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COVER STORY:
The Betrayal of Christ
Recently I received a letter from a lady who had obtained her late father’s edition of Our Firm Foundation. She described her father as a “faithful Seventh-day Adventist”. In the issue of the magazine she received was the article comparing the myth of Dracula with the myth of Sunday keeping, as opposed to the keeping of the true Sabbath. She was apparently a Sunday keeper and was quite upset with the statement that Sunday was not the right day.

She called the Sabbath “that Jewish day of rest”, and indicated that Sunday was the correct day for the following two reasons: 1. Pentecost came after seven, seven-day weekly cycles, each cycle ending on the seventh-day Sabbath; so the fiftieth day, the day of Pentecost, would have been on a Sunday, or the first day of the week, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church. That, she said, was the day God’s church was formed, and thus Sunday would be the day of God’s church. 2. She next mentioned Paul’s meeting on the first day when Eutychus fell from the window—one of the first-day texts.

Her deceased father, being a faithful Seventh-day Adventist probably had many prayers go up for her, and I believe God works on our prayers even after we pass on to the grave.

Ellen White has said, “God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front, and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God’s means of provoking inquiry, and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber.” 5T, 453.

I have sent this lady two letters of several pages each covering the fact that the day was never changed by the Scriptures. I also included the poem written by Uriah Smith that is found in this issue of the magazine, It’s Jewish.

Prayerfully, each of our readers is well grounded in the Sabbath truth and can defend their position from the Scriptures as well as from history.

In this editorial I will not attempt to cover all the points that I sent in answer to the lady’s objections. I will cover a few of them with the hope that by so doing I will stimulate each of you who read this editorial to become well-versed in the defense of the Sabbath, as well as sharing the Sabbath truth with your friends and family.

I would strongly recommend that Uriah Smith’s poem, It’s Jewish, would either be copied or taken from the magazine and placed in your Bibles. I have had it in my Bible for many years.

It is interesting to me that out of ten commandments, one could be called Jewish because it was kept by the Jews. I am sure that the faithful Jews kept the other nine, but their keeping of them was not nearly as apparent. Therefore, no one refers to them as being “Jewish”.

Of course we know that Jesus, as Creator, gave us the Seventh-day Sabbath back at the time of Creation. See Gen. 2:2, 3. He blessed the seventh day and set it aside. And in the fourth commandment, not only is the word “Remember” inserted, but a reference back to the creation week is made. The Jews came long after creation week.

In Bible times the day began with the evening which was the dark part of the day. Paul most likely had a Sabbath meeting that carried into the evening, which was the beginning of the first day. It was mentioned at this point because of Eutychus falling from the window and the miracle of his restoration to life. Paul traveled on the next morning which would have still been the first day, which he wouldn’t have done on the Sabbath. There are Scriptures that show that Paul held meetings with both Jews and Gentiles on the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Catholic church admits the change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day at the council of Laodicea in 336 AD, many years after the death of Christ and the Apostles.

The doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath is founded on a solid base of the Scriptures and history.

I am praying for the daughter of a faithful Seventh-day Adventist. I would call for our readers to pray for her as well. God answers prayer!
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The narrative portions of the Holy Scriptures are full of striking biographies of those whose virtues are set before us as examples, or whose errors as warnings. We are led, as it were, into a Gallery of Portraits, drawn with faultless accuracy by a sunbeam.

The Ark of Bulrushes

A frail bark, indeed, this cradle of woven bulrushes, to bear so precious a freight! We read of the boat which carried Caesar and his fortunes; if we measure human greatness by the extent and durability of a man’s influence over his kind, the mighty Roman is dwarfed beside Moses, and his “fortunes” appear comparatively a thing of a day. Many ages have passed since Caesar exercised sway in the world; all that remains of him is a mighty name. Moses, who lived some fourteen hundred years before him, is still a living power on earth. The nation which Moses was the instrument of delivering reverence his laws to this day, while myriads of Christians, yea, all who to the latest time will study the Word of God, will honour Moses as a prophet, obey him as a teacher, and drink in wisdom from his inspired writings. Caesar raised a Babel structure of grandeur, cemented not with slime but with blood, and it has not left even a ruin behind it. The work of Moses, heaven-guided as he was, resembled more one of the everlasting hills which the Almighty Himself hath planted and made firm, from which flow, and to the end of time will flow, pure streams to fertilize earth, and which from age to age remain unchanged in their calm majestic beauty. Caesar was a great conqueror. Moses stands before us in dignity of a loftier kind; so glorious as deliverer, lawgiver, prophet, that we almost forget that he was a mighty conqueror also. Caesar climbed up to a point where a halo of fame shone around him. Moses soared high above it; the glory which beamed from his countenance was glory derived directly from God.

Think on the fears and hopes of Jochebed

Did the hopes of Jochebed venture to picture anything like this, as she laboured at forming this little ark, twining in and out every green bulrush with a prayer for her helpless babe? A scene of touching domestic interest rises before the imagination
as we think of the home of Amram the Levite, near the bank of the Nile, in these old, old days which the Scripture narratives bring so freshly before us. There is Jochebed, in a retired part of her dwelling, anxiously pursuing her labour of love, working and weeping, and praying as she works, trembling lest a cry from her hidden infant should betray the secret of his existence to any Egyptian ear. Perhaps little Aaron disturbs her ever and anon with innocent prattle, lisping in his childish simplicity dangerous questions which the mother knows not how to answer; while Miriam, the future prophetess, of an age to share her parent’s anxieties and guard their secret, watches to give notice of the approach of any stranger, her child-face already stamped with the impress of care too natural to one brought up in the house of bondage.

An ark of many prayers should be woven for each infant born

The story of Jochebed and her little ark of bulrushes seems to be one especially recorded for the comfort of mothers. Though in our peaceful land such perils as those which surrounded the cradle of Moses are unknown, yet every parent who watches by a baby boy may learn a lesson from the Israelite mother who, strong in faith, twined that green nest for her little darling. For every infant born into this world of danger and trouble an ark should be woven of many prayers. In two points of view we may regard every such infant as in a position not unlike that of Jochebed’s babe, when found by Pharaoh’s daughter in his little floating cradle. The child has been born to danger, and under the doom of death; he is redeemed, adopted, and may be destined to great usefulness and exalted honour. Should a mother’s eye rest on these pages, let her follow out with me a subject which can scarcely fail to be one of deep interest to her heart.

Guard your children with prayers

Your child, my Christian sister, has, like Moses, been born to danger and under the doom of death. You have transmitted to him a fallen nature; he has first opened his eyes to the light in a world of which Satan is the prince—that Pharaoh whose wages is death, that tyrant who seeks to destroy the babe whom you so tenderly love. You cannot keep your little one from all the perils and temptations which, if he live to manhood, will certainly surround him. You cannot prevent his being exposed to trials as perilous to his soul as the waters of the Nile were to the body of the infant Moses. What can you do to guard your child from dangers in which so many have perished? Like Jochebed, strong in faith, make him a little ark of your prayers.

As parents we can share in Jochebed’s hopes

And to turn to the brighter side of the subject—if you have to share Jochebed’s fears, may you not inherit her hopes also? It is no earthly princess, but the gracious Saviour Himself who has raised your child from his low estate, reversed his doom, adopted him as His own, and placed him as a little Christian in your arms with the words, “Take this child away, and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages.” The destiny which may await your babe, is one which is more great, more glorious, than your imagination can conceive. Can the human mind grasp all that is contained in the titles, “Member of Christ, child of God, inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven?” You are tending a future immortal being; a future seraph may be craddled in your arms! These soft lips, pressed so closely to your own, may hereafter utter words that shall influence the destiny of souls through the countless ages of eternity; to that mind, which can scarcely yet hold even the sweet assurance of a parent’s love, may be unfolded mysteries into which the angels desire to look.

Ask for your child grace to follow the Lord

If care and anxiety press on your soul when you think of what your child is—feeble, helpless, born to trouble as the sparks fly upward—there is deep rapture in the thought of what that child may be. Oh! Dedicate him now to his God; ask for him not fame, power, or wealth, not the riches of Egypt, but ask for him grace to follow the Lord fully, to choose “the reproach of Christ,” ask for him the spirit of humility, faith, and love, which was given to Jochebed’s favoured son. In view of the glorious destiny to which he is called, as well as of the perils which beset him, make him a little ark of your prayers.

An honoured woman was Jochebed, mother of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, all peculiarly favoured by God; and thrice blessed is every Christian parent, whether her offspring live for usefulness below, or be early taken to bliss above, who at the last day shall appear with an unbroken family before the Heavenly King! “Thou whose blood hath redeemed me and mine, and whose grace has preserved us—lo! Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given me!”
The Betrayal of Christ

I was carried down to the time when Jesus ate the Passover supper with His disciples. Satan had deceived Judas and led him to think that he was one of Christ’s true disciples; but his heart had ever been carnal. He had seen the mighty works of Jesus, he had been with Him through His ministry, and had yielded to the overpowering evidence that He was the Messiah; but Judas was close and covetous; he loved money. He complained in anger of the costly ointment poured upon Jesus. Mary loved her Lord. He had forgiven her sins, which were many, and had raised from the dead her much-loved brother, and she felt that nothing was too dear to bestow upon Jesus. The more precious the ointment, the better could she express her gratitude to her Saviour by devoting it to Him. Judas, as an excuse for his covetousness, urged that the ointment might have been sold and given to the poor. But it was not because he had any care for the poor; for he was selfish, and often appropriated to his own use that which was entrusted to his care to be given unto the poor. Judas had been inattentive to the comfort and even to the wants of Jesus, and to excuse his covetousness he often referred to the poor. This act of generosity on the part of Mary was a most cutting rebuke of his covetous disposition. The way was prepared for Satan’s temptation to find a ready reception in the heart of Judas.

The priests and rulers could see no safety for themselves if Jesus lived

The priests and rulers of the Jews hated Jesus; but multitudes thronged to listen to His words of wisdom and to witness His mighty works. The people were stirred with the deepest interest and anxiously followed Jesus to hear the instructions of this wonderful teacher. Many of the rulers believed on Him, but dared not confess their faith lest they should be put out of the synagogue. The priests and elders decided that something must be done to draw the attention of the people from Jesus. They feared that all men would believe on Him. They could see no safety for themselves. They must lose their position or put Jesus to death. And after they should put Him to death, there would still be those who were living monuments of His power. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, and they
feared that if they should kill Jesus, Lazarus would testify of His mighty power. The people were flocking to see him who was raised from the dead, and the rulers determined to slay Lazarus also, and put down the excitement. Then they would turn the people to the traditions and doctrines of men, to tithe mint and rue, and again have influence over them. They agreed to take Jesus when He was alone; for if they should attempt to take Him in a crowd, when the minds of the people were all interested in Him, they would be stoned.

Judas offered to betray Jesus for a few pieces of silver

Judas knew how anxious they were to obtain Jesus and offered to betray Him to the chief priests and elders for a few pieces of silver. His love of money led him to agree to betray his Lord into the hands of His bitterest enemies. Satan was working directly through Judas, and in the midst of the impressive scene of the last supper, the traitor was devising plans to betray his Master. Jesus sorrowfully told His disciples that all of them would be offended because of Him that night. But Peter ardently affirmed that although all others should be offended because of Him, he would not be offended. Jesus said to Peter: “Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Luke 22:31, 32.

With strong cries and weeping, Jesus prayed to His Father

I beheld Jesus in the garden with His disciples. In deep sorrow He bade them watch and pray, lest they should enter into temptation. He knew that their faith was to be tried, and their hopes disappointed, and that they would need all the strength which they could obtain by close watching and fervent prayer. With strong cries and weeping, Jesus prayed, “Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done.” The Son of God prayed in agony. Great drops of blood gathered upon His face and fell to the ground. Angels were hovering over the place, witnessing the scene, but only one was commissioned to go and strengthen the Son of God in His agony. There was no joy in heaven. The angels cast their crowns and harps from them and with the deepest interest silently watched Jesus. They wished to surround the Son of God, but the commanding angels suffered them not, lest, as they should behold His betrayal, they should deliver Him; for the plan had been laid, and it must be fulfilled.

Jesus manifested His power as a witness that He could deliver Himself from their hands, if He so chose

After Jesus had prayed, He came to His disciples; but they were sleeping. In that dreadful hour He had not the
sympathy and prayers of even His disciples. Peter, who was so zealous a short time before, was heavy with sleep. Jesus reminded him of his positive declarations and said to him, “What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?” Three times the Son of God prayed in agony. Then Judas, with his band of armed men, appeared. He approached his Master as usual, to salute Him. The band surrounded Jesus; but there He manifested His divine power, as He said, “Whom seek ye?” “I am He.” They fell backward to the ground. Jesus made this inquiry that they might witness His power and have evidence that He could deliver Himself from their hands if He would.

Jesus allowed Himself to be led away by His enemies

The disciples began to hope as they saw the multitude with their staves and swords fall so quickly. As they arose and again surrounded the Son of God, Peter drew his sword and smote a servant of the high priest and cut off an ear. Jesus bade him to put up the sword, saying, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall present give Me more than twelve legions of angels?” I saw that as these words were spoken, the countenances of the angels were animated with hope. They wished then and there to surround their Commander and disperse that angry mob. But again sadness settled upon them, as Jesus added, “But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” The hearts of the disciples also sank in despair and bitter disappointment, as Jesus suffered Himself to be led away by His enemies.

Every insult and cruelty imposed upon Jesus was recorded by the angels

The disciples feared for their own lives, and they all forsook Him and fled. Jesus was left alone in the hands of the murderous mob. Oh, what a triumph of Satan then! And what sadness and sorrow with the angels of God! Many companies of holy angels, each with a tall commanding angel at their head, were sent to witness the scene. They were to record every insult and cruelty imposed upon the Son of God, and to register every pang of anguish which Jesus should suffer; for the very men who joined in this dreadful scene are to see it all again in living characters.

From Early Writings, 168
When we present God’s holy law,
And arguments from Scripture draw,
Objectors say, to pick a flaw,
“It’s Jewish.”

Though at the first Jehovah blessed
And sanctified His day of rest,
The same belief is still expressed,
“It’s Jewish!”

Though not with Jewish rites, which passed,
But with the moral law ’twas classed,
Which must exist while time shall last,
“It’s Jewish.”

If from the Bible we present
The Sabbath’s meaning and intent,
This answers every argument—
“It’s Jewish.”

Though the disciples, Luke and Paul,
Continue still this rest to call
The “Sabbath day,” this answers all:
“It’s Jewish.”

They love the day of man’s invention,
But if Jehovah’s day we mention,
This puts an end to all contention:
“It’s Jewish.”

O ye who thus God’s day abuse,
Simply because ’twas kept by Jews,
The Saviour, too, you must refuse—
He’s Jewish.

The Scriptures, then, we may expect
For the same reason you’ll reject;
For if you will but recollect,
They’re Jewish.

Thus the apostles, too, must fall;
For Andrew, Peter, James and Paul,
Thomas and Matthew, John and all
Were Jewish.

So to your helpless state resign
Yourself in wretchedness to pine;
Salvation, surely you’ll decline—
It’s Jewish.
Zechariah was an Old Testament prophet that had several short dreams or visions. He was a young man who had a real burden for his people. Zechariah was born in Babylonian captivity. He had come of age when the Lord had determined that the Jews had suffered enough and had finally learned what they needed to grasp... that departing from the Lord is not the direction they want to go.

Seventy years it took to make that point. “Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?” Zech. 1:12.

Seventy years, basically, a lifetime. “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” Ps. 90:10.

**Can you imagine it taking 70 years to finish punishing your child?**

Can you imagine it taking 70 years to finally get the point? I’d like to dwell on that just for a moment.

So often in Bible study, we can read right over very relevant and important points that the Lord has given to us in His word. Can you imagine waiting 70 years to finish the punishment of your child, or children? You know how your Mom or Dad would say, “This is going to hurt me more than it will hurt you”?

No child has ever believed that, of course. No, not until they have had their own. Then they feel the pain in their hearts for their children that only a parent can know and only a parent can suffer.

**What will it take to get through to them?**

When we have to punish our children, we suffer right along with them. We don’t want to punish, but sometimes, it is the only way to get them to correct their course. We hate punishing our children, don’t we? No normal parent wants to do anything to their children to cause them any pain or suffering. And to cause them suffering for any length of time is worse yet. If we can make the point through a stern talking to, or a swat on the rear, or a removal of some joy or liberty for a day or two, we are relieved.

Try to put yourself in God’s position of a seventy-year long punishment. We can’t conceive it.

If you’ve ever thought, “What is it going to take to get through to him or her”, you might not want to know the answer... seventy years maybe.

Even after 70 years, only a remnant learned their lesson

But finally, the 70 years comes to an end and the Lord has seen that it has had the impact it needed to have. Not by any stretch did it have the impact on everyone. As a matter of fact, it was just a “remnant” that learned their lesson. Of all the people that were taken captive to Babylon, and of all the people that were born there, in captivity, like Zechariah, only 42,360 Jews returned.

“Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city,” Ezra 2:1. And then the Bible gives an entire list of tribal heads and how many people came with them. Then we are given the final, or total number... “The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore,” Ezra 2:64. We don’t know the exact number that was taken to Babylon or how many were born there or died there, but the Bible says that it was a remnant that returned.
Finally, there is good news

Again, try to imagine seventy years of punishment and only a few of your children responded favorably. We can hardly comprehend it. But finally, the punishment is over and the children are released from captivity and they get to come home. They are so happy and elated to be back where they belong. They want to leave the past behind and look to the future. Can’t you imagine it? Everybody’s joyous and singing and planning for the future. And Zechariah has been given a vision that said Zerubbabel would finish the building of the temple. It’s good news all around. Not only are they released from punishment but they have been promised that the Lord will be with them in the restoration project they are on. They will be victorious. They will be successful. They will have the Lord’s blessing.

The most dangerous juncture comes during victory

Now… everything is going to be alright. And this is their most dangerous juncture, or point of concern. This is when they have to be the most careful. And this is so important for us as well. When we have just been signally blessed by the Lord, we are many times assailed by the devil to take liberties because of those blessings. When we are in trouble, we know we have messed up and we are careful. But when the Lord is giving us what we want and we are riding high in His goodness and grace, this is when the devil attacks.

We have to stay on the ready. We have to be like the soldier who never leaves his post… especially after a victorious battle.

As a matter of fact, I just saw on the news where a soccer game was going on and the player kicked the ball and hit the bar above the goal, and the goalie was so excited that the man missed that he tore off to his team to celebrate their victory, only to find that the ball had come down and rolled into the goal. And the commentator noted that this had happened before!

God gave Zechariah another vision

In the very heat of victory, there is danger of failing! God knew this could, and would, be a problem. So, He gave Zechariah another vision. Not a long, drawn out diatribe to discourage and dishearten, just a quick reminder that they must be exceedingly careful here. You see, if the devil can’t make you quit serving God when you are punished, then he will wait until you are released from punishment and then whisper that you are free to do as you want now. He wants to destroy us… never forget that. If God is blessing us, and he can’t hurt us because of God’s protective care, then what does he have to do? He has to get us to come out from under that covering of blessing. See what I mean?

The devil’s only chance of success is to get us to turn from God

Balaam had this idea when Balak wanted him to curse the Israelites. The devil can’t do anything to those whom God has blessed, except as God allows it. If God says no… there is nothing the devil can do. God was blessing the Israelites. They were freed from their captivity and they were rebuilding their temple. God knows this is making the devil very, very wroth. God knows the only way the devil can hurt the Israelites’ success. The devil has to get them to turn away from God and commit sins again. This is the only chance the devil has. It is his only chance against us today as well.

That’s why all these stories have been left for us. We are supposed to read them and learn what the Israelites learned. God’s people today are supposed to understand what to do or not do from God’s people back then. And so God, in His infinite understanding and mercy, gave Zechariah another vision to help the people.

This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth

This vision was designed to prepare the people for the on slaughters of the devil. The devil would try to deceive, but God provides light
to unmask the deception. With this background, let’s now turn to Zechariah. We’ll read the entire vision… “Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and beheld a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.” Zech. 5:1-4.

The holy place is the same dimensions as the rolled-out scroll

That was the extent of the vision. Zechariah sees a roll, or a scroll, flying in the midst of heaven. This roll goes forth over the entire earth, meaning it is for everyone. No one is left out or is unaffected by this roll. And this roll, or scroll, is open and we are given the dimensions of the rolled-out scroll. Ten cubits by twenty cubits. This is important! A cubit is eighteen inches. What else in the Bible had the measurements of 15 feet by 30 feet? The tent sanctuary in the wilderness was 15 feet wide by 45 feet long. The most holy place was 15 feet wide by 15 feet long. The holy place, where the blood from the sacrificed victim was brought each day, was 15 feet wide by 30 feet long.

Remember, the people are just returning from Babylon and one of their main duties was to rebuild the temple. The temple that Solomon built, that they were rebuilding, was exactly twice the size of the tent tabernacle in the wilderness, so they knew exactly what the dimensions of the first tabernacle were. The 15’ X 30’ holy place was where sin was dealt with. The sin of a person was transferred onto the lamb that was slain, and the blood of the lamb was brought into the holy place. The sin was symbolically removed from the person and put in the holy place. This room with the dimensions of 15’ by 30’ was where sin went. Sin was dealt with in this room… this 15’ by 30’ room.

A scroll, or roll, of those dimensions might not mean much to us today, but it would not have been lost on the Israelites. In addition to the scroll being the identical size as the tent tabernacle holy place where all sins were brought, the scroll was called “the curse”. “Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth…” Zech. 5:3. Throughout the Bible, there are blessings and cursings pronounced. There are blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. And here is this scroll, identified as a curse, flying all over the world.

The Ten Commandment law is the curse of all law-breakers

Let’s look at what Paul considered a curse to us all…“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law…” Gal. 3:13. Paul understood that the law was a curse to us because we were all law-breakers. “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Gal. 3:10. It is not a curse to those who do not sin, but to every sinner, the law condemns us. We are condemned, or cursed by the law because of our disobedience.

Now, is there any other indication that this flying scroll might be the law, or the Ten Commandments? Let’s read the rest of Zechariah 5, verse 3… “Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.” This “curse” addresses stealing and swearing and says that those who do these things will be “cut off” according to it, meaning the curse. What in the Bible deals with stealing and swearing? The Ten Commandments.

To be “cut off” refers to transgressing God’s laws

By the way, the phrase, “cut off” is not something we hear a lot today,
but for the Israelites, it was a very common saying. Here are just a few of the many uses of the term…

“Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.” Ex. 31:14.

“For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.” Lev. 18:29.

“The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Ps. 34:16.

“But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.” Ps. 37:38.

“But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.” Prov. 2:22.

The Jews understood when they heard the idea of being “cut off” that it referred to transgressing God’s commands in some way. You see, God gives us all kinds of clues as to what He is referring to in this vision, but it is only for those who dig and search to know the truth.

The Ark of the Covenant, containing the Law, had been removed from the temple before it was destroyed

Now, why address the law and its continued validity to the returning Jews? Why make the point that the law is still binding and is still in force? Especially to the Jews who are rebuilding the temple?

Remember all of the furniture that went in the temple? The candlestick, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense. These were all in the Holy Place. What piece of furniture was in the Most Holy Place? The Ark of the Covenant. That ark was no longer in the Jews’ possession. The ark, containing the Ten Commandments, was removed before Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army came to Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. It has been missing ever since.

The literal tablets were gone, but the law was still in effect

And when the Jews returned to rebuild the temple, there was no ark and no commandments to put in the Most Holy Place. When the temple was rebuilt... the Most Holy Place was conspicuously empty. They no longer had the Ten Commandments. God was making a point that whether they had the literal tablets of stone for their temple or not, the Ten Commandments were still in force. And those laws, those commands, would search each person as if he or she were the only one on earth.

Let’s go back and read the last verse in this vision: “I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.” Zech. 5:3. The reference here is that there is writing on both sides of the scroll. What do we have in scripture that refers to swearing and stealing that is written on both sides?

“And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tablets of the testimony were in his hand: the tablets were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.” Ex. 32:15.

With all of these evidences, it seems clear to me that God was trying to make a point here with this vision. It was as if God was saying, “Just because you have been forgiven and cleansed and I am now blessing you, do not forget that there is still a law that needs to be kept.” The law still applies. The law has not been done away with.
there until everything is consumed. What would be consumed by the law would be sin, and anything connected to it. The law has not been done away with. Just because they no longer had the ark with the literal tablets of stone, God wanted there to be no doubt that His commands were still in effect.

That law will come personally to you. It will come into your very home… where you live… where you talk… where you act out your life. And it will stay until everything sinful is consumed.

**His Commands Are Still to Be obeyed**

By the way, this “stone and timber” was another reference that the Jews were well aware of. Leprosy was, and is, symbolic of sin. In the Jews’ day, if leprosy was found in the house, it could not be removed, the very house was dismantled, stone by stone and timber by timber, and was taken away from God’s people.

“Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: it is unclean. And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.” Lev. 14:44, 45.

Please remember, God was trying to make very clear that everything related to His commands was still to be obeyed and followed, regardless of whether they had the tablets of stone or not.

**God’s Grace Does Not Negate His Law**

God’s law could not be done away with simply because the tablets were missing. He knew that the devil would try to insinuate that the commandments of God were not binding anymore. Even though the Jews were just now being released from their punishment for breaking God’s commands, they would still be tempted to think that the law was void because the “law” was gone now. This has huge implications for us today. The devil has tried to palm off that same lie to us: “When we are forgiven, we don’t have to obey anymore.” “The law is not still binding.” “God doesn’t require that of Christians.” “We are now under grace.”

The Jews were gracefull y released from punishment and gracefully readmitted to their homeland and God gracefull y gave Zechariah a vision to point out that the law was not removed from them. God’s grace does not negate, or make of no effect, God’s law. The scroll of the law still flies today. The scroll of the law still searches us out in our personal space. The scroll of the law will stay with us until we are cleansed from our leprosy of sin… or until we are consumed.

**These Dreams and Visions Are for Our Understanding So That We May Not Be Deceived**

God is so good and so kind and so gracious to give us these dreams and visions and parables that we might not be deceived by the devil. Our Father loves us with an everlasting love. And He is pleading with us to understand the reality of our situation. “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.” Num. 14:18. Jesus wants us to come to Him and to get forgiveness and to receive power to keep His commands. But if we hold on to our sins… if we hold on to that leprosy… that scroll will consume us… stones, timbers and even the very mortar on the walls.

May God give us the Spirit’s wisdom and guidance to see through the devil’s deceptions is my prayer.
By R.F. Cottrell

1886

O solemn thought! and can it be the hour of judgment now is come,
Which soon must fix our destiny, and seal the sinner’s fearful doom?
Yes, it is so; the judgment hour is swiftly hastening to its close;
Then will the Judge, in mighty power, descend in vengeance on His foes.

He who came down to earth to die, an offering for the sins of men,
And then ascended up on high, and will ere-long return again,
Is standing now before the ark, and mercy seat, and cherubim,
To plead His blood for saints, and make the last remembrance of their sin.

The solemn moment is at hand when we who have His name confessed,
Each in his lot must singly stand, and pass the final, searching test.
Jesus! We hope in Thee alone; in mercy now upon us look,
Confess our names before the throne, and blot our sins from out Thy book.

O blessed Saviour! May we feel the full importance of this hour.
Inspire our hearts with holy zeal, and aid us by Thy Spirit’s power,
That we may, in Thy strength, be strong, and brave the conflict valiantly;
Then, on Mount Zion, join the song, and swell the notes of victory.
Spiritual Restoration

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all that therein is—the plants, the animals, and in particular, man. But He did not just create man. He, in His great love, created man in His own image—in form, feature and character. See The Great Controversy, 644. And throughout eternity man would have the ability, through God working in and through him, to develop the attributes of God. What an opportunity for man; what condescension on the part of God!

Satan’s purpose is to destroy God’s image in man

But man lost all this perfection at the Fall. Through sin the image of God in man was almost obliterated, and from that time onward “Evil, unrestrained grew stronger, while the appreciation and desire for good diminished. Men lost the image of God and received the impress of the demoniacal power by which they were controlled.” Ed. 76. Satan, in his hatred for God, brought about the Fall of man, and it has been his purpose and work to continue to destroy God’s image in man and replace it with his own image. See SDABC, vol.1, 1105.

The redemption plan is the central theme of the Bible

But God has a plan of restoration. And if we truly understand that plan, it will help us in our own Christian walk to avoid many of the pitfalls and winds of doctrine found in such variety and number in these last days as Satan seeks to hold us in his net. We must keep in mind that “The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God.” Ed. 125.

The great object of life is our restoration

The Godhead, even before the foundations of the earth were placed into position, devised a plan for the salvation of lost man. Ellen White tells us, “By sin the image of God in man has been marred and well nigh obliterated; it is the work of the gospel to restore that which has been lost; and we are to co-operate with the divine agency in this work.” 5T 743. “It was to restore [the image of God...
in man] that the plan of salvation was devised, and a life of probation was granted to man. To bring him back to the perfection in which he was first created is the great object of life – the object that underlies every other.” PP 595.

Do you comprehend that? The great object of life is our restoration to our pre-Fall condition. But our God will not force this result upon us. This fact is clear from Bible history from the time of the antediluvians down through the present. Our choice is involved. And it appears that only a very few finally make that choice in favor of God’s plan. Only eight passed through the waters of the Flood; they made a choice to be obedient to God.

**The governing power in man is his will**

“What we need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.” SC 47.

God will do the work in you if you will allow Him the opportunity through submission to Him, but it must be a day-by-day, moment-by-moment submission. Even some of the eight who came through the Flood did not maintain this surrender of their wills to God. Clearly, there is no such thing as “once saved, always saved”. And of course, the majority of the offspring of these eight people down through the ages lost their way and chose to remain on Satan’s ground. What tragedy!

**God’s plan of restoration is still intact**

But God has maintained a remnant, and His plan for the restoration of His image in those who consent and co-operate has remained intact. God has continued in every generation to woo man and to guide him by love, while never forcing his will to bring it into a right relationship with Him. And it remains true that “Man, who has defaced the image of God in his soul by a corrupt life, cannot by mere human effort, effect a radical change in himself. He must accept the provisions of the gospel; he must be reconciled to God through obedience to His law and faith in Jesus Christ. His life from thenceforth must be governed by a new principle. Through repentance, faith, and good works he may perfect a righteous character, and claim, through the merits of Christ, the privileges of the sons of God.” 4T 294. All emphasis supplied.

**In obedience, sin will become hateful to us**

Did you notice that obedience and good works, as well as faith and repentance, are part of this whole process of reconciliation and restoration? God will work in us if we surrender to Him and allow Him to do so, to perform His good works. “All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heartwork with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” DA 668.

And all this heartwork, again, has the purpose of restoring the image of God in each of our lives, and through us to encourage others to submit to God. “He [God] designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.” PK 16.

**Physical and spiritual restoration**

There is a biblical example of physical restoration that I wish to share with you to bring home in a greater sense the need of spiritual restoration in our lives. After the Babylonian captivity, there was a return to Jerusalem. Ellen White speaks of this return in the following words: “The work of restoration and reform carried on by the returned exiles, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, presents a picture of a work of spiritual restoration which is to be wrought in the closing days of this earth’s history…. The spiritual restoration of which the work carried forward in Nehemiah’s day was a symbol, is outlined in the words of Isaiah: ‘They shall build the old wastes, they shall
Every divine institution is to be restored

The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God’s law—the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard.

“In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored….God’s remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to co-operate with Him in building up the waste places. They are to be repairers of the paths to dwell in.” PK 677, 678. Emphasis supplied.

Every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God’s sight accounted precious

And why is obedience necessary? Why do the divine institutions need to be restored? What is God’s purpose? Again, God is ultimately seeking the restoration of His image in His people. “The lost coin, in the Saviour’s parable, though lying in the dirt and rubbish, was a piece of silver still. Its owner sought it because it was of value. So every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God’s sight accounted precious. As the coin bore the image and superscription of the reigning power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God. Though now marred and dim through the influence of sin, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul. God desires to recover that soul and to retrace upon it His own image in righteousness and holiness.” MH 163.

In the same way that the walls, the temple, and the city were to be restored physically as the exiles returned from their Babylonian captivity, God desires to restore in a spiritual sense, to those that are His, those qualities which were important before the Fall in building the character of man. It is through character development that God’s image will be restored. And we are assured in the Spirit of Prophecy, “The defaced image of God will be restored in humanity, and a family of believing saints will finally inherit the heavenly home.” DA 625.

It is important that we understand the areas in which these spiritual walls need to be rebuilt.

Diet reform is part of God’s restoration plan

“In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God’s original plan for man’s diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food….Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance and a vigor of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.” MH 295-296.

Ellen White has shown “that God is bringing His people back to His original design.” CDF 82. Will we pay attention? Will we truly submit our wills to God in the area of appetite? Will we only submit in those areas that do not cross our likes? Will we go just so far and no further? Or will we study the books, such as Counsels on Diet and Foods, and determine that by the power of God we will follow all of the inspired counsel contained therein? Temperance is the foundation of the Christian graces, for “It is impossible for those who indulge the appetite to attain to Christian perfection.” 2T 400.

“It is of great importance that individually we act well our part, and have an intelligent understanding of what we should eat and drink, and how we should live to preserve health. All are being proved to see whether they will accept the principles of health reform or follow a course of self-indulgence.” RH, Feb. 10, 1910.

God’s instruction goes beyond eliminating flesh foods from the diet

We will have clear minds only as we return to God’s original plan for maintaining the body. Only with clear minds can we truly understand other aspects of God’s program for restoring His character image in each of us. Our growth as God’s
end-time people does not stop with eliminating flesh foods from our diets. God’s instruction as given by His end-time prophet goes far beyond this recommendation, and here many historic Seventh-day Adventists fail to follow all the light we have been given. For example, there is counsel regarding overeating, even of wholesome food. There is counsel about the number of meals a day which best maintain a healthy body; about eating between meals and late at night; about foods which cause irritability to the nerve and stomach and dullness of the brain, and which bring on disease, such as foods rich in fats, sugar, and refined and spicy foods. Cheese and other dairy products, baking powder, vinegar, coffee, tea, and many other specific items of diet are discussed in Counsels on Diet and Foods. Other important health principles are given, including the drinking of plenty of pure water, getting adequate exercise out-of-doors; and rest, cleanliness of the home, purity and simplicity in the life, and trust in the healing and sustaining power of God as He works through these laws of healthful living.

**Christ-centered Bible study will restore the image of God in the soul**

God wants to see a restored relationship between man and the Godhead, in particular at this time with Jesus. But in order for this ideal to be reached, we must spend the time necessary daily studying God’s Word. “The education to be secured by searching the Scriptures is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation. Such an education will restore the image of God in the soul. It will strengthen and fortify the mind against temptation, and fit the learner to become a co-worker with Christ in His mission of mercy to the world. It will make him a member of the heavenly family, and prepare him to share the inheritance of the saints in light.” COL 42, 43.

**The Word destroys the natural, earthly nature**

“By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His Word, they find that it is spirit and life. The Word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven.” DA 391.

“The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will re-create the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine.” 8T 289.

**Satan has brought man into collision with God**

“Sin has marred the divine image in man. Through Christ this may be restored, but it is only through earnest prayer and the conquest of self that we can become partakers of the divine nature…

“The true toilers in the Lord’s vineyard will be men of prayer, of faith, of self-denial—men who hold in restraint the natural appetites and passions. These will in their own lives give evidence of the power of the truth which they present to others; and their labors will not be without effect.” GW 80.

“The less you follow natural inclinations, the better it will be for yourself and for others. The natural inclinations have been perverted, the natural powers misapplied. Satan has brought man into collision with God. He works continually to destroy the divine image in man. Therefore we must place a restraint on our words and actions.” MYP 68.

**This is the work of redemption**

Brothers and sisters, it must be very clear by now that God wants to build up the old waste places in your lives; He wants to rebuild the walls. Satan will continually seek to destroy all that God wants to do. The choice is yours. Will you let God restore His image in you? Will you allow Him to bring you back to the perfection in which man was originally created? Will you allow Him to promote the development of body, mind and soul that the divine purpose in your creation might be realized? This is the work of redemption. This is the great object in your life. May it be brought to pass as you submit fully and trustingly to God and allow Him to control your Christian walk.

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By Meade MacGuire

Editor’s Note: This is number 6 in a series of several articles written for the Review and Herald from June 3 to August 12, 1943. They are very pertinent for today!

We have stated several times in these studies that there are certain definite conditions upon which the Lord has promised to give the latter rain. God is waiting for us to meet those conditions, and until we do so, we are delaying the coming of the Saviour. In view of these tremendous facts, we can see the paramount importance of studying carefully what the Lord has revealed on this subject. Here are some of the statements in which the conditions are tersely set forth.

**OUR CHARACTERS MUST BE SPOTLESS**

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

**THE EARLY RAIN CAUSES THE SEED TO SPRING UP AND GROW**

Whenever there is a special interest manifested in the truth and a large number of people eagerly study and accept it, either in heathen lands or at home, some immediately talk of this as the latter rain. They seem to forget that it is the early rain that causes the seed to spring up and grow, and the latter rain comes at the close of the harvest to bring it to perfection. There have been, and doubtless will continue to be, wonderful miracles of healing and deliverance under the early rain.

**TODAY YOU MUST HAVE YOUR VESSEL PURIFIED**

“Today you are to give yourselves to God that He may make of you vessels unto honor, and meet for His service. Today you are to give yourself to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. Today you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work today to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” RH March 22, 1892.

**WE MUST HAVE VICTORY OVER EVERY WRONG WORD AND ACTION**

“I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary, through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully.... “I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing,’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and every wrong word and action.” EW 71.
hearts, with fasting and weeping and mourning. We do not understand that it is the fasting and weeping that brings the results, but they indicate that we are awake and realize our desperate need, and like Jacob, we are determined to hold on to God until we have complete deliverance. This experience is described graphically by the messenger of the Lord.

ANGELS OF GOD WILL HASTEN TO THOSE WHO STRUGGLED TO RESIST EVIL

“I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle….

“As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts, and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud.

The angels of God left these, and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones. I saw angels of God hastening to the assistance of all who were struggling with all their power to resist the evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But His angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.” EW 269 & 270.

STRAIGHT TESTIMONY CAUSES THE SHAKING

Here it is plainly indicated that those who do not participate in the revival God is calling for—the deep heart searching and crying to Him for deliverance from all sin—will not continue with God’s people, and this is called “the shaking”.

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shone that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.” EW 270.

WE MUST COME UP TO EVERY POINT AND STAND EVERY TEST

When the church of Christ fully meet His requirements and reach out by faith, the latter rain falls upon all who have “come up to every point, and stood every test” to fit them for the closing work. The Lord gives us a wonderful picture of His people at that time.

“My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy.

SOME WILL BE SHAKEN OUT AND LEFT BY THE WAY

“The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.” EW 271.

THE DOOR OF MERCY IS STILL OPEN

How many of us today have loved ones who profess the truth, yet have no living connection with the Saviour. We need to plead and agonize with God, not only for ourselves but for those who we know will soon be shaken out unless they awake and cry to Him before it is too late. May God help us to be in earnest now while the door of mercy is still open.
By Mrs. E. G. White

Text: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20.

**There is only one truth**

We are thankful that we have a sure word of prophecy, so that none of us need be deceived. We know that there are heresies and fables in our world at the present time, and we want to know what is truth. It becomes us to search carefully for ourselves that we may gain this knowledge. We cannot do this with a mere reading of the Scriptures, but we must compare scripture with scripture. We must search the Scriptures for ourselves, so that we shall not be led astray; and while many may be led astray because there are all kinds of doctrines in our world, there is one truth. Many may come to you and tell you that they have the truth, but it is your privilege to search the Scriptures for yourself. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” We must be acquainted with the Scriptures ourselves, that we may understand the true reason of the hope that is within us.

**It is not enough to merely read**

The apostle tells us that we are to give to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear. “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” It is not enough to merely read, but the word of God must enter into our hearts and our understanding, in order that we may be established in the blessed truth. If we should neglect to search the Scriptures for ourselves, that we may know what is truth, then if we are led astray, we are accountable for it. We must search the Scriptures carefully, so that we will know every condition that the Lord has given us; and if we have minds of limited capacity, by diligently searching the word of God we may become mighty in the Scriptures, and may explain them to others.

**The harvest is great, but the laborers are few**

Every church that shall be raised up in this kingdom should be educated in regard to this truth. “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.” The teachers that shall present the truth, cannot stand by you to see that you do not embrace the errors that are flooding our land; but if you
are established in the Scriptures, you will feel the responsibility and will search the Scriptures, for yourselves, so that you may be a help to others. Now, the small churches, although they are but few, may be a power for the truth. Every one should feel that a solemn responsibility rests upon him to build up his little church in the most holy faith. The very fact that there are only a few, should cause every individual member to seek most earnestly for a living connection with God; because the giving of the truth to those around you depends upon the influence that you exert.

**Compare the light you have received with scriptures**

Christ has said, “Ye are the light of the world;” therefore you must put forth every effort to let that light shine. The only way for you to know that you have the true light from heaven, is to compare the light you have received with the Scriptures. Joshua 1:8, 9. Now, Joshua was to take the position of Moses and lead the children of Israel in council. And there was a warfare before them, if they were to drive the intruders out of the land. Joshua was to carry the Spirit of the Lord with him in all he should do. And he was to carry this Spirit with him by being obedient to all of God’s requirements. He was to meditate day and night, that he might know that he was doing God’s will. You will meet, as I have, with people who profess to be sanctified, holy. Now, there is a bewitching influence carried with this doctrine. They will state to you wonderful exercises of mind, to show you that the Lord is leading them and teaching them. Then how can you tell but that the Lord is leading them? Well, there is a test: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

**People may claim to have great faith in Jesus, but cannot tell what is truth**

If it stirs up the enmity of the human heart when the Lord, the great Jehovah, is mentioned, you may know the person has no connection with God. People may claim that they have great faith in Jesus, and that there is nothing you can do but that Christ will do for you. Now, when Christ shall call forth the dead, it depends wholly upon your course of action whether you have a resurrection to life eternal, or a resurrection to damnation. Thus they get these truths all mixed with error, and they cannot tell what is truth; and if asked to sit down and search the Scriptures with you, to see what saith the Lord, I never knew a case but the answer was that they had no need to search the Scriptures, for the Lord told them what to do.

**Christ has warned us to beware of false prophets**

The voice of God is speaking to us through his word, and there are many voices that we will hear; but Christ has said we should beware of them who will say, Here is Christ or there is Christ. Then how shall we know that they have not the truth, unless we bring everything to the Scriptures? Christ has warned us to beware of false prophets who will come to us in his name, saying that they are Christ. Now, if you should take the position that it is not important for you to understand the Scriptures for yourselves, you will be in danger of being led away with these doctrines. Christ has said that there will be a company who in the day of retributive judgment will say, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?” But Christ will say, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
The truth will be seen in our characters

Now, we want to understand what sin is; that it is the transgression of God's law. This is the only definition given in the Scriptures. Therefore we see that those who claim to be led of God, and go right away from him and his law, do not search the Scriptures. But the Lord will lead his people; for he says that his sheep will follow if they hear his voice, but a stranger will they not follow. Then it becomes us to thoroughly understand the Scriptures. And we will not have to inquire whether others have the truth; for it will be seen in their characters.

The only safety for us is to trust in God

You are not to be discouraged or faint-hearted. The word was given to Joshua, “Be strong, and of a good courage;” for there is a great work before you. And his success depended upon his obedience to God. When the tempter comes in to distract you, if your mind is filled with the Scriptures, you will say, I cannot do this evil and sin against the Lord. Joseph was enabled to resist temptation because he made God his refuge. He exclaimed, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” He trusted in God, and his soul was protected; and this is the only safety for us.

Weave the understanding of scripture into your daily life

Whoever of you shall enter a missionary field to do something for the Master, should be thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures. If you understand them yourselves, then you can lead others to a knowledge of them. There is more to do than just to give discourses in the desk. Every one of you should draw nigh to God, that he may draw nigh to you. And you may believe that you will have success and victory, if you take hold of the work humbly and in the fear of God. But there is no safety for you unless you understand what saith the Scriptures, and carry this out, and weave it into your daily life and experience. Carry it with you wherever you go. Thus you will be fortified against the delusions that are filling the world at the present time, and will obtain the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.

RH, April 3, 1888

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.
ACROSS
1. Ellen White was born in
3. Any lack of conformity to the law of God
4. Prophet from Tekoa
5. A person seen in heaven in Ellen White’s vision
6. He came under the wall of Babylon
9. Ellen White’s description of heaven convinced him she was a prophet
11. Ellen White’s song writing nephew
15. J.N. Andrews sent in 1874 as foreign missionary to
17. A priest that returned from Babylon to Jerusalem
18. Ellen White’s mother’s name
19. Ellen White’s father’s name
21. He left potatoes in ground expecting soon return of the Lord
22. The encouraging pastor in Ellen Harmon’s early years
23. Began colporteur work in Indies in 1889
24. Exclamation of Christ on the cross
26. James White’s illness in 1865

DOWN
2. In 1850 EGW moved from Oswego, NY to
3. Satan posed as a
4. Wicked king of Israel with a wicked wife
7. First introduced our pioneers to the Sabbath
8. First Sabbath-keeping Adventist minister in North America
10. Garden
12. Father of Miriam
13. Missionary ship built in 1890 for South Pacific
14. Kingdoms in Scripture are often described as
16. The church of Ellen White’s parents
18. Father of Jezebel
20. God’s people overcome by the blood of the
23. Boat
25. Isaiah’s father

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the July 2011 issue of Our Firm Foundation
Health Gem

DIET AND DISEASE PART 4 - Plant Foods vs. Animal Foods Cont'd

Last month we talked about some of the acid-forming foods and what additional effects they have on the body (other than bringing the pH down). Keep in mind we do need SOME acid in our body to balance out the pH, but which foods are best? We talked about heart disease and how different acid-forming foods affected it. This month we’ll continue on in the same fashion, and so we’re gonna jump right in, starting with diabetes.

Diabetes

On the American Diabetes Association website, they list data from the 2007 National Diabetes Fact Sheet (the most recent year for which data is available). It states that: “23.6 million children and adults in the United States—7.8% of the population—have diabetes.” And another “57 million people have pre-diabetes”. (1)

On that same website, they give more startling diabetes statistics:

• “1.6 million new cases of diabetes are diagnosed in people aged 20 years and older each year.
• Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults aged 20–74 years.
• Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, accounting for 44% of new cases in 2005.
• Adults with diabetes have heart disease death rates about 2 to 4 times higher than adults without diabetes.
• The risk for stroke is 2 to 4 times higher among people with diabetes.
• About 60% to 70% of people with diabetes have mild to severe forms of nervous system damage.
• More than 60% of non-traumatic lower-limb amputations occur in people with diabetes.
• Total costs of diagnosed diabetes in the United States in 2007: $174 billion
• Factoring in the additional costs of undiagnosed diabetes, pre-diabetes, and gestational diabetes brings the total cost of diabetes in the United States in 2007 to $218 billion.” (2)

They may even be able to return their blood glucose levels to the normal range.” – It goes on to say: “While the DPP also showed that some medications may delay the development of diabetes, diet and exercise worked better. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5-10% reduction in body weight, produced a 58% reduction in diabetes.” (3)

Did you hear that? Do you need to read that again? That wasn’t a typo. Just changing their diet (losing weight) and exercise habits – no dangerous heart attack-causing drugs - and there was an unbelievable 58% reduction. If there was a drug out there that worked that well, it would be hailed as a miracle cure!

Ok, so losing some weight helped reduce the chances of diabetes. Let’s think back on the list we gave you from the pH talk and the different foods that were acid forming. Almost all of the foods that were acid-forming but not plant based, i.e., soft drinks, sugar, candy, meat, dairy, etc. - all cause you to gain. Fruits, grains, vegetables, herbs, and a moderate amount of nuts - the acid-forming plant foods - all cause you to lose! It’s treatable through diet and lifestyle choices. In fact, on that same website, the American Diabetes Association says themselves: “The good news is that the recently completed Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) study conclusively showed that people with pre-diabetes can prevent the development of type 2 diabetes by making changes in their diet and increasing their level of physical activity. They may even be able to return their blood glucose levels to the normal range.” – It goes on to say: “While the DPP also showed that some medications may delay the development of diabetes, diet and exercise worked better. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5-10% reduction in body weight, produced a 58% reduction in diabetes.” (3)

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like we’re seeing a pattern here...

Ok, let’s look at some of the foods one by one starting with the NON-plant (animal based) acid-forming foods and see if there is an association with diabetes.

Diabetes And Non-Plant (animal-based) Acid-Forming Foods

1.) Red Meat: A study from the American Diabetes Association states “Over an average of 8.8 years, we evaluated 37,309 participants in the Women’s Health Study aged ≥45 years who were free of cardiovascular disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes and completed… food frequency questionnaires in 1993. RESULTS—During 326,876 person-years of follow-up, we documented 1,558 incident cases of type 2 diabetes. After adjusting for age, BMI, total energy intake, exercise, alcohol intake, cigarette smoking, and family history of diabetes, we found positive associations between intakes of red meat and processed meat and type 2 diabetes. Meaning it appears that those foods **increase** your risk for diabetes.

Then, they go on to adjust for other foods including some minerals, fiber, etc. and the results were STILL significant!

The study goes on to say that total cholesterol (cholesterol comes from meat foods), animal protein (obviously protein from animals), and heme iron (heme iron is the iron found in the hemoglobin and myoglobin of foods such as meat, poultry, and fish) are all 3 “significantly associated with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes” – meaning it’s not just the cholesterol, but even the protein and the iron in meat that are associated with a higher risk of diabetes.

And another note about the “heme iron”: while it’s true it is 2-3 times more absorbable than nonheme iron (from plant sources), that doesn’t mean it’s better; in case you ever hear someone saying that the iron in meat is “better” than the iron in plants. Here you can see that just because it’s “more absorbable” doesn’t mean it’s “better” – this kind of iron is associated with a higher risk of diabetes.

Ok, back to the quote: “CONCLUSIONS — Our data indicate that higher consumption of total red meat, especially various processed meats, may increase risk of developing type 2 diabetes in women.” (5)

All right, so far we’ve been dealing with animal foods, but what about the other acid-forming foods?

2.) Soft Drinks/Soda: “Scientists and non-scientists have observed that high consumption of soft drinks and other sweetened beverages is often noted in people who are either obese, or who develop type 2 diabetes, or who suffer from both. To determine if this was simply an anecdotal connection or something that could lead to a measurable increase in risk, these researchers decided to analyze all of the studies that examined the chances of contracting type 2 diabetes as a result of the regular consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. What did the research show? The authors found and combined eight studies that enrolled a total of more than 310,000 subjects, more than 15,000 of whom developed diabetes, thus allowing a comparison of soft-drink consumption in new diabetics and people who did not develop the disease. The key finding was that drinking an average of a single sugar-sweetened beverage on a daily basis increased the risk of becoming diabetic by **25 per cent.**” (6)

Oh my goodness! Talk about dangerous!! We already discussed how acidic sodas are, but look at this. Only ONE drink on a daily basis can increase the risk by 25%. You’d think they would put warning labels on sodas just like they put on tobacco: “This product may cause you to lose feeling in your hands and feet, go blind, get body parts amputated, etc.”
Diabetes and Acid-Forming Plant Foods

1.) Whole Grains and Legumes: UC Davis, one of the nation’s top public research universities, emphasizes research supporting the role of fiber in preventing diabetes. Fiber is present only in plant foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads, cereals and legumes. For diabetes prevention, UC Davis endocrinologist Pamela T. Prescott recommends aiming for a level of 20 to 35 gm per day of fiber, about double the amount in the average American diet. The American Diabetics Association recommends 40 grams per day of fiber for people who already have diabetes.

So here we have another acid-forming plant food that not only does NOT contribute to diabetes, but also helps prevent it!

2.) Whole Grains and Legumes: According to The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) “The traditional approach to diabetes focuses on limiting refined sugars and foods that release sugars during digestion—starches, breads, fruits, pasta, etc. With carbohydrates reduced, the diet may contain an unhealthful amount of fat and protein. So diabetes experts have taken care to limit fats—especially saturated fats that can raise cholesterol levels—and to limit protein for people with impaired kidney function. Newer treatment programs drastically reduce meats, high-fat dairy products, and oils. At the same time, they increase grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables. One study found that 21 of 23 patients on oral medications and 13 of 17 patients on insulin were able to get off of their medications after (only) 26 days on a near-vegetarian diet and exercise program. During two- and three-year follow-ups, most people with diabetes treated with this regimen have retained their gains. The dietary changes are simple, but profound, and they work. Low-fat, vegetarian diets are ideal for people with diabetes.” (7)

So almost every person eating grains and legumes (acid-forming) along with fruits and veggies—a “near-vegetarian” diet, were able to get off of their medication after less than one month—simply by changing the foods that they ate.

3.) Whole Grains and Legumes: A 2006 study, conducted by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine with the George Washington University and the University of Toronto, looked at the health benefits of a low-fat, unrefined, vegan diet (excluding all animal products) in people with type 2 diabetes. Portions of vegetables, grains, fruits, and legumes were unlimited. The vegan diet group was compared with a group following a diet based on American Diabetes Association (ADA) guidelines. The results of this 22-week study were astounding:

• “43 percent of the vegan group and 26 percent of the ADA group reduced their diabetes medications. Among those whose medications remained constant, the vegan group lowered hemoglobin A1C, an index of long-term blood glucose control, by 1.2 points, three times the change in the ADA group.
• The vegan group lost an average of about 13 pounds, compared with only about 9 pounds in the ADA group.
• Among those participants who didn’t change their lipid-lowering medications, the vegan group also had more substantial decreases in their total and LDL cholesterol levels compared to the ADA group.
• This study illustrates that a plant-based diet can dramatically improve the health of people with diabetes.” (8)

What about nuts? Often people think of nuts as being “bad” since they are high in fat. Yet you need some fat, and nuts are a great source of vegan protein; so how do they affect diabetes?

4.) Walnuts—A WebMD study states, “Incorporating a handful of walnuts into a healthy diet may help people with type 2 diabetes improve their cholesterol levels and reduce their risk of heart disease, a new study suggests. Researchers found including walnuts as part of a balanced, low-fat diet helped people with diabetes increase their “good” HDL cholesterol levels while lowering their “bad” LDL cholesterol levels. (9)

Wow! Not only did it decrease their risk of heart disease, but it also raised good cholesterol and lowered bad cholesterol! Now remember from the beginning, diabetics are 2-4 times more likely to die from heart disease than non-diabetics. So incorporating walnuts into the daily diet is a great way to help prevent that (not to mention the other health benefits you will receive!).

I don’t know about you, but if I knew I needed to add a few “acid-
forming” foods to my diet, I'd be reaching for the walnuts and whole grains to protect my body against diabetes!

But there's more! 😊

1.) Blueberries - A recent study at the University of Michigan suggests that blueberries can help to cut the risk of diabetes and heart disease by helping to eliminate belly fat. In the study, scientists gave obese rats a diet, which contained blueberry powder and noted a decrease in abdominal fat and cholesterol, and improved glucose control regardless of how healthy the diet was otherwise. Rats who were given a low-fat diet as well as the blueberry powder experienced weight loss in addition to decreased belly fat and cholesterol and an increase in glucose control. (10)

2.) Oatmeal and Beans – James W. Anderson, M.D. and his colleagues have studied the importance of high-fiber diets extensively since 1976, especially those containing oat fiber or beans. Dr. Anderson is the Chief of Medical Service, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Lexington, Ky. Their studies have shown that fiber (remember, fiber is only found in plant foods) is useful in treating diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity, and in reducing cholesterol levels. Dr. Anderson has determined that high-fiber diets lower insulin requirements by 25 to 50 percent for patients with Type I (insulin-dependent) diabetes mellitus, while improving glycemic control. He added that high-fiber diets offer even greater benefits to Type II patients, those who are not insulin dependent. “With intensive treatment using high-fiber diets, we have discontinued insulin therapy in more than 80 percent of the lean or obese patients we have treated,” Dr. Anderson said. “And using high-fiber diets, we have discontinued therapy with sulfonylureas* in almost 90 percent of the Type II diabetic patients we have treated. Others have also documented the beneficial effect of high-fiber diets for Type II diabetic patients.” (11)

So here with a high fiber diet—especially containing oat fiber and beans—even type 1 diabetics were able to lower their insulin requirements substantially! In addition, the vast majority of type 2s were able to get off of medication and even insulin! That is just too cool for words! Now we have grains, nuts, fruits, legumes—all specifically acid forming—all beneficial for a chronic disease—diabetes. But let’s go on. What about other diseases? What about cancer? All that and more—next month! Find out how the different acid forming foods encourage or discourage the growth of cancer. As always, if you have any health questions, call our health line at 309-343-5853. God bless!

References:
2. Et al.
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**Feature Product**

**Bitter Melon Plus**

**Why is Bitter Melon Plus so effective?**

- To date, nearly 100 scientific studies have demonstrated the blood sugar-lowering effect of bitter melon, the primary ingredient in Bitter Melon Plus. This fruit has shown the ability to enhance cells’ uptake of glucose, to promote insulin release, and to enhance the effects of insulin.
- In numerous studies, at least three different groups of components found in bitter melon have clinically demonstrated hypoglycemic (blood sugar-lowering) properties.
- A study published in 1999 examined bitter melon’s effect on 100 people with type 2 diabetes. On two days, researchers tested the participants’ blood sugar levels in a fasting state and after drinking glucose. The first day, nothing unusual was done. The second day, participants took 500-1000 mg. of bitter melon extract. That day, researchers found that 86 percent of the participants experienced an average of a 14 percent drop in blood sugar BOTH after fasting and after drinking glucose than on the day prior when none was taken.

**Our Bitter Melon Plus with bitter melon can also help:**

- Fight and slow the growth of certain cancers
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- Prevent or improve symptoms of bacterial infections such as Staphylococcus, Streptococcus, and Salmonella
- Improve digestion

**FACT:** Rich in iron, bitter melon has twice the beta carotene of broccoli, twice the calcium of spinach, twice the potassium of bananas, and contains vitamins B1, B2, B3, and C, phosphorus, and dietary fiber.

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*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.*

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**STUDIES:**

- Bitter melon has shown to be good for the liver and has been scientifically proven to contain insulin, act as an anti-tumor agent, and inhibit HIV-1 infection.
- In test tube studies, a protein in bitter melon called AP-30 kills viruses and slows the growth of some cancer cells.
- In some studies, bitter melon has even been shown to reduce total cholesterol.

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“Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on May 11 woke to a new day in the life of their strife-torn, fast shrinking 2.1 million member denomination….Effective July 10, gone will be the explicit language in the church’s ordination standards that require pastors ‘to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman….or chastity in singleness’….It opens the door for liberal-controlled presbyteries to ordain non-celibate gays and lesbians.”

“The PCUSA joins three other troubled mainline denominations that have voted to accept open gays and lesbians as clergy: The United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”

END TIME PERSPECTIVE: “As it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But that same day 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.” Luke 17:28-30.

“Sodomitish Impurity. Oh, how disgusted is God with the tame, lifeless, Christless efforts made by some of those who profess to be His servants! God’s work must be carried forward strongly and upward. This cannot be done unless the sensuality that corrupts the whole man is separated from the religious experience. This work must be done.” TSB 119.

“Church members need to fast and pray, striving earnestly to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Not one particle of Sodomitish impurity will escape the wrath of God at the execution of the judgment. Those who do not repent of and forsake all uncleanness will fall with the wicked. Those who become members of the royal family and form God’s kingdom in the earth made new, will be saints, not sinners. Isaiah 30:1-3, 8-16.” TSB 119.

“Those who have had great light and have disregarded it stand in a worse position than those who have not been given so many advantages. They exalt themselves, but not the Lord. The punishment inflicted on human beings will in every case be proportionate to the dishonor they have brought on God. Many, by a course of self-indulgence, have put Christ to open shame.”--Letter 159, 1901.

“Basest Passions of the Human Heart. Indulgence in unlawful things has become a power to deprave mankind, to dwarf the mind and to pervert the faculties. Just such a state of things as exists today existed before the flood and before the destruction of Sodom. Dissipation is on the increase in our world….But the most terrible part of the evil is that it is practiced under the garb of sanctity. Our youth will be defiled, their thoughts degraded, and their souls polluted unless they are barricaded with the truth.”--Letter 1, 1875.

“Sodomitish practices which brought the judgment of God upon the world, and caused it to be deluged with water, and which caused Sodom to be destroyed by fire, are fast increasing. We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world, depart from all iniquity.”--RH Nov. 10, 1884.

“The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today--not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man. If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.”--5T 218.

Editor’s Note: Because of the increase of Protestant churches that are opening their pulpits to people who openly practice the sins today that were the reason for destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, I have included several statements that point out the end for the people who follow and allow these practices.
God is Love is a lovely little book by G.E. Fifield that Ellen White included in her bedside reading. It is available at the Hope International Bookstore for $10.99 + S/H, paperback, 143 pages. Here is a peak at this timeless treasure:

"God is love. These three words of only nine letters contain a revelation of God greater than men or angels will ever be able fully to fathom. In fact, to know more of their meaning, to be constantly learning more of their meaning, will be the work and the wisdom, the pleasure and the poetry, of the redeemed throughout eternity. To comprehend the meaning of these words is to know God and Jesus Christ, and to know these is life eternal."