FROM HEBREWS

As Paul continues with the Book of Hebrews, he throws in cautions to encourage the people to listen and follow that which he is sharing with them. He says, “Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness.” Heb. 3:8.

And again, “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” Heb. 3:19. He repeats in Hebrews 4:7: “Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”

Paul, in chapter 4, not only speaks of the Seventh day Sabbath being an example of the final rest that man can look forward to in the Heavenly Canaan, but he re-inforces the ministry of Jesus as our High Priest. In chapters 5 and 7, Paul continues to show how Jesus can be a High Priest even though He is not of the tribe of
Levi, from whom earthly priests came. His priesthood is compared to that of Melchisedec, who, like Jesus, existed before there ever was a Levite, and has no record of any beginning or any ending. Abraham, however, paid tithe to Melchisedec, thus acknowledging his superiority as a priest. The tribe of Levi was still in the loins of Abraham when this tithe was paid; so Levi was also subject to Melchisedec as a high priest. Jesus was a high priest in the order of Melchisedec.

He also reminds the people that the earthly tabernacle was a pattern of the heavenly, and in chapter 9, Paul continues with why things are better now, for the real has come.

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us….but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Heb. 9:24 & 26.

AN APPEAL

Hebrews 10:35-39 is an appeal to Paul’s listeners. “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Paul continues his appeal in Hebrews chapter 11 by referring to the faithful of the past, and that faith often has to be based on the unseen. He speaks of the exploits of those who were faithful in the hope of encouraging his current readers and listeners to move forward in faithfulness.

In Chapter 12, he speaks of the need for patience, training and endurance, much as an athlete goes through for a worldly wreath or crown that soon fades, but for his listeners, a heavenly crown that endures forever.

BENEDICTION

And finally in chapter 13, he gives final encouragement for each to walk the Christian walk.

“Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Heb. 13:20 & 21.

THE SUM OF THINGS

In chapter 8 of Hebrews, Paul gives a summary of what he has said in the first seven chapters: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 8:1 & 2.
One of the great puzzles to Bible Commentators through the centuries has been the identity of Belshazzar. Until fairly recently, no reference in ancient records to such a king had been discovered. The name Belshazzar was known only from the Book of Daniel and from works that borrowed the name from Daniel—as, for example, the Apocryphal Baruch and Josephus’ writings. Many attempts were made to harmonize secular history with the Biblical records. The difficulty was accentuated by the fact that several ancient sources gave lists of the kings of Babylon to the end of the history of that nation, all of which mentioned Nabonidus, in different spellings, as the last king before Cyrus, who was the first king of Persia. Since Cyrus conquered Babylon and succeeded its last Babylonian king, there seemed to be no place for Belshazzar in the royal line. The Book of Daniel, on the other hand, puts the events immediately preceding the fall of Babylon in the reign of Belshazzar, a “son” of Nebuchadnezzar, who lost his life during the night of the conquest of Babylon by the invading Medes and Persians (Dan. 5:30).

Of the numerous interpretations formerly set forth to explain the apparent discrepancies between the Biblical records and other ancient sources the following are listed. Belshazzar was: 1. another name of Nebuchadnezzar’s son known as Evil-Merodach, 2. a brother of Evil-Merodach, 3. a son of Evil-Merodach, hence Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson, 4. another name for Labass-Marduk, Nergalshar-usur’s
son, 5. another name for Nabonidus, and 6. the son of Nabonidus and a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar.

According to another view, held by the majority of critical scholars prior to the discovery of Belshazzar’s name in cuneiform sources toward the close of the 19th century, the name Belshazzar was an invention of the writer of Daniel, who, these critics assert, lived in the time of the Maccabees in the 2nd century B.C.

**GREAT TRIUMPH OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

This list of divergent views demonstrates the nature and extent of the historical problems confronting interpreters of the Book of Daniel, one that seems to abound in more problems than any other OT book of its size. That the identity and office of Belshazzar have now been fully established from contemporary sources, thus vindicating the reliability of chapter 5, is one of the great triumphs of Biblical archaeology of the 19th century. The extreme importance of this achievement calls for a brief review of the subject.

In 1861 H. F. Talbot published certain texts found in the Moon Temple at Ur, in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (vol. 19, p. 195). The texts contained a prayer of Nabonidus pronounced in favor of Belsharusur, his eldest son. Several writers, among them George Rawlinson, brother of the famous decipherer of the cuneiform script, identified this Belsharusur with the Biblical Belshazzar. Others rejected this identification, among them Talbot himself, who, in 1875, listed his argument with a new translation of the text mentioning Belshazzar. Seven years later (1882), Theophilus G. Pinches published a text brought to light in the preceding year, which is now called the Nabonidus Chronicle. This text describes the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, and states also that Nabonidus stayed in Tema for several years while his son was in Babylonia. Pinches made several accurate deductions concerning Belshazzar. He observed, for example, that Belshazzar “seems to have been commander-in-chief of the army, and probably had greater influence in the kingdom than his father, and so was regarded as king.”

**DUAL RULERSHIP**

In the succeeding years more texts were discovered that shed light on the various functions and important positions that Belshazzar, Nabonidus’ son, held before and during his reign. However, none of these texts called Belshazzar ‘king’ as the Bible does. Nevertheless, a number of scholars, on the basis of the accumulating evidence, suggested the view--later proved to be correct--that the two men may have been coregents. In 1916, Pinches published a text in which Nabonidus and Belshazzar were jointly invoked in an oath. He claimed that texts like this indicated that Belshazzar must have held a “regal (viceregal) position,” although he stated that “we have yet to learn what was Belshazzar’s exact position in Babylonia.”

Confirmation of the conclusion that a coregency between Nabonidus and Belshazzar had existed finally came in 1924, when Sidney Smith published the so-called “Verse Account of Nabonidus” of the British Museum, in which the clear statement is made that Nabonidus “entrusted the kingship” to his eldest son. This text, which settled all doubts about a kingship for Belshazzar, was a severe blow to scholars of the higher-critical schools who claimed that Daniel was a product of the 2nd century B.C. Their dilemma is reflected in the words of R. H. Pfeiffer of Harvard University, who states: “We shall presumably never know how our author learned... that Belshazzar, mentioned only in
Babylonian records, in Daniel, and in Bar. 1:11, which is based on Daniel, was functioning as king when Cyrus took Babylon.”

Cuneiform records have thrown an abundant stream of light on Belshazzar, his office, and activities during the years he was coregent with his father. After conferring the kingship upon Belshazzar in 553/552 B.C., or shortly thereafter, Nabonidus conducted a successful expedition against the Arabian Tema, and made it his residence for many years. During this time Belshazzar was the acting king in Babylon and functioned as commander in chief of the army. Although legal documents continued to be dated according to the regnal years of Nabonidus, the fact that the names of both father and son were pronounced together in oaths, whereas under other kings’ reigns only one name was used, clearly reveals the dual rulership of Nabonidus and Belshazzar.

**Scriptural Account May Be Interpreted As Excelling**

Information from the secular sources, briefly sketched above, has, in a positive way, vindicated the historical accuracy of Dan. 5. At the conclusion of his monograph on Nabonidus and Belshazzar, Dougherty has forcefully expressed the following conviction:

“Of all non-Babylonian records dealing with the situation at the close of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the fifth chapter of Daniel ranks next to cuneiform literature in accuracy so far as outstanding events are concerned. The Scriptural account may be interpreted as excelling because it employs the name Belshazzar, because it attributes royal power to Belshazzar, and because it recognizes that a dual rulership existed in the kingdom. Babylonian cuneiform documents of the sixth century B.C. furnish clear-cut evidence of the correctness of these three basic historical nuclei contained in the Biblical narrative dealing with the fall of Babylon. Cuneiform texts written under Persia influence in the sixth century B.C. have not preserved the name Belshazzar, but his role as a crown prince entrusted with royal power during Nabonidus’ stay in Arabia is depicted convincingly. Two famous Greek historians of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. do not mention Belshazzar by name and hint only vaguely at the actual political situation which existed in the time of Nabonidus. Annals in the Greek language ranging from about the beginning of the third century B.C. to the first century B.C. are absolutely silent concerning Belshazzar and the prominence he had during the last reign of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The total information found in all available chronologically-fixed documents later than the cuneiform texts of the sixth century B.C. and prior to the writings of Josephus of the first century A.D. could not have provided the necessary material for the historical framework of the fifth chapter of Daniel.”

(Editor’s footnote—this above information taken from page 806 of volume 4 of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary points to the fact that chapter 5 of Daniel could have only been written back in the Babylonian era, most likely by Daniel, because there was not enough information in the later historical records to furnish the necessary backdrop for chapter 5. God allowed this information to be uncovered later by archaeologists to strengthen our faith not only in the Book of Daniel, but also in our God.)
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God is a vigilant observer of the actions of the children of men. Nothing occurs in earth or heaven without the knowledge of the Creator. Nothing can happen without His permission. He on whom the fate of an empire may depend is watched over with a vigilance which knows no relaxation by Him who “giveth salvation unto kings,” to whom belong “the shields of the earth.” And the poor man is as tenderly watched over as the monarch upon his throne.

God is constantly at work for the good of His creatures. Satan is also constantly at work, but for evil. The prince of the power of the air is the agent of destruction, the one who causes suffering and misery. Times without number God has interposed to avert death, to keep men, women, and children in safety when Satan purposed a result wholly disastrous.

God made everything good and beautiful; but evil gained entrance into the earth, and with it came defilement and degradation. It is God's purpose to obliterate all traces of sin from His handiwork, to restore human beings to their original purity. To fulfill this purpose, God's only Son, equal with the Father, assumed human nature. He stooped to our estate that He might lift us from a fallen, degraded condition to the pure and holy condition of Adam when he came from the hand of the Creator. As soon as man joined Satan in transgression, Christ took the field to fight in his behalf. He entered the conflict, and fought successfully the battle with the prince of evil.

This world has been signally blessed by God. Human beings are the recipients of countless mercies. Providence watches over and shields them. Upon them are poured the choicest gifts in heaven's treasury. Yet notwithstanding this, men show a growing disregard for God and a growing contempt for His law and for the salvation placed within their reach by the death of the Saviour.

Men have lifted themselves up in pride and self-sufficiency, casting down the needy and oppressing the hireling in his wages. Against them have been registered covetousness, pride, and self-indulgence. They show contempt for the laws which govern God's kingdom. God has borne long with them; but in response to His amazing forbearance, men are approaching that degree of iniquity which the antediluvians reached, to perish in the waters of the flood, and which the Sodomites reached, to be destroyed by fire from heaven.

Some believe Satan's assertion that there will be a second probation. They say that even though they now resist the Spirit of God, refusing to improve their day of grace, they will be given another opportunity to gain heaven. But those who cherish this belief are under a deception which leads to ruin. When God gave Christ to our world, He gave in this one gift all the treasures of heaven. He held back nothing. He can do no more than He has done to bring men to repentance. He has no means held in reserve for their salvation.

God bears long with the rebellion and apostasy of His subjects. Even when His mercy is despised and His love scorned and derided, He bears with men until the last resource for leading them to repentance is exhausted. But there are limits to His forbearance. From those who to the end continue in obstinate rebellion, He removes His protecting care. Providence will no longer shield them from Satan's power. They will have sinned away their day of grace.

God keeps a reckoning with the nations. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. Those
who work evil toward their fellow men, saying, How doth God know? will one day be called upon to meet long-deferred vengeance. In this age a more than common contempt is shown to God. Men have reached a point in insolence and disobedience which shows that their cup of iniquity is almost full. Many have well-nigh passed the boundary of mercy. Soon God will show that He is indeed the living God. He will say to the angels, “No longer combat Satan in his efforts to destroy. Let him work out his malignity upon the children of disobedience; for the cup of their iniquity is full. They have advanced from one degree of wickedness to another, adding daily to their lawlessness. I will no longer interfere to prevent the destroyer from doing his work.”

They are guided by the enemy

This time is right upon us. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the earth. When the angel of mercy folds her wings and departs, Satan will do the evil deeds he has long wished to do. Storm and tempest, war and bloodshed,—in these things he delights, and thus he gathers in his harvest. And so completely will men be deceived by him that they will declare that these calamities are the result of the desecration of the first day of the week. From the pulpits of the popular churches will be heard the statement that the world is being punished because Sunday is not honored as it should be. And it will require no great stretch of imagination for men to believe this. They are guided by the enemy, and therefore they reach conclusions which are entirely false.

Satan will bring in pleasing fables to meet the minds of all who love not the truth. With angry zeal he will accuse commandment-keepers. Furious because he cannot pervert their faith, he will vent his rage upon them. He will give to his angels the work of hardening wicked men against the truth. Knowing that he has but a short time, he will work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. In the form of friends who have died, fallen angels will come to the children of men, just and unjust. Thus Satan will deceive those who, had they honored the law of Jehovah, would have been barricaded against temptation.

God is our tower of defense

When Christ was upon this earth, He declared of the nation that rejected Him, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” They made void the law of God by loading it down with needless ceremonies. They tore down the Lord’s standard of righteousness, blinding the eyes and hardening the hearts of the people, leading them to believe a lie in the place of truth. Were Christ upon the earth today, He would say to many professed Christians, “Ye are both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God.”

Satan claims the world, but there is a little company who withstand his devices, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Satan sets himself to destroy this commandment-keeping company. But God is their tower of defense. He will raise up for them a standard against the enemy. He will be to them “as an hiding place from the wind,” and “as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” He will say to them, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

RH, September 17, 1901.

Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God’s people around the world.
1. In 1975, at the time of the fifty-second session of the General Conference, in how many countries were the Seventh-day Adventists conducting organized work?
   a. 59  
   b. 145  
   c. 193  
   d. 205

2. What was the name of the Bill that was intended to compel Sunday observance in the District of Columbia?
   a. The Blair Bill  
   b. The Breckenridge Bill  
   c. The Hanover Bill  
   d. The Holden Bill

3. Which of the following men was not involved in the early Millerite Movement?
   a. Joshua V. Himes  
   b. Charles Fitch  
   c. Elon Galusha  
   d. John Gallagher

4. How was Ellen Harmon convicted of the seventh day Sabbath?
   a. By Elder Joseph Bates  
   b. By a vision of the law of God  
   c. By James White  
   d. By Elias Elliot

5. Who in 1844 while in a cornfield had the powerful impression that the sanctuary to be cleansed was in heaven, not the earth?
   a. O. R. L. Crosier  
   b. Joseph Marsh  
   c. Hazen Foss  
   d. Hiram Edson

6. How many other persons were present when Ellen Harmon had her first vision?
   a. 7  
   b. 10  
   c. 5  
   d. 3

7. Ellen related: “I raised my eye, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world.” What was the bright light at the first end of the path?
   a. The Holy Spirit  
   b. The ‘midnight Cry’  
   c. The great disappointment  
   d. The Millerite Movement

8. Who was the nephew of Ellen White that wrote many Seventh-day Adventist Hymns?
   a. Frank Belden  
   b. Samuel Belden  
   c. Joshua White  
   d. Joseph Harmon

9. In March, 1848, in Hydesville, Wayne Co., N.Y., began the mysterious noises later called “spirit rappings” in the home of?
   a. The Wolf family  
   b. The Peterson family  
   c. The Fox family  
   d. The Bates family

10. What were these mysterious knockings as in #9, in Rochester, and other places according to Ellen White’s vision of March 24, 1849?
    a. The power of Satan  
    b. A made up story  
    c. A trick by some family member  
    d. Friendly angels

“…we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” E.G. White, Life Sketches, 196. Many today have neglected to study the history and people that made up the early days of the Advent movement. To help encourage interest in Adventist history, we have put together questions about people and events of our past. Our goal is to spark faith and further study into “the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”
Health Gem

Dr. Olson comes from a long line of health professionals including MDs, naturopaths, and osteopaths. Having early wanted to help people, especially in the area of health, she was a missionary to Belize and Korea. A national speaker, an RN for years, a certified herbologist, and a naturopathic doctor, Dr. Olson is utilizing this experience and wealth of knowledge for the benefit of people all over the world.

Influenza Part 3:
Seasonal Flu vs. Swine Flu

How was Spanish flu defeated? Were vaccines effective? What can you do to prepare your body and mind in case of a deadly global pandemic? Last month I left off at these questions, and today I’ll cover all this, and more!

Were Vaccines Effective At All?

So, how WAS the Spanish Flu ultimately defeated? Was there some wonder pill or vaccine that ended it? At the height of the 1918 flu pandemic, acting Surgeon General, Dr. Victor Vaughn, reached a frightening conclusion. “If the epidemic continues its mathematical rate of acceleration,” he announced, “civilization could easily disappear from the face of the earth within a few weeks.”

“The death rate in Washington kept rising. A resolution shot through Congress, giving the Public Health Service a million dollars to fight the flu. Biochemists around the country worked feverishly to develop a vaccine. Hundreds were produced. Then, a researcher in Massachusetts came up with the most promising solution. Hopes rose: perhaps a cure was at hand. San Francisco’s mayor wired for a huge shipment; a special envoy carried the vaccine across the country on the fleet Twentieth Century Express. Soon over 18,000 people in the city had been inoculated… But the vaccines didn’t help. They thought it was caused by bacteria, so they made up a vaccine with the bacteria they thought was influenza…. But, you can’t make a vaccine if you’re looking at the wrong causative organism. They were on the wrong track; the influenza was caused by a virus.” (1)

You’ll note that before they knew if it worked or not, they were injecting this vaccine into thousands of people, giving them false hopes (and of course making money).

“Doctors gave out elixirs and vaccinated people against the flu, but to no avail. Crosby [an historian studying the flu of 1918] wondered about those flu vaccines. What was in them when no one knew what was causing the flu? He interviewed a doctor who had helped produce flu vaccines in 1918. The doctor, Crosby said, told him that the vaccines were just a “soup” made of blood and mucus of flu patients that had been filtered to get rid of large cells and debris. When they injected it into people’s arms, their arms became sore “so they thought it really worked.” (2)

This was a doctor, a medical doctor, saying this. Their arms became sore after the injection, so they “thought it really worked”. And the people lined up to be inoculated. Why? Because the people trust the doctors and the vaccine-makers. They trust that they aren’t just in it for a buck, but are actually there to help them.

What Can We Do?

So how did the Spanish Flu end? Sad to say, no one ever found an effective antidote, and the flu essentially killed until it could not kill anymore. Just as suddenly as it struck, the calamitous disease abruptly began to vanish. It essentially ran out of fuel and “burned out” so to speak, which can often happen to viruses. Fast forward to 2009, and the medical and scientific communities are on the edge of their seats hoping that the current Swine Flu will run out of fuel before it mutates and becomes more deadly. But no one can foresee the course the virus will take and how it may mutate, so all we can do is get ready.

So, the first question people ask is, “What can I do?” Usually followed closely by “Should I take the vaccine?” First, there are many things you can do to prepare for something like this. You can make sure your body and immune system are as strong as they can be through diet, exercise, lifestyle,
and supplementation. I know you have heard it all before but it bears repeating. If this virus becomes deadly, you will wish you had heeded the warnings and supplied your body the necessary requirements to fight the virus or prevent it from ever taking hold. What happens if the virus putters out and goes away? Your body will still be stronger, healthier, and you will generally feel better all over. So it’s a win/win situation! Here are some ways to prepare your body to meet this mighty foe:

1. Get plenty of rest!
   Try to get to bed by 9 p.m. or earlier if at all possible. Lack of rest can hinder the body’s defense mechanisms and prolong infection. When you rest in bed, and especially when you sleep, powerful immune-strengthening substances are released, enhancing the potency of immune functions.
   In addition, during deep sleep, the production of growth hormone is at its peak. Growth hormone speeds the absorption of nutrients and amino acids into your cells and aids the healing of tissues throughout your body. This hormone also stimulates your bone marrow, where your immune system cells are born. Melatonin, often called the “sleep hormone,” is also produced during sleep. This hormone inhibits tumors from growing, prevents viral infections (remember, the flu is a virus), stimulates your immune system, and has antioxidant properties.
   So much of the body’s healing occurs during the nighttime hours! It is vital to your health to get plenty of rest at night (especially between the hours of 8 pm and midnight). In fact, getting fewer than six hours of sleep each night increases your risk of contracting colds and the flu by a whopping 300 percent! Start getting to bed early and you will feel the difference. It could quite literally, save your life!

2. Drink water, drink water, and when you’re done… drink some more water.
   What does water have to do with the flu? In order to stay healthy, the mucous membranes lining the respiratory tract must be kept hydrated. When they become dry, they offer a desirable breeding ground for viruses (such as the flu). A moist respiratory tract repels viral infections. So drink plenty of water throughout the day. Daily, you should try to drink half of your body weight in ounces. (For example, a 150 pound person needs 75 ounces per day). No coffee, black tea, or colas as they dehydrate the body and weaken the immune system. Which leads me to the next item:

3. Stop drinking coffee (and other caffeinated beverages)!
   Contrary to recent marketing as a source of antioxidants, coffee, tea (other than herbal tea), colas, and chocolate are some of the worst things you can do for your immune system and your health. Caffeine robs your body of minerals and vitamins, and it dehydrates you – leaving you more vulnerable to infection. A vitamin and mineral-robbed immune system is a weak immune system, and you are much more likely to get sick.
   If you do drink caffeinated beverages, there are still things you can do to try to counteract the damage they cause. (First, try to limit your intake of these products as much as possible). Also, make sure you add an additional two glasses to your water intake per cup of caffeinated beverage you drink. A high quality vitamin/mineral supplement such as Mega Multi will help to offset caffeine's damage, too.
4. Quit eating refined white sugar!!

If you do only one thing to boost your immune system, eliminating sugar should be it. When you stop eating refined sugar, you will see noticeable results in your energy levels, weight distribution, immunity, and your ability to think clearly. Many holistic nutritionists actually consider sugar a drug since it has such a dramatic impact on the human body!

Sugars depress the immune system. This limits the body’s ability to kill bacteria and viruses (like the flu). In addition, blood sugar and vitamin C compete for entry into white blood cells. Which do you want to win?

To show how much sugar affects the immune system, consider this: eating or drinking 8 tsp. of sugar (the equivalent of one 12-ounce can of soda) can reduce the ability of white blood cells to kill germs by forty percent. The immune-suppressing effect of sugar starts less than thirty minutes after ingestion and may last for five hours. If only one can of soda can depress your immune system for 5 hours, think about people who drink a few sodas a day, or a couple 24 oz. bottles of soda per day. Just one 24 oz. bottle would be 10 hours of depressed immune function. Add in a cookie here, a piece of candy there, or any number of sweet treats – and you are living with a constantly depressed immune system.

Healthier sugars such as agave and stevia exist, but even natural sugars should be taken in moderation. Avoid artificial sweeteners such as Aspartame (NutraSweet or Equal), Saccharin, Sucralose (Splenda), etc.; they are more toxic than cane sugar!

6. Quit Smoking!

Obviously, anything that weakens the lungs will make the flu a more dangerous foe. Research shows smokers face a higher risk of flu infections and flu mortality (death from the flu) than nonsmokers, so smoking cessation is essential in preventing the flu. If you’ve been planning on quitting, but just haven’t taken that final step, now is the time. You don’t want to still be smoking when this flu season hits. It may be the difference in your life or death!

6. Quit Drinking Alcohol!

Alcohol can depress the body’s immune system in many ways. First, drinking alcohol produces an overall nutritional deficiency, depriving the body of valuable immune-boosting nutrients. This is the last thing you need coming into what could be the next big pandemic. Second, alcohol, like sugar, can directly lead to a weakened immune system by reducing the ability of white blood cells (B-cells and T-cells) to kill germs. B-cells and T-cells (the most abundant lymphocytes – immune system “soldiers”) are essential for fighting foreign microorganisms that cause infections, bacteria, and viruses. In people who drink, the activity of these lymphocytes is suppressed, leading to a higher risk of infection and disease.

7. Talk to your doctor if you are taking immunosuppressant drugs!

The main problem with immunosuppressants, is that they suppress the immune system! Not surprisingly though, since that is what they are supposed to do. Unfortunately, modern immunosuppressant drugs are not specific, meaning they suppress ALL of the immune system, leaving the patient vulnerable to a variety of infections that would normally be prevented by the immune system. Patients taking immunosuppressant medications are thus often called immuno-compromised (i.e. their immune system is compromised) and are at risk for numerous complications. These are usually given for autoimmune disorders (such as: Crohn’s disease, eczema, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, etc.) or to prevent transplant rejection. Check with your doctor if you are on an immunosuppressant drug to find out if there are other options for you.

8. Don’t take antibiotics unless you absolutely have to!

Taking antibiotics before a swine
flu infection greatly increases your risk of being killed by swine flu. How do we know that? Because antibiotics wipe out the friendly flora that have been scientifically proven to boost the body’s defenses against influenza!

While the above information was mostly related to things you shouldn’t do, here are some things that you should do that can help to boost your immune system and help prevent or fight the Swine Flu:

9. Eat lots and lots of raw fruits and vegetables!

Fruits and veggies are high in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fiber, and enzymes. The nutritional content that you receive from raw fruits and veggies is unparalleled. Many vitamins are also antioxidants that protect cells of your immune system from damage by toxins in the environment. Natural foods that are high in antioxidants such as vitamins A, C, E, B-6, folic acid, and zinc are particularly beneficial in supporting the immune system. Kiwi, oranges, grapefruit, cantaloupe, spinach, broccoli, strawberries, blueberries, carrots, bell peppers, cauliflower, and sweet potatoes are full of antioxidants and are fantastic for your immune system. Dark-colored produce (berries, kale, broccoli) tend to be higher in flavonoids and are powerful immune stimulators. Lemons are the ideal food for restoring acid-alkali balance. Drinking freshly squeezed lemon juice in water helps maintain the body’s internal “climate” at a healthy pH. A balanced pH supports healthy bacteria and viruses that thrive in a more acidic environment. Regularly eating fresh fruits and vegetables is one of the best ways to naturally boost your immune system! If you do not eat, or cannot tolerate, many fruits and vegetables, try our nutrient rich Fruitilicious or Living Green Energy, to supply your body with whole food nutrients.

10. Spend some time outside in the fresh air and sunshine!

Exercise can make a noticeable difference to your health and happiness. Just 20-30 minutes of exercise daily outside in the fresh air (preferably in the sunshine) will help expel toxins and boost the immune system to fight infections. It will also help increase draining of the lymphatic system, which in turn, expels toxins. Only 10 minutes in the sunshine is enough to boost the immune system and help prevent both bacterial and viral infections from taking hold. One way it does this is by boosting white cell-building in the blood. White blood cells are the immune system’s “army”. The more “soldier” cells you have, the more ability your body has to fight and prevent infections!

11. Get plenty of Vitamin D – especially if you suffer from asthma or other respiratory-related illnesses!

In a study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine, researchers analyzed information on vitamin D levels and respiratory infections from nearly 19,000 adults and adolescents who participated in the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III) from October 1988 to October 1994. The results showed those with the lowest vitamin D levels (less than 10 nanograms per milliliter of blood) were 36% more likely to report having a recent upper respiratory tract infection than those with higher levels (30 ng/mL or higher).”

“The findings of our study support an important role for vitamin D in prevention of common respiratory infections, such as colds and the flu,” says researcher Adit Ginde, MD, MPH, of the University of Colorado, Denver, Division of Emergency Medicine, in a news release. “Individuals with common lung diseases, such as asthma or emphysema, may be particularly susceptible to respiratory infections from vitamin D deficiency.”

This association persisted during all four seasons and was even stronger among those with a history or asthma.
or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). For example, people with asthma with the lowest vitamin D levels were five times more likely to have had a recent respiratory infection. Among those with COPD, recent respiratory infections were twice as common among those with lowest vitamin D levels.” (3)

12. Relax and be happy!

Stress slows the healing process and weakens the immune system, which will lengthen healing time. Our bodies respond to our emotions - if you’re feeling harassed and anxious, it can manifest in a sore throat or a cold. Prayer and Bible study can relax your mind and improve your health! Giving thanks to God for the blessings and abundance in your life and of the world around you helps! Think positive thoughts!! Pay attention to warning signs of sore throat or exhaustion so you can keep them from getting worse. Remember: A merry heart doeth good like a medicine (Proverbs 17:22). When you’re happy, you’re far less likely to get sick!


Many herbal products exist to give the immune system the additional support it needs during the flu season (or any time your immune system is compromised). If you have followed the H1N1 virus at all, you have probably seen that most doctors will be recommending Tamiflu, an antiviral medication. Countries have already begun stockpiling this drug and don’t even mention natural anti-virals (But why would they? There would be no money in it for them!). But the world is full of natural anti-viral medicine! It’s found in tens of thousands of different plants. Culinary herbs like thyme, sage, and rosemary are anti-viral.

Garlic, ginger, and onions are anti-viral. Berries and sprouts are anti-viral. And because these anti-viral plants contain literally thousands of different medicinal compounds, they are able to attack viruses with a full spectrum of synergistic natural medicines. Thus, even mutating viruses find themselves unable to escape the all-around medicinal cocktail of antiviral plants.

Here are some products that I have personally studied, taken, and highly recommend:

To help prevent an infection and boost immune system overall, I like:

C-Blast – This is a whole food Vitamin C blend (which is much stronger than commercial synthetic Vitamin C products). C-Blast will give your immune system the boost it needs to fight off infections.

Acerola Chews – For children, or adults, who don’t like to swallow pills, this is a delicious chewable form of Vitamin C. Tastes great and gives your immune system a kick!

Mighty Immune Plus – If you don’t like pills: swallowable or chewable, this product is perfect for you. Mighty Immune Plus is an amazing liquid blend of over 200 vitamins, minerals, herbs, and nutrients that will help to boost the immune system and prevent infections.

For natural anti-viral options, try:

Ultra Fighter – Whenever I feel something coming on, I reach for Ultra Fighter. Known as a natural antibiotic and “anti-everything.” This one fights all infections, whether the cause is viral (such as flu), bacterial (such as pneumonia), or fungal.

Anamu – Especially helpful for serious immunodeficiency disorders, Anamu helps boost the immune system to fight against foreign, harmful, and damaging organisms and particles. Also helps kill viruses and bacteria! Great for colds and the flu!

Odorless Garlic – An extremely potent natural anti-viral, garlic is an invaluable tool against viruses such as the Swine Flu.

For congestion in the lungs: Congesta-Clear – This product works quickly and effectively.

When the infection is deep and congestion is present, some people may experience relief in as little as 15 minutes.

Stay tuned next month for the conclusion of the Flu series, and to find out the truth about Tamiflu and Swine Flu vaccines!

1. The American Experience: Influenza 1918, PBS Program Transcript
2. Flu: The Story Of The Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918 and the Search for the Virus that Caused It, Gina Kolata
3. Low Vitamin D Levels Linked to Colds: Study Shows Vitamin D May Have a Role to Play in Preventing Colds and Flu, http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/news/20090222/low-vitamin-d-levels-linked-to-colds
1. The Mafia Takes a Hit—Newsmax, July, 2009, page 14—by Clayton B. Reed

“Organized crime, which the Italian mob once dominated in the United States, quickly is becoming a mishmash of loosely affiliated gangs from different ethnic groups, according to law enforcement experts. Russians, Albanians, Chinese, Japanese, and, above all, Mexican syndicates are clamoring for crime supremacy and, in many places in America, they’re succeeding.”

End time perspective 1—“Satan is busily at work in our crowded cities.... Step by step, the world is reaching the conditions that existed in the days of Noah. Every conceivable crime is committed. The lust of the flesh, the pride of the eyes, the display of selfishness, the misuse of power, the cruelty, and the force used to cause men to unite with confederacies and unions--binding themselves up in bundles for the burning of the great fires of the last days--all these are the working of Satanic agencies. This round of crime and folly men call ‘life.”’” Ev 26

End time perspective 2—“It is no wonder that violence and crime have spread over the earth, and moral darkness, like the pall of death, shrouds the cities and habitations of men. Satan controls many households, people, and churches. He watches the indications of moral corruption, and introduces his specious temptations, carefully leading men into worse and worse evils, till utter depravity is the result. The only safety is to watch unto prayer against his devices; for he goes about, in the last days, like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. The presence of Jesus is a safe-guard against his advances.”


“Here’s an interesting take from religiously liberal blogger Paul Raushenbush on the left-right argument over the hate-crime legislation approved by the House. The bill, which President Barack Obama has pledged to sign if it reaches his desk, would give ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘gender identity’ the same federal protection as race....Conservative Christians have insisted that it could have a chilling effect on clergy who have religious objections to homosexual behavior because a minister could be charged with the hate crime for preaching that homosexuality is a sin.”

End time perspective 1—“Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed [them] all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.”

End time perspective 2—“Everything is preparing for the great day of God. Time will last a little longer until the inhabitants of the earth have filled up the cup of their iniquity, and then the wrath of God, which has so long slumbered, will awake, and this land of light will drink the cup of His unmingled wrath.


“The idea that a religion can advocate certain health behaviors is not unique to Adventists. Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, do not smoke or drink alcohol. Many Hindus are vegetarian. Eastern Orthodox believers participate in holy days of ‘fasting,’ during which they refrain from eating meat.
Because our marvelous bodies represent the peak of a stupendously complex and wonderful creation, many people take seriously the moral responsibility to carefully care for their bodies—but few more seriously than Seventh-day Adventists.

End time perspective 1—“The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel’s message and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body....In order to be fitted for translation, the people of God must know themselves....They should ever have the appetite in subjection to the moral and intellectual organs.... The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body.” 1T 486

End time perspective 2—“Whatever injures the health, not only lessens physical vigor, but tends to weaken the mental and moral powers. Indulgence in any unhealthful practice makes it more difficult for one to discriminate between right and wrong, and hence more difficult to resist evil. It increases the danger of failure and defeat.” MH 128

End time perspective 3—“There is now need of earnest working men and women who will seek for the salvation of souls, for Satan as a powerful general has taken the field, and in this last remnant of time he is working through all conceivable methods to close the door against light that God would have come to His people. He is sweeping the whole world into his ranks, and the few who are faithful to God’s requirements are the only ones who can ever withstand him, and even these he is trying to overcome. . . .” 3SM 389

4. Stopping Discrimination--Christianity Today, June, 2009—by Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra. (Editor’s note: This is similar to #2 above but shows the extent to which the world is going)

“Under an anti-discrimination directive passed by the European Union Parliament in April, Christian churches, schools, and social services in Europe cannot limit their membership to those who share their beliefs. The directive, which the parliament passed by a 360–277 vote, must be passed unanimously by member states for it to become law. The directive expands anti-discrimination protection beyond employment to health care, social benefits, education, and ‘access to goods and services.’ Originally intended to protect the disabled, the proposal was expanded to include discrimination against religion and belief, age, or sexual orientation. Exemptions in the draft legislation for organizations based on religion and belief were removed before the final vote.”
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It is recommended that we should be eating at least 5 pieces of fruit every day in order to gain the full health benefits of eating fruit. Are you getting this much? Need some help? Try Fruitilicious!

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Editor's note: The following quotes are from This Day With God by Mrs. White

“The requirements of God are set plainly before us, and the question to be settled is, Will we comply with them? Will we accept the conditions laid down in His Word--separation from the world? This is not the work of a moment or of a day. It is not accomplished by bowing at the family altar, and offering up lip service, neither by public exhortation and prayer. It is a lifelong work. Our consecration to God must be a living principle, interwoven with the life, and leading to self-denial and self-sacrifice. It must underlie all our thoughts and be the spring of every action. This will elevate us above the world, and separate us from its polluting influence.” TDG 94

“We have not earnestness enough in our faith or in our experience. . . . I hope there is not one of you that will settle down with a contented position because you believe the truth. Just as long as there is a soul to save in all the world you want to press yourselves to the Source of all light and power that you may save these souls. You do not care to have an earthly, worldly mold upon your experience. You have souls to save or to lose and you want a great deal more of Jesus brought into your lives, into your character, and into your experience. You can be a help and blessing to one another by being true in every position where you are, by feeling that you are God's representative upon the earth. . . .” TDG 95

“We may be taught by man to see the truth clearly, but God alone can teach the heart to receive the truth savingly, which is to receive the Words of eternal life into good and honest hearts. The Lord is waiting patiently to instruct every willing soul who will be taught. The fault is not with the willing Instructor, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, but it is with the learner who holds to his own impressions and ideas, and will not give up his human theories and come in humility to be taught. He will not allow his conscience and his heart to be educated, disciplined, and trained--worked as the husbandman works the earth, and as the architect constructs the building. . . .” TDG 112

“These words are important and solemn, and it would be profitable to us should we take them home with us, and search the Scriptures in reference to their true meaning. The hour of temptation is to come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth; and although we do not wish to make a time of trouble for ourselves, nor do we wish to groan over trials in the future, still we should be so closely connected with God that we shall not fall under the temptation when it does come. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God" (Isa. 50:10). TDG 114

“The Lord will raise up a standard for us against the enemy. We should believe that we have a helper in God, that we shall not be afraid, we shall not be filled with wonder and amazement; for we know that the God of Israel has been with His people from the very first--from the very infancy of this world God has been with His obedient children. We must show that we have confidence in God, and make it manifest to the world that we can trust Him because we believe in Him. His word is pledged that there shall no temptation come upon us, but that help shall be provided to sustain us. . . .” TDG 114

“Those who are sanctified through the truth will show that the truth has worked a reformation in their lives, that it is preparing them for translation into the heavenly world. But so long as pride and envy and evil surmising predominate in the life, Christ does not rule in the heart. His love is not in the soul.” TDG 118

“To those who obey, the Word of God is the tree of life. It is the word of salvation, received unto eternal life. Those who follow its teachings eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. On the effect which this word produces on us, depends our destiny for eternity. It possesses the elements necessary for the formation of a perfect character. The Christian is appointed to connect with God in such close relationship that his life is bound up with the life of Christ in the eternal life of God.” TDG 120
“Ellen G. White’s home in Australia, Sunnyside, was about a mile from the little village of Cooranbong in New South Wales. It was also about a twenty-minute walk from the Avondale school. It provided Ellen White with what she often spoke of as the most pleasant and comfortable living arrangements that she had ever had. She found the climate to be very favorable; she loved the country, and she loved the people. Her home was modest, but it provided a convenient place to live and work, with her women helpers around her. The several towns and villages within a thirty-mile radius provided easy contact with people of all classes, giving her an opportunity for personal ministry. This she cherished. She would have been pleased if she could have spent the rest of her life in Australia.”

– Ellen G. White Biography, Volume 5, Page 13 –