THE ONE WHO LIVED BY DISOBEDIENCE

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Recently, I have been rereading the Desire of Ages. Even though I have read this book several times before, it always proves a blessing. It draws my heart more to Jesus each time. It makes me want to reach out to others. It makes me want to have others read this book.

On page 458 of the Desire of Ages appear the following words: “God does not compel men to give up their unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice and compared written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophesies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean.

“Many are deceived today in the same way were the Jews.”

Prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean.

“Many are deceived today in the same way were the Jews. Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment and commit their souls to their leaders….We must bring every man’s teaching to the test of Scripture.”

The Bible contains 66 Books written by 44 authors. It was written over a 1500 year period of time. The evidence or the Bible’s inspiration includes prophecy. Some of the prophecies that we have speak of the second coming—Jesus’ disciples ask, “What shall be the sign of your coming and the end of the world?” Matthew 24:3.

Notice Jesus’ answer. He first warns, “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Matt. 24:4,5.

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: See that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Matt. 24:6. If you read magazines such as Time, every month you will read of wars and rumors of war.

It goes on, “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places.” Matt. 24:7.

“All these are the beginning of sorrows.” Matt. 24:8. …. “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” verse 12.

And then two key verses: “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” verse 13. “And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” verse 14.

God would that all would be saved, but He knows that He can save only those who are safe to be saved—that sin will not raise its ugly head a second time. Nahum 1:9 reads as follows: “What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.”

God does not want us to be machines that work the way He wants them to because He controls their mechanism. He knows that love can only exist where free will exists. We must have the right to choose for ourselves.

In Christ’s Object Lessons at page 69, Ellen White writes, “Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

“It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.”

Peter speaks to us in 2 Peter 3:10-12: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God…”

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

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About Hope International:
We are a lay ministry founded, supported, and operated by Seventh-day Adventists to assist God's Church in the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel in every way that is consistent with the principles of God as revealed in Inspiration.

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Haman wanted to destroy all the Jews throughout the kingdom

Haman plays a central role in the rest of the Book of Esther. Haman has a new position of authority and he is being revered by all the rest of the people... except for Mordecai, the Jew. “And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.” Esther 3:2.

We are not told why Mordecai did not reverence him or bow to him... what we are told is that Haman was a hater of the Jews. You see, Haman did not want to make just Mordecai suffer for not bowing to him, but he wanted the entire nation of the Jews to be destroyed. “And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.” Esther 3:6.

Haman was even willing to finance the eradication of the Jews himself

Now certainly, he wanted all the Jews destroyed to make Mordecai pay, but doesn’t it seem a little unreasonable for Haman to want to kill every Jew in Persia’s 127 provinces? I mean, there are a lot of Jews spread throughout the empire of Persia. Why kill all of them? I mean, what is up with that? And he was personally invested in their destruction as well... “If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.” Esther 3:9. He was so enraged by Mordecai and his lack of reverence, that he is willing to pay for their destruction himself! Why does this man hate Mordecai and all the rest of the Jews so badly? He is upset that he is not being shown the reverence he wants, but really... kill an entire...
nation over it? What in the world? So I tried to find out if there was more to the story.

**Agag was the king of the Amalekites**

Remember who his father was and what his nationality was? “After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite...” Esther 3:1. Haman was an Agagite. He was an Agag-ite. Haman was a descendant of Agag. There are only two other Books in the Bible that reference Agag. In Numbers, there is a prophecy that says Judah, or the Jews, will be more powerful than Agag... “He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.” Num. 24:7. Interestingly, this is a prophecy from Balaam who tried to curse the Israelites and ended up blessing them. This verse was part of his blessing upon the Jews.

But the other verses are all in 1 Samuel, chapter 15. And here is where it gets really interesting to me. Agag was an Amalekite. Agag was the king of the Amalekites. And the Amalekites tried to destroy God's people when they came up out of Egypt... “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.” 1 Sam. 15: 2,3.

**God sees the end from the beginning**

God said to destroy all of Amalek. Let none of them survive. Kill all of the people... men, women and children and even suckling babies. And this is where many people have trouble with what God did back in the Old Testament. People cannot imagine killing small children and babies, as a rule. We do not know the heart, so we cannot comprehend taking the life of someone small. We think there may be endless opportunities for that life.

How can we end that life, not knowing how it may turn out?

The difference with God, is that He does know. God sees the end from the beginning. “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:” 1sa. 46:9,10.

God knows how each of us will act and respond to His word and what we will do with our lives. He knows if we will choose evil or good. And everyone is given opportunity to choose which side they will be on. And those who are too young to choose, He has already looked into the future and knows their path. God can make these decisions... because He knows the outcome of each life. When God told Saul to destroy all the Amalekites, He already knew how each life would end up. He had seen each life, the courses they would take and what effect they would have on this earth. And He determined, they needed to be removed from the earth... all of them.

**God is too loving to allow evil to continue**

And it is amazing to me to see how people react to that. They are tempted by the devil to feel God has somehow been unjust. God didn't give them a chance. God didn't let their life play out so they could choose. But He did let it play out. He watched it in the future and decided, “There is no reason to keep them on this planet any longer.” He knew they would be evil and that continually. Just like before the flood... “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil
Our Firm Foundation

continually.” Gen. 6:5. Once someone has decided to be evil continually, why keep them on this earth? All evil people do is make others suffer, while they suffer themselves. God is too loving to let that happen indefinitely. So, He determines to make a change - take the ones who still want to do good, and remove the rest. That’s what He did at the flood, and that’s what He will do with fire very soon. Those who don’t want to serve Him will get their choice. God knows what He is doing. How could He not... He knows everything. We get to look at what God has done for us and made for us and given to us and we are to decide if we trust Him. Again, we get to chose what we will do.

Saul and the people spared Agag

God told Saul to destroy the Amalekites… ALL the Amalekites. He said to destroy everything they possessed; all the animals… everything.

But what does Saul do? “But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.” 1 Sam. 15:9. God said to utterly destroy them. But Saul and the people “would NOT utterly destroy them”. Yet, they felt they had done enough to consider themselves as obedient. “And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.” 1 Sam. 15:13. “I have performed the commandment of the Lord.” “I have done what God said to do.” “I have obeyed.” Is that right? Did He obey? “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” James: 2:10.

Saul did not fully obey God

Most people have this same attitude today. They will obey God in everything… that they agree with. If they feel one part of what God said is a little unreasonable, (in their minds) then they will choose which parts of what He said they will obey, while choosing not to do the rest. Really? How did that work out for Saul? Saul kept Agag, the king, because in his day, when a king defeated another king, you would parade the defeated king through the streets of your capitol to show him off. It was a pride thing. Speaking of Saul, Sister White said in...Patriarchs and Prophets, 629, “Ambitious to heighten the honor of his triumphal return by the presence of a royal captive, Saul ventured to imitate the customs of the nations around him and spared Agag, the fierce and warlike king of the Amalekites.” Ambitious to heighten the honor of HIS return…Saul was not ambitious to heighten God’s honor, but his own. Yet, he tells Samuel, “I have obeyed; I have performed God’s commandment.” No, he didn’t. He obeyed the part he wanted to, or was willing to. When it came to what HE
wanted… he did not obey God's, but his OWN will.  Now here is where it gets really interesting. God said to destroy them all. Saul decided not to. Saul spared Agag. Agag was an Agagite. From Moab, came Moabites. From Ammon, came Ammonites. From Agag, came Agagites. As far as we knew, Saul killed everyone but Agag.

But did he?

Let’s go back to our original story in Esther…Esther 3:1, “After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite...” *The what??* Haman was an Agagite. How can there be an Agagite if all of Agag's family was dead? Somehow, somewhere, someone survived. Saul did NOT kill them all. Someone escaped. And what was the result? Haman, the Agagite, wants to kill all of God's people.

God knows from the beginning how everything turns out

A couple of things come to mind here. Number one, it sure seems like God knew what He was doing when He said to destroy them all, doesn’t it?

God saw through the stream of time what would result if Haman was allowed to be. He knew that Haman would try to destroy ALL God’s children. God did not want the Jews to have to experience that. God never intended for there to be a decree made to kill all the Jews. But because Saul did not obey, Haman gets to be born and rises to the position to make this possible. God saw this and wanted to prevent it.

As with so many things God tells us to do or not to do, He wants us to avoid a lot of pain and suffering. We think it is not that big a deal to do ALL that God says to do. We don’t have to follow EVERY particular. Saul did almost everything God said to do… wasn’t that enough? Apparently not. When God says to do something, there is a very good reason, whether we understand it or not. We don’t think like God does. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my thoughts,” *Isa. 55:8.*

We can’t think like God does for many reasons, but a big one is that we cannot see the future. He knows what each one of us will do. He knows how everything turns out. He can tell if this person or that person, who is yet in the womb, will live for Him, or try to destroy His people. “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee...” *Jer. 1:5.*

Our thoughts are not like God’s thoughts

God knows all about everyone on this earth… what they will do… what they will refuse to do… everything. Since He knows all, why don’t we try listening to Him? The devil tempts us to think that WE know, but we really don’t. Our thoughts are nothing like God’s. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” *Isa. 55:9.* God is not saying that to embarrass us or to make us feel small. He is saying that He has the ability
to see everything and He has a different perspective than we do. Of course, our thoughts would be different if we could see the end from the beginning. Of course, our ways would be guided so much better if we knew everything.

These histories are put in the scripture to help us see that we serve a God who is worthy of our love and devotion. When Saul was told to kill all the Amalekites, he should have done it. There are always reasons that God says to do what He says. Now the entire Jewish nation is at risk. “And the letters were sent by posts into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day…”

Esther 3:13. Destroy, kill and cause to perish…Satan wanted to make sure that all of God’s people would be removed from this earth.

He is still trying to do that. And God is still trying to get us to see that when He says to do something, that we should do it.

The Book of Esther is a reminder of what happens when God is not obeyed. Whether it is to do something, or quit doing something, God’s will should be done because His will is to make us as happy as we can be. He is our loving, heavenly Father and wants only the best for us. It is, and always has been, the devil who tries to make us feel God is against us.

Against us? How could He be against us when He gave us His only Son to die for us? One look at the cross should dispel any doubt as to God’s love for us. Let’s obey Him not because we have to, but because we are beginning to realize that He knows what He’s doing. His thoughts really are higher than ours. His ways really are different from ours. He really does know the end from the beginning.

Unlike God, we cannot know the end from the beginning

And to finish this message, I’d like to tell another story…not from the Bible, but from our own history. Speaking of us not knowing how things turn out…about us not being able to see the end from the beginning…here is something I found interesting…

It’s a story about two women. Klara and Caterina. They are both pregnant. One is young…in her teens. She is not married. She had a quick, one-night stand and she doesn’t even know where the father is. She is alone. She does not want this child and is at the doctor, asking about the obvious. What should this doctor advise?

Klara is older…28. She, too, has come to a doctor because she has had 3 children already, and this is the fourth. All three of her other children have died from disease. One died at 31 months. The second at 16 months, and the last at just a few days. She is NOT alone. Her husband is with her. She told the doctor he was her second cousin, but actually is her uncle. She, too, does not want this child. She is seeking advice…they are both seeking advice. What do you say?

This isn’t so much about abortion as it is about knowing the end from the beginning. What might happen if the world is denied these children? What might they become?
What might they have created or built or ascended to? Who is wise enough to know what to do? Only God. Only God can look at the life of Agag or his son or his son’s son and know what would happen. We are clueless. We cannot know. Just like these two examples of women who do not want their children.

Two women, two children, two choices

Well, as the story plays out, both of them did make an impact on humanity in large ways. Caterina had Leo… well, that’s what his friends called him. His full name was Leonardo DaVinci. Leonardo was one of the most gifted artists and inventors in the world. He painted the ceiling of the Sistine chapel, one of the most famous paintings in the world today. He was the one who painted “The Last Supper”, the most reproduced painting of all time. He also painted the “Mona Lisa”, the most recognized painting in the world. He was a prolific inventor, and actually created the designs for the world’s first helicopter… in 1698! He lived to bless the world with original ideas for things like: tanks, solar power, adding machines, the double hull for boats, and automated bobbin winders for sewing machines. All this and much, much more… because he lived.

The second child… Klara’s child, too, made an impact on the world… but in a different way. He took singing lessons and sang in the church choir.

He was considering becoming a priest. He then wanted to go to school to become an artist and did fairly well selling his watercolors. But, his life took a turn after both his father and mother died and he ended up in a poorhouse. That’s when he developed his interest in politics. Two interests really… politics and the military. He grew up to be a soldier… and then a politician; a world leader, actually. He made an impact on the lives of literally millions and millions of people.

His name? Adolf Hitler.

Two women… two children… two choices. Who decides who lives and who dies? As humans, we cannot know. But God, able to see the end from the beginning, can, and does, know.

So, when HE says to do something, like destroy all the Amelekites, as in Agag’s day, He knows what He is doing. We can avoid a world of pain and suffering if we will just do what He says.

What do you think?

Maybe we should take Him at His word.

Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.
Our Strength
and Stay

O what can we have to lean on
When everything else gives way?
O where can we go in trial,
In the dark and gloomy day?

Some friends of our sunny weather
Forsake us when days are drear;
Then what shall we have to lean on,
O what can our spirits cheer?

There's a Friend that has proved dearer
Than ever a brother can,
The hope of a race of sinners—
‘Tis Jesus, the Son of man.

With one hand on the throne of heaven,
With the other he reacheth down
To strengthen and cheer the fainting,
And help them to win a crown.

—Minnie Embree-Parker
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These words were spoken by Christ just before his crucifixion, and were among his last to the disciples. He is not at this time thinking of the sufferings that lie before him, but of his disciples. How will they stand when they have not his personal presence with them? He comforts them with the assurance of his return: “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

Only through the Son of God can any soul make his way to the Father

Very simple are the words of the Saviour. They can not be misunderstood or misinterpreted. “And if I go and prepare a place for you,” he continues, “I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” For three years Christ had been educating his disciples in that way; yet Thomas said to him: “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

O that we all might understand these words for ourselves, and know that Christ is for us the way, the truth, and the life! Only through the Son of God can any soul make his way to the Father. Only he can remedy the injury that was wrought for man by the fall. “If ye had known me,” he declared, “ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.”

Had the disciples not paid attention to Jesus for the three years He was with them?

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.”

Christ came as the representative of the Father, and the works of the Father he was constantly doing. Had not the disciples for three years been beholding these works? Had they not seen the sick brought to him to receive healing, and had he not restored them to health? The needy of all classes had flocked to him in crowds, and he had ministered to all. They had seen him feed a multitude with a few small loaves and fishes, and as the food was passed from hand to hand, they had watched it multiply until there was more than enough for all. After five thousand men, besides women and children, had been fed, the Saviour gave the command, “Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost;” and they gathered up of that which was left twelve baskets full.
Even children and the most ignorant could understand the simple lessons Jesus taught

This is an object-lesson of the work that the Saviour desires to do through his followers. He wants us to take the blessed Word, to study it, and then to teach it in its simplicity. How simple Christ’s lessons were! Even the children could understand them. The people of his own nation, those who professed to believe in God, were greatly incensed against him because by the simplicity of his daily teachings he was removing the rubbish that was hiding the truth from the comprehension of the people. Even the most ignorant could take in the truths he taught, and be comforted and blessed thereby.

Mothers, hearing and seeing his words and works, desired that their children might come to him to be blessed. On one occasion one mother with her children left their home to find the Saviour. On the way they told others of their desire; and as they pursued their journey, mother after mother, with their little ones, joined the company, until, when they reached the place where the Saviour was, there was a little army of women and children who sought to reach his high command, and came to earth to take his place among humanity as a little child, to bear the test of temptation and trial from childhood to manhood. Greater than that of any other were the sufferings and trials he endured. Satan and his host were determined that Christ should not carry out his plan of sacrifice. If they could discourage Christ, and cause him to sin, the world would perish in its iniquity, and the cause of righteousness be lost. But Christ was working out the salvation of the human race, and he would not fail on a single point. He would make it possible for humanity to lay hold upon his divinity, and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Man does not need to be corrupted. May God help us to accept by faith the victory that has been won in our behalf, and make it ours.

The test of our love for God is in the keeping of His commandments

The Saviour continued: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” It was a path of suffering and temptation by which the Saviour went to his Father, and we may rejoice that he consented to travel such a path. Had he not, how could the world have been saved? By this he made it possible for us to be accepted with God. When we are in doubt and perplexity and difficulty, let us consider what the Son of God passed through that he might prepare for us a home in the kingdom of heaven. And today he stands by his Father’s throne to minister help to every soul who seeks him in sincerity for strength to overcome. He waits to bestow on all the power to do his will. He will accept the little children, blessing them as he blessed the
children in the days of his earthly ministry. Shall we not bring them to him? These little ones are to learn the lessons of God's Word, and be captivated by the simplicity of his truth. Let the labors of those who work for Christ's little ones be marked with the simplicity that was revealed in the words that fell from the Saviour's lips.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.” Here is the test of our love for God. Parents are to teach their children what these commandments are. We need missionary fervor in our homes, that we may bring the word of life before the members of our families, and lead them to seek a home in the kingdom of God. There will be no sickness there, no sorrow, no death. A life that measures with the life of God will be the reward of all who win that eternal home.

Simplicity of speech and simplicity of life are to be our goals

In view of all that lies before the believer, his piety should be “always abounding”. He should labor for souls with all his intelligence and powers. Not for eloquence and honor is he to strive, but for simplicity of life and simplicity of speech. Christ had no need to explain any word that he made use of. All were simple, and all were understood by the most simple. We need to let our faith take hold of Christ; we need to listen to his words, to seek to do his works. We need to take hold of the hope of immortality that will give us life everlasting in the kingdom of glory. To us the promise is, “The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” To the worldling the truth is too simple; he deems it unworthy of his attention. He does not see Christ in it. But how thankful should the believer be for these promises! I am thankful for the faith I have in God's Word. I claim his promises, saying, “You said it, Lord. You asked me to come to you. I come expecting you to help me and bless me.” And he proves the truth and the preciousness of his words: “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. . . . He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

We are to accept His word with the simplicity of little children

“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Consider the familiar relation Christ here brings to view as existing between the Father and his children. His presence and guardianship is an abiding thing. While we trust in Christ's saving power, all the arts and wiles of the fallen host can do nothing to harm us. Heavenly angels are constantly with us, guiding and protecting. God has ordained that we shall have his saving power with us, to enable us to do all his will.

Let us grasp the promises, and cherish them moment by moment. Let us believe that God means just what he says. If we will accept his word with the simplicity of little children, believing that he has given his life
that we might have everlasting life, we shall receive power to overcome.

“He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me. . . . Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.”

If we will walk in the fear of God, He will not fail us

I am very thankful for the privilege of speaking these words to you. I was present at the establishment of this institution (Paradise Valley Sanitarium). At that time I spoke to the workers here, presenting before them the way in which they might carry on their work intelligently. I spoke also to the patients, and I know that Jesus was present on these occasions. His blessing rested upon those assembled.

We must do all we can to help each other to gain eternal joy

I have said that if we seek to help and bless others, the Lord will let his blessing rest upon us, and I know that what I say is truth; for I have proved the Lord for many, many years. How long the Lord will permit me to speak and to labor for him I can not tell; but I have given my life to do his work, to study the blessed Word of God, and to pass it on to the people as the bread of life. It is possible that we shall never meet again on this earth; but let us remember that there is a grand meeting to take place ere long. Everlasting life is before us, and the city of God. Angels of God will be there. They will bid us welcome to the joys of heaven because we have kept the commandments of God. There there will be no more death, no sorrow, no sin. Let us do all we can to help one another to gain the eternal joys that are awaiting the redeemed. May God’s blessing rest upon his people in large measure, is my prayer.

RH, January 7, 1909

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.
There is no truth of Scripture to which so much prominence is given as that of the second coming of Christ. The New Testament is especially eloquent upon this subject, over three hundred references to it being found upon its pages.

There is a reason for this prominence. The coming of Christ is the consummation of the Christian’s hope; the event which changes the Christian’s experience from mortality to immortality, from the sorrows, labors, privations, and agonies of the present life, to the joys and everlasting felicities of the life to come.

Other hopes are set before us in the Scriptures; but the hope or the coming of Christ is the crowning hope of all, in that it ushers in all other hopes. Thus Paul, writing to Titus, represents Christians as ever “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13.

Christians should not only look for the appearing of Christ, but they should love to contemplate it.

What man was a more true and devoted follower of Christ than the Apostle Paul? To him, in life and in death, the coming of Christ was a joyful theme, a “blessed hope”. As he drew near to the end of his laborious life, and was soon to stand by the headman’s block, the thought of the coming of his divine Master filled all the chambers of his soul with gladness. Condemned to death by an unrighteous judge, he looked forward to the glad time when the righteous Judge would come to judge the world in righteousness. 2 Timothy 4:6-8. Like Abraham he believed that the Judge of all the earth would do right. Genesis 18:25.

This righteous judgment, so full of hope and promise to the children of God, brings to those who have slighted the gracious offers of salvation and have followed their own evil ways, no ray of hope, no joy, no blessedness, nothing but destruction. The heart that will not be moved to repentance by the love of God can be reached in no other way. God has no reserve power by which to save such.

The day of the Lord’s appearing will be one of terror and distress

Jesus declares that His coming will be to the wicked like the flood which destroyed the unbelieving and wicked antediluvians, who mocked Noah and rejected his message of warning. Luke 17:26, 27.

Says Paul: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

To the wicked, the day of the Lord’s appearing will be one of terror and distress. It is said of them in that day: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:15-17.

Jesus took on our human nature to give us the example of a sinless life

As Creator, the word of God as spoken by
Him, called the world into existence. As the great central figure of the plan of salvation, He was the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The gospel of Christ was the hope of the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, and He, in person, was the Leader of ancient Israel. He was the greatest Teacher that the world ever knew.

He became the Man of Sorrows on earth, taking the nature of man and living as a man, passing through all the experiences that man must meet, that He might be able to reach mankind in whatever condition they might be.

He bore the sins of the world in Gethsemane, and died on Calvary, that pardon might be made possible to all who would accept the offering made at so great cost. Raised from the dead on the third day, He made the great coming resurrection day possible. As our Mediator and Advocate He pleads His blood in behalf of the repenting sinner, and by it brings to him forgiveness, justification, and righteousness.

Christ will soon return to gather those who are prepared

As High Priest, He now presents His own sacrifice, His own blood, as a perfect atonement for the sins of His people on earth, and thus the claims of His Father's law are fully met, sinners are saved, and the justice of God vindicated.

But the time is very near when our Saviour will lay off His priestly garments, assume His kingly crown, put on His royal robes, and take to Himself the kingdom which He has redeemed from the power of the enemy. He is soon coming to earth to raise the righteous dead of all generations, change the faithful living from mortality to immortality, and with those redeemed by His great sacrifice, reign forever. To this great event the children of God have ever looked forward as the culmination of the hopes and desires of the ages.

Angels who escorted Jesus to heaven will return with him

When He comes, it will be the same One who once walked the earth a stranger; the same One who died on the cross for sinners; the same One who ascended to heaven in the sight of His astonished and sorrowful disciples. This same Jesus! Do you believe it? Jesus said, “I will come again.” The angel said, “This same Jesus” will come again, “in like manner as ye have seen Him go.” He went away bodily; He will return in the same manner. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16. He was borne away in a cloud; He will come in the same way. “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him.” Revelation 1:7. Angels escorted Him to heaven; they will also return with Him. “The Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.” Matthew 25:31.

But He will not come in His own glory alone. When He comes to receive to Himself His faithful ones, He will then appear in all the glory of heaven. He will “come in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.” Luke 9:26. His own glory is above the brightness of the sun. Acts 26:13. The glory of the
Father can be no less, and the glory of a single angel is described as follows:

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.” Revelation 10:1.

When Jesus comes as King, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of these resplendent beings, shining in all the glory of Himself and His Father, He will indeed be “wrapped in a blaze of boundless glory.”

He will appear as a King, wearing a crown of glory
How different such a coming from that witnessed at His first advent. He came then a stranger to His own professed people; He will come again to be “admired in all them that believe.” Then He came in weakness; now He comes in power to scatter His enemies. He was then a babe in Bethlehem’s manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lived to wear a crown of thorns; now He comes a King, wearing a crown of glory and attended by all the shining angels. Then He came to bear the burden of sin, to suffer and to die; now He comes without sin, nevermore to die, but bearing crowns of life for all His people. Thank God that this time—

“He comes not an infant in Bethlehem born,
He comes not to lie in a manger;
He comes not again to be treated
with scorn,
He comes not a shelterless stranger;
He comes not to Gethsemane,
To weep and sweat blood in
the garden;
He comes not to die on the tree,
To purchase for rebels a pardon;
Oh, no! glory, bright glory
environs Him now.”

We shall be like Him
And we shall see Him. What a thought! See Him as He is; He whose head and hairs are white like wool, as white as snow; whose eyes are as a flame of fire; whose feet are like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; whose voice is as the sound of many waters, and whose countenance is as the sun shineth in his strength. Revelation 1:14-17. But this is too much for our understanding. We must wait for the glad day of His actual coming, when our eyes may behold Him in all His splendor; for, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3:2.
There are certain stories in the Bible that have become so well-known that when we mention the person’s name, we automatically think of a particular event. When we say Noah, we think of the flood. We say Abraham, we think of Isaac. We say Joshua, we think of Jericho. When we say David, we think of Goliath. When we say Daniel, we think of the lions’ den. When we say Elijah, we think of the crisis on Mt. Carmel.

Carmel was important in the Old Testament for military and geopolitical reasons. Carmel is an enormous mountain by the seacoast overlooking the modern day city of Haifa in the Holy Land. From the top of Mount Carmel you have a commanding view in all directions. Carmel was important in the Old Testament for military and geopolitical reasons. Whoever held Mt. Carmel controlled the northern half of the nation. And whoever controlled the worship that took place on Carmel controlled the nation spiritually. The priests and the prophets of Baal knew that. That is why years earlier they had built an altar to Baal on top of Mount Carmel. We know from history that Baal worship was a particularly degrading religion. It was a bizarre mixture of idolatry, perverted sexuality and child sacrifice. The pagans believed Baal controlled the rising and the setting of the sun. He was also considered the god who brought forth the seasons, and the god who brought forth or withheld the rains. Because ancient Israel was an agricultural nation, Baal was an extremely powerful deity. Men and women who came to worship Baal would offer a sacrifice and then engage in some sort of sexual activity with the priests and priestesses. They believed that if you were joined physically to one of those priests or priestesses of Baal, the power of Baal would be transferred to you. Thus Baal worship appealed on one level to the mind, on another level to their economic well-being, and on a deeper level to the desires of the flesh.
Elijah visits Ahab with a warning from God

We should therefore not be surprised that even in Israel, a nation dedicated to the one true God, Baal worship became extremely popular. It grabbed the mind, the heart, the body and ultimately the soul. Under the reign of wicked king Ahab, Baal worship had virtually swept the northern kingdom. The worship of the one true God had been almost completely extinguished. It is against that backdrop that we read the story of Elijah, a mountain man whose name means “The Lord is my God.” 1 Kings 18:16-46.

One day without warning he appeared before Ahab, that wicked toad squatting on the throne of Israel. Elijah said to the king “I have come to you in the name of the living God, the God of Israel, before whom I stand. And I tell you there shall be no rain in Israel and even no dew until I give the word.” Having uttered those words by the power of Almighty God, Elijah was sent by the Lord to the brook Cherith where he stayed in hiding for a while. Eventually the Lord moved him to Sidonian territory, to the widow of Zarephath where the Bible records the miracle of the flour and the oil that did not run out and the miracle of the raising of the widow’s son. Meanwhile in the nation of Israel the famine set in. For more than three years there had been no rain. The ground turned brown and began to crack. The creeks dried up, the brooks disappeared, and the Jordan River became little more than a trickle. All across the land the crops were dying on the vine. Animals became carcasses lying in the fields.

Elijah is sent to visit Ahab a second time

Finally God tapped Elijah on the shoulder and said, “Go see Ahab again.” When the king and the prophet met the second time, the king asked, “Is that you, you trouble of Israel?” (v. 17). The word for trouble in the Hebrew means snake. You dirty snake. That’s what the king thought of God’s anointed prophet. Elijah turned the tables and said, “I have not made trouble for Israel, but you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the LORD’s commands and have followed the Baals.” (v. 18). Before Ahab could say anything else, Elijah said, “It’s time for the truth to come out. It’s time for the people to decide.” He said to the king, “Tell all the people of Israel to meet me at Carmel.”

“The command was issued by one who seemed to stand in the very presence of Jehovah; and Ahab obeyed at once, as if the prophet were a monarch and the king a subject. Swift messengers were sent throughout the kingdom with the summons to meet Elijah and the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth. In every town and village the people prepared to assemble on Carmel at the appointed time. As they journeyed toward the place, the hearts of many were filled with strange forebodings. Something unusual was about to happen; else why this summons to meet Elijah? What new calamity was about to fall upon the people and the land?” RH, September 18, 1913.

One man of God up against 850 false prophets

Elijah said, “Send 450 prophets of Baal, and send 400 priests of Asherah,” who was thought to be the female consort of Baal. That’s 850 false prophets versus one man of God. Before the drought, Mt. Carmel had been a place of beauty, its streams fed from never-failing springs, and its fertile slopes covered with fair flowers and flourishing groves. But now its beauty languished under a withering curse. The altars erected to the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth stood now in leafless groves. On the summit of one of the highest ridges, in sharp contrast with these, was the broken-down altar of Jehovah. Elijah was a man who was in touch with Almighty God. Upon the appointed day they met on top of Mt. Carmel. We pick up the story in verses 20-21. “So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.”

“Early on the morning of the
day appointed, the hosts of apostate Israel, in eager expectancy, gather near the top of the mountain. Jezebel’s prophets march up in opposing array. In regal pomp the king appears and takes his position at the head of the priests; and the idolaters shout his welcome. But there is apprehension in the hearts of the priests as they remember that at the word of the prophet, Israel for three years has been destitute of dew and rain. Some fearful crisis is at hand, they feel sure. The gods in whom they have trusted have been unable to prove Elijah a false prophet. To their frantic cries, their prayers, their tears, their humiliation, their revolting ceremonies, their costly and ceaseless sacrifices, the objects of their worship have been strangely indifferent.”

RH, September 18, 1913.

“But the people said nothing”

Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is god, follow him.” The most important part comes in the next sentence. “But the people said nothing.” Of all the things that plague modern Christianity perhaps this is the greatest. Spiritual indecision. Spiritual juggling. The inability of the people of God to make up our minds, to decide which side we’re really on, the inability of the modern Christians to decide between the true worship and false worship based on the true Biblical day of worship.

While Israel on Carmel doubt and hesitate, the voice of Elijah again breaks the silence. Elijah then proposed a simple experiment so the people would know which God was the true God. Elijah say, “I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and call ye on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.”

The prophets of Baal cut up a bull and laid the pieces on the wood, but Elijah would not let them set it on fire. “Ask Baal to light the fire for you.” He told the prophets of Baal and Asherah to do whatever they thought they needed to do in order to entice Baal to send fire from heaven. The prophets of Baal had hair down to their shoulders. When they danced, they would scream and beat their drums, and lower their bodies almost to the ground. They bowed to the ground to show their devotion to Baal. Remember that sexual immorality lay at the core of Baal worship. Think of wild screaming and various sexualized antics up on the mountain. They carried on for hours, with leaping and writhing and screaming, and with tearing of the hair and cutting of the flesh, they beseech their god to help them, calling out, “O Baal, answer us. Answer us.” Nothing happened.

There is no reply from Baal to the frantic and desperate maneuvers of his prophets

The morning passes, noon comes, and yet there is no evidence that Baal, whom the priests serve with frenzy and apparent sincerity, hears the cries of his deluded followers. There is no voice, no reply to their frantic prayers. The
sacrifice remains unconsumed. At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder! Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

Toward the end of the afternoon, in desperation the prophets of Baal took knives and swords and began cutting themselves as a kind of blood sacrifice to their false god. How desperate they were. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. Baal had utterly failed.

At last their voices hoarse with shouting, their garments stained with blood from self-inflicted wounds, the priests become desperate. With unabated excitement, they now mingle with their pleadings terrible cursings of their sun-god, and Elijah continues to watch intently; for he knows that if by any device the priests should succeed in kindling their altar-fire, he would instantly be torn in pieces.

At the appointed time, Elijah prepared the sacrifice - and doused it with water

Evening draws on. The prophets of Baal are weary, faint, confused. One suggests one thing, and another something else, until finally they cease their efforts. Their shrieks and curses no longer resound over Carmel. In despair they retire from the contest.

Verse 30 is perhaps the most important verse in the chapter. “Then Elijah said to all the people, ‘Come here to me.’ They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in ruins.”

Taking twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes, he rebuilt the altar of the Lord. This was a symbolic sign that the nation would now return to its true spiritual heritage. The timing is also significant. Elijah had rebuilt the altar late in the afternoon, about the time of the evening sacrifice. This was the time God had appointed, but Israel had been completely forgotten about it.

Now at the appointed hour for the evening sacrifice, he built the altar, dug a trench, and laid the wood in place. He cut up the bull, laid the pieces on the wood, and then told the people to soak the wood with four large jugs of water. Three times he ordered the water poured. Until that bull is soaking wet. Until the wood is soaking wet. Until the altar is soaking wet. Until there is so much water it fills the trench around the altar. By doing these radical things at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah was saying, “Our God is a covenant God. If we come back to him according to his Word, he will not turn us away. If we come back to him in his terms in the right way at the right time, he will come through for us.” Though the people had forgotten, God still was ready to keep his promise.

Elijah prays a simple, dignified prayer

So at the hour of sacrifice everything was ready. So Elijah steps forward and prays a very simple prayer: “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again” (vv. 36-37). On one side you have 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, and they have had more than 6 hours of screaming and yelling and whooping and cutting themselves, and all their prayers to their fake god. You have all that religiosity. And over on the other side you have one man, the mountain man, God’s man. When he prays, he prays for three things:

Hear me O LORD, hear me,
• So that they will know you are the true God.
• So that they will know I am your prophet and I am doing your will.
• So that the hearts of the people may be turned back to you.

Elijah’s only concern was for God, his word, his work, his glory, and God’s people. Lord, answer me. No screaming. No whooping, No hollering. No cutting of self. I am impressed by the simple dignity of it all.

Elijah’s sacrifice is immediately consumed by fire from heaven

By the way, the water wasn’t necessary. God could answer
without the water. God could answer in a rainstorm. God could answer in a snowstorm. God could answer at the bottom of a well. That wasn’t any problem for God. The water was just to convince the people that it was no trick, that it was the Lord God himself who answered.

No sooner is the prayer of Elijah ended than flames of fire, like brilliant flashes of lightning, descend from heaven upon the upreared altar, consuming the sacrifice, licking up the water in the trench, and consuming even the stones of the altar. The brilliancy of the blaze illumines the mountain and dazzles the eyes of the multitude. In the valleys below, where many are watching in anxious suspense the movements of those above, the descent of fire is clearly seen. All are amazed at the sight.

At last the people see how greatly they have dishonored God

The people on the mount prostrate themselves in awe before the unseen God. They dare not continue to look upon the heaven-sent fire. They fear that they themselves will be consumed; and convicted of their duty to acknowledge the God of Elijah as the God of their fathers, to whom they owe allegiance, they cry out together as with one voice, “The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.”

With startling distinctness the cry resounds over the mountain and echoes in the plain below. At last Israel is aroused, undeceived, penitent. At last the people see how greatly they have dishonored God. The character of Baal-worship, in contrast with the reasonable service required by the true God, stands fully revealed. They recognize God’s justice and mercy in withholding the dew and the rain until they have been brought to confess his name. They are ready now to admit that the God of Elijah is above every idol.

Elijah slays the idolatrous priests with his own hand

The priests of Baal witness with consternation the wonderful revelation of Jehovah’s power. Yet even in their discomfiture and in the presence of divine glory, they refuse to repent of their evil-doing. They would still remain the prophets of Baal. Thus they show themselves ripe for destruction. The anger of the people has already been aroused against these leaders in transgression, and when Elijah gives the command, “Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape,” they are ready to obey his word. They seize the priests, and take them to the brook Kishon, and there, with his own hand, Elijah slays these idolatrous priests, allowing none to live.

Power will come from God in answer to those who stand firm for His truths

The point of this whole story is really not about Elijah. He’s just the instrument through whom God works an incredible miracle. This is a story about God. It is a story that teaches us that we need to take up our stand for God even if it means standing alone for the truth of God.

If men are as devoted as Elijah was and possess the faith that he had, God will reveal Himself as He did then. The results that were seen then will again be seen. If we are faithful to stand for the truths of God, God is faithful to stand for us, He will send His angels to encamp around and deliver those who fear Him. Power will come from God in answer to those who stand firm for His truths.

Emmanuel Machakaire is a(n) SDA writer who is based in So. Africa. He enjoys studying, writing, and sharing Bible truths.
Recently, I ran across this quote I had jotted down inside of an old book a long time ago - “The preservation of health is a duty. Few seem conscious that there is such a thing as physical morality.” The author of these words was Herbert Spencer. I thought it was a pretty profound statement. “Physical morality”. Morality basically means being in line with standards of right conduct. Do we, as Seventh-day Adventists, even think of health in the same way as we think of morality? We should. Paul did in 1 Cor. 6:20 - “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Purchased by God at the ultimate price; He didn’t purchase just our spiritual side, but the whole package, which includes the physical part of our being. Our physical health is a big deal to God, and it should be to us. “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 1:2.

**Caring for the temple**

Imagine for a moment that you were a devoted Levite and had the responsibility for the care of the actual physical temple in Jerusalem, how would you have taken care of it? I believe that if you were a sincere believer and it was your responsibility to take care of that temple, you would probably do so with deep reverence, respect, and fear, knowing that it was the dwelling place of God. Do you give your body that same respect and reverent care? “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” 1 Cor. 6:19. Most of us have heard and recited that verse so many times that it has lost its meaning for us; you could say it has become Laodicean to us - lukewarm, almost meaningless, but we need to revisit it and take it to heart. Good health received a great deal of attention from our pioneers and our prophet, but somewhere along the way health reform has all but been dropped completely from our Sabbath services. When was the last time you heard a full sermon on our health message? Have you ever heard one? In these final days on this earth it is imperative that we rethink our attitudes toward health and educate ourselves in right principles because our very sanctification hinges on controlling our appetite - “We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification.” CCh 234. Look around - we desperately need mental improvement, and we need sanctification.
even more. “God has bought us, and He claims a throne in each heart. Our minds and bodies must be subordinated to Him, and the natural habits and appetites must be made subservient to the higher wants of the soul. But we can place no dependence upon ourselves in this work. We cannot with safety follow our own guidance. The Holy Spirit must renew and sanctify us. In God’s service there must be no halfway work.” AG 96. Brothers and sisters, we must bring ourselves into harmony with God’s health laws - not part of the way, not halfway, not even three quarters of the way - ALL the way.

**To render perfect service**

Our physical health is not a private matter, just between us and our dinner plates. We are forming our very characters at the dinner table, and what we make of ourselves through our physical habits affects our family, friends, and the world at large. “All should be very careful to preserve the body in the best condition of health, that they may render to God perfect service and do their duty in the family and in society.” CH 121. We cannot render a perfect service to anyone if we are sickly all the time and making no effort to improve. The very culture that we have contributed to and helped to form, works against us in this matter telling us we are just victims of circumstance, victims of poor ancestry, and we are helpless to change. God tells us just the opposite and we need to, we must, grab hold of this concept.

**Presenting our bodies**

Keeping yourself healthy is actually one aspect of holiness. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,...” Rom. 12:1. Present what? Your bodies. Look back to the Old Testament and what God had to say about the sacrifices. They were not allowed to sacrifice anything that had the slightest blemish. The best that they had was to be laid on the altar. Verse 2 goes on to caution us: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” Renew your mind about this matter of health, stop listening to this world telling you that your health is in the hands of someone else and turn to the only One who can help you. Renewing your mind involves clear thinking, and we cannot develop clear thinking if we are filling our minds and bodies with unhealthy substances - it is difficult to even refer to some of it as food.

**We must embrace health reform**

There is an expiration date on this matter, but it isn’t clearly printed on
the side of the box, or our bodies. Our date could be right now, this hour, this minute, and God isn’t kidding: “The Lord is about to punish the world for its iniquity. He is about to punish religious bodies for their rejection of the light and truth which has been given them. The great message, combining the first, second, and third angels’ messages, is to be given to the world. This is to be the burden of our work. Those who truly believe in Christ will openly conform to the law of Jehovah. The Sabbath is the sign between God and His people, and we are to make visible our conformity to the law of Jehovah by observing the Sabbath. It is to be the mark of distinction between God’s chosen people and the world. It means much to be true to God. This embraces health reform. It means that our diet must be simple, that we must be temperate in all things. The many varieties of food so often seen on tables is not necessary, but highly injurious. Mind and body are to be preserved in the best condition of health. Only those who have been trained in the knowledge and fear of God should be chosen to take responsibilities. Those who have been long in the truth, yet who cannot distinguish between the pure principles of righteousness and the principles of evil, whose understanding in regard to justice, mercy, and the love of God is beclouded, should be relieved of responsibility.” KC 105.

Being the head and not the tail

The man, Herbert Spencer, who I quoted in the first paragraph was not a Seventh-day Adventist; he wasn’t even a Christian. He was a nineteenth century philosopher, among many other things, including evolutionist who coined the phrase “survival of the fittest”, and according to Wikipedia he wrote about evolution even before Darwin did; so he was not someone we could consider a good example to follow. But I think we should borrow his term “physical morality” and keep it in our minds. We have a source, THE Source, of such higher instruction in these matters of duty involving our health, if we would just study, learn, apply, or “hearken”, as we are told.

“And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do [them]: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, [to] the right hand, or [to] the left, to go after other gods to serve them. Deut. 28:13,14.
You may already be familiar with Zinc as a support for your immune system, however, did you know that Zinc is an essential trace mineral and is one of the most abundant found in the body? Discover the wide variety of ways that Zinc may improve all aspects of your family’s health!

**Zinc Chelated**

**Why Chelated?**
Chelated zinc means that an amino acid is attached to the mineral to enhance its absorption into cells. Chelated zinc shows much improved levels of efficiency and effectiveness when compared to other types of zinc supplement.

**Zinc For Children:**
Zinc is a commonly ignored mineral in children who need help concentrating. Studies have shown an improvement in social behavior and children were less hyperactive and impulsive. Research conducted at the University of Toronto and published in the journal Neuron, revealed that zinc has a crucial role in regulating how neurons communicate with one another and could affect how memories are formed and how we learn.

**Random Facts:**
- 35% - 45% of adults age 60 and over are believed to not get enough zinc. 30% - 50% of alcoholics are zinc deficient, the egg won’t mature properly and ovulation will be impeded, causing infertility. Adequate zinc allows women to use estrogen and progesterone efficiently, supporting reproductive health and ensuring that estrogen does what it’s supposed to do in the body.
- Zinc is a critical mineral for the growth process of the oocyte or egg. If women are zinc deficient, the egg won’t mature properly and ovulation will be impeded, causing infertility. Adequate zinc allows women to use estrogen and progesterone efficiently, supporting reproductive health and ensuring that estrogen does what it’s supposed to do in the body.
- Zinc For Children: Zinc is a commonly ignored mineral in children who need help concentrating. Studies have shown an improvement in social behavior and children were less hyperactive and impulsive. Research conducted at the University of Toronto and published in the journal Neuron, revealed that zinc has a crucial role in regulating how neurons communicate with one another and could affect how memories are formed and how we learn.
- Zinc is an essential mineral found in every tissue of the body – 60% of the body’s zinc is found in the muscles that support your skeleton and 30% is in the bones. So, zinc plays an important part in keeping you upright. The remaining 10% is found in the teeth, hair, nails, skin, liver, leukocytes (white blood cells), prostate, sperm and testes.
- Consuming refined sugar requires zinc to metabolize, in turn, reducing zinc stores.
- Have you or someone you know been struggling with hearing loss? Zinc may be the answer to your prayers! Melvyn Werbach, M.D. found that zinc deficiency is associated with some types of hearing loss. Try Zinc today and hear what you’ve been missing!
- Scientists say animals suffering from a zinc deficiency must eat about 50% more food to gain the same weight as an animal supplied with sufficient zinc.
- **Zinc May Improve:**
  - **Eye Health** - It plays a vital role in bringing vitamin A from the liver to the retina in order to produce melanin, a protective pigment in the eyes. Zinc is highly concentrated in the eye, mostly in the retina and choroid, the vascular tissue layer lying under the retina.
  - **Skin Health** - Zinc is like a 24-hour, on-call skin mechanic! It helps repair damaged tissues and is essential for wounds. Without zinc, your body’s inside and outside repair time and possible health costs may go up!
  - **Respiratory Support** - Zinc is found in the mucous secretions of the respiratory system and on the surfaces of lungs and throat. It has an antimicrobial effect, so it helps to kill inhaled bacteria and viruses before they get chance to take hold! Zinc is also secreted in the saliva and the mucous membranes of the digestive system to kill any ingested invaders.
  - **Athletic Performance** - Adequate zinc directly affects athletic performance and strength development from training because it plays a primary role in anabolic hormone production.
  - **Male Reproductive Health** - Zinc is a critical mineral for robust testosterone levels, and the cells of the male prostate require a very high concentration of zinc to work optimally.
  - **Female Reproductive Health** - In women, zinc is involved in the growth process of the oocyte or egg. If women are zinc deficient, the egg won’t mature properly and ovulation will be impeded, causing infertility. Adequate zinc allows women to use estrogen and progesterone efficiently, supporting reproductive health and ensuring that estrogen does what it’s supposed to do in the body.
  - **Healthy Cell Growth and Immune System** - Ananda Prasad, a leading researcher in the field of zinc and health, notes that simply ensuring our zinc levels are adequate can help a number of the most severe health problems, especially unhealthy cell growth and poor immune function.
  - **Cardiovascular Health** - Zinc is vital to maintain the health of cardiovascular cells and the endothelium. The endothelium is the thin layer of cells that lines the blood vessels and plays a major role in circulation.
  - **Pancreas Support** - Zinc is needed for the healthy function of most hormones, including insulin.
  - **Antioxidant Effects** - Zinc is an excellent antioxidant. The purpose of an antioxidant is to get rid of free radicals that cause damage to cells in the body by bonding with them and neutralizing them.
  - **Detoxifying The Body of Heavy Metals** - The super antioxidant effects of zinc allow it to efficiently remove toxins from the body and keep them from building up in tissue and causing damage.
  - **Boost Brain Function** - Zinc plays an essential role in neurotransmitter function and helps maintain brain structure and health. It is necessary in the metabolism of melatonin, which regulates dopamine. Also, zinc is part of an enzyme that is necessary for the anabolism of fatty acids in the brain membrane. This is very important because a key part of supporting brain health and function is to ensure the membrane gets the nutrients it needs.
  - **Mood** - Dopamine production, which is partly regulated by zinc, is a chemical that boosts energy, mood, and reward-driven learning.

**Price:**
- 100 tablets .......................................................... $8.99

**Suggested Adult Usage:**
- Take 1-2 tablets daily with food.
- *These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.

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*Prices listed do not include shipping and handling or sales tax.
Stand Up For the Truth.com, February 2014, Pope to Copeland: Catholics and Charismatics must spiritually unite—“We are galloping toward a one-world melding of religions, and the ramifications are staggering.”

“The Catholic and Charismatic Renewal is the hope of the Church, exclaims Anglican Bishop Tony Palmer, before a group of cheering of the Kenneth Copeland Ministries. Palmer said those words are from the Vatican… “Before playing the video message from Pope Francis to Kenneth Copeland, Palmer told the crowd, ‘When my wife saw that she could be Catholic, and Charismatic, and Evangelical, and Pentecostal, and it was absolutely accepted in the Catholic Church, she said that she would like to reconnect her roots with the Catholic culture. So she did, … The crowd cheered as he continued, “Brothers and sisters, Luther’s protest is over. Is yours?” …Said Copeland, “Heaven is thrilled over this…”

End Time Perspective:

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Revelation 13:3

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” Revelation 13:11, 12.

Editor’s Note: Notice that there is no change in the Catholic Church. It still claims the power to forgive sins through man, which is blasphemy. It still claims to be God on earth, which is blasphemy. It still does not accept the second or the fourth commandments.

Brothers and Sisters, our time is short. What are you doing to win souls—some suggestions: Leave the Amazing Prophecies magazine in convenient places like the Post Office; pass out the Great Controversy, and the Desire of Ages to friends; put them in an envelope and leave them in the door of churches for the pastor. Keep all these people in prayer that you have shared information with.
The Greatest Investment

The greatest investment isn’t made,
Isn’t traded, isn’t bargained, isn’t paid,
On the stock exchange floor.
No! On Calvary the highest stakes were laid,
Jesus invested His life; holy angels watched, amazed!
My Saviour could give no more!

As my bleeding Lamb dying in my place,
He brought the right to invest in me His grace,
My weakness exchanged for His power!
His blood for my sins did atone
I now obey His law of love written in stone
Upheld by His strength every hour!

Daily the Living Christ invests in me His will,
His power, His truth - I can’t keep still!
I must share His word and His love!
Others must know my Jesus who died,
Suffering deadly wounds in hands, head, and side,
To invest in them His life from above!

—Patricia J. T. Smith
At the general conference of believers in the present truth, held at Sutton, Vermont, September, 1850, I was shown that the seven last plagues will be poured out after Jesus leaves the sanctuary. Said the angel, “It is the wrath of God and the Lamb that causes the destruction or death of the wicked. At the voice of God the saints will be mighty and terrible as an army with banners, but they will not then execute the judgment written. The execution of the judgment will be at the close of the one thousand years.”

The book of life and the book of death are opened

After the saints are changed to immortality and caught up together with Jesus, after they receive their harps, their robes, and their crowns, and enter the city, Jesus and the saints sit in judgment. The books are opened — the book of life and the book of death. The book of life contains the good deeds of the saints; and the book of death contains the evil deeds of the wicked. These books are compared with the statute book, the Bible, and according to that men are judged. The saints, in unison with Jesus, pass their judgment upon the wicked dead. “Behold ye,” said the angel, “the saints, in unison with Jesus, sit in judgment, and mete out to the wicked according to the deeds done in the body, and that which they must receive at the execution of the judgment is set off against their names.”

This, I saw, was the work of the saints with Jesus through the one thousand years in the Holy City before it descends to the earth.

The Holy City comes down and settles on the plain

Then at the close of the one thousand years, Jesus, with the angels and all the saints, leaves the Holy City, and while He is descending to the earth with them, the wicked dead are raised, and then the very men that “pierced Him,” being raised, will see Him afar off in all His glory, the angels and saints with Him, and will wail because of Him. They will see the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet, and where they thrust the spear into His side. The prints of the nails and the spear will then be His glory. It is at the close of the one thousand years that Jesus stands upon the Mount of Olives, and the mount parts asunder and becomes a mighty plain. Those who flee at that time are the wicked, who have just been raised. Then the Holy City comes down and settles on the plain. Satan then imbues the wicked with his spirit. He flatters them that the army in the city is small, and that his army is large, and that they can overcome the saints and take the city.
The crown of Jesus was brilliant and glorious

While Satan was rallying his army, the saints were in the city, beholding the beauty and glory of the Paradise of God. Jesus was at their head, leading them. All at once the lovely Saviour was gone from our company; but soon we heard His lovely voice, saying, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” We gathered about Jesus, and just as He closed the gates of the city, the curse was pronounced upon the wicked. The gates were shut. Then the saints used their wings and mounted to the top of the wall of the city. Jesus was also with them; His crown looked brilliant and glorious. It was a crown within a crown, seven in number. The crowns of the saints were of the most pure gold, decked with stars. Their faces shone with glory, for they were in the express image of Jesus; and as they arose and moved all together to the top of the city, I was enraptured with the sight.

Our inheritance opened before us and we inherited the whole earth made new

Then the wicked saw what they had lost; and fire was breathed from God upon them and consumed them. This was the execution of the judgment. The wicked then received according as the saints, in unison with Jesus, had meted out to them during the one thousand years. The same fire from God that consumed the wicked purified the whole earth. The broken, ragged mountains melted with fervent heat, the atmosphere also, and all the stubble was consumed. Then our inheritance opened before us, glorious and beautiful, and we inherited the whole earth made new. We all shouted with a loud voice, “Glory; Alleluia!”
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ACROSS
5.  Abraham's third wife
6.  An ancient Canaanite tribe descended from Heth
9.  The Babylonian name given to Mishael in Babylon
10. A king who was the son of Omri
13. Egyptian officer and captain of the guard
14. He had a vineyard adjoining the grounds of King Ahab
16. The father of Miriam
18. King of Syria who with King Pekah of Israel attacked King Ahaz of Judah
20. Husband of Ruth
22. Jewish books not included in the Hebrew canon of the Bible
23. A son of Ishmael
25. A faithful spy sent with 12 spies to Canaan
27. A daughter of Laban that became the wife of Jacob
28. Grandson of Noah and the father of Nimrod
29. He crawled with Gideon into the camp of the Midianites

DOWN
1. Eldest son of Aaron the High Priest
2. One of Job's friends, the son of Barachel
3. The manservant of the prophet Elisha
4. He helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem
5. A Hittite woman who was the wife of Esau
7. Abraham told this king that Sarah was his sister
8. The mother of Solomon
11. The Babylonian name given to Hananiah
12. His name means 'God is my judge'
13. Third son of Adam and Eve
15. Third son of Adam and Eve
16. David went to this people for his protection
17. The second son of Levi
19. The scribe of Jeremiah
21. High Priest in the time of King David
24. One of the 5 kings in the time of Abram
26. A son of Abram's deceased brother Haran

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