June 2015 Signs of the Times Email Newsletter

Read the story of the connection of an Adventist doctor and Thomas Edison!

The Signs of the Times newsletter is a collection of stories and quotes from past issues of Signs and These Times.

A woman once said to her pastor, “I do love God very much, but want to love more; how can I?”

“You must become better acquainted with Him,” was his reply. “We love those who are worthy of our love, in proportion as we become acquainted with them.”

“How can I get better acquainted?” she asked.

“Study the Bible more,” he said. “God speaks to you, reveals Himself to you, in the Bible. Read in the New Testament the life of Jesus, and imagine you had been with Him as John and Peter and Mary were—and pray more. Tell Him all your joys and troubles and needs. He will answer you, and every answer will draw you closer and closer to Him. Then try to please Him in everything you do and say. We always love those whom we try to please. Love makes us wish to please the Lord, and love rewards us when we have done it.”

The woman followed these rules, simple as they were, and her love to God grew and spread all through her heart.
It made her very happy, so that all who knew her said, “What a bright, cheerful person she is! I don’t believe she ever has any trouble.” And yet she did have a great deal of trouble, but the love of God so filled her heart that it seemed like wings to lift her up above it all. If she had been asked if she had any trouble, she would have smiled and said, “I don’t believe I have; the minute it comes Jesus takes it all away.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, September 8, 1890.

Quote: “I wish some of our preachers would spend less time in propping up the cross, and more in pointing men to it. Life is altogether too short to defend the word.”—By Dr. Cuyler, Signs of the Times, December 20, 1883.

A missionary in China once heard a group of men discussing the various religions. At last one of the group said: “It is just as if a man were down in a deep pit, and wanted help to get out. Confucius came along and said ‘If you had only kept my precepts you would not have fallen into this pit.’ Buddha also came to the pit, saying, ‘Ah, poor man, if you were only up where I am I would make you all right.’ The man replied, ‘If I were where you are, I would not want help.’ But then there came along Jesus Christ, with tears in His eyes, and He jumped right into the pit and lifted the poor man right out of it.” This is the love which wins our hearts.—Ram’s Horn, Signs of the Times, October 28, 1903.

Quote: “Live for God! Entreat the Throne for rich endowments of the Holy Spirit! Seek to clothe your soul in the purple and fine linen of pure and beautiful thoughts!”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, October 7, 1903.

NEW from Pacific Press—Red Coats and Scimitars by Patty Knittel. Amidst the too-good-to-be-true promises of free land, freedom of religion, and exemption from taxes and military service, the Schwartz family emigrated to Russia in the 1800s. But their reality was much different than the sugar-coated promises of Catherine the Great. Red Coats and Scimitars is the true story of Karl Schwartz, a German boy growing up in the Ukraine, who was forced into the Russian army and ultimately became part of the royal guard to the czar.
One day an old gentleman, bent with years, and his face lined with care, came to President Abraham Lincoln with a sad story. His son had committed some crime punishable by death. He was his only boy. He begged the president to save him.

“I am sorry I can do nothing for you,” said Lincoln. “Listen to this telegram I received from General Butler yesterday. ‘President Lincoln, I pray you do not interfere with the courts-martial of the army. You will destroy all discipline among our soldiers.’”

Lincoln watched closely the expression on the father’s face; then he said, “Butler or no Butler, here goes.”

He hastily wrote a few words on a slip of paper and handed it to the old gentleman. It read, “Job Smith is not to be shot, until further orders from me. Abraham Lincoln.”

The father was disappointed, and the disappointment showed in his face and voice. “Why,” said the old gentleman with trembling voice, “I thought it was a pardon. You may order him to be shot next week.”

“My friend,” replied Lincoln, “I see you are not very well acquainted with me. If your son never dies till orders come from me to shoot him, he will live to be a great deal older than Methuselah.”—By Archa O. Dart, Our Times, March 1950.

Quote: “It is the cleverest thing in the world to be merely happy, and the unhappiest to be merely clever.”—By Maarten Maartens, Our Times, September 1950.

A king, who was also lawmaker and judge of his realm, had an only son who was admitted to the bar as a pleader in his father’s court.
This son was a princely man, who made a big-brother friendship with three youths who were inclined to be wild and to rebel against restraint. These boys culminated their evil careers by forging a check on the judge for ten thousand dollars, and then gambled away the whole sum.

They were detected, imprisoned, and brought before the court. The prince thought so much of the misguided fellows that he decided to plead their case for nothing, and resolved to pay the judge, if necessary, the ten thousand dollars, which sum was all his wealth.

At first, all three stoutly maintained their innocence. But the evidence was too plain; and when they were told that the judge was noted for his clemency, and that the prince was sacrificing all he had to save them from punishment, two of them melted in spirit and pleaded guilty. The third youth held out to the end that he had done no wrong, and if he had, he was being treated unfairly. So he was condemned to a just penalty by the court.

Of the other two, one, judging from his knowledge of human nature, could not bring himself to believe that a judge could be so merciful and a pleader so liberal. Hence, fearing a trap, he absolutely refused to accept the offered help. Therefore he was condemned to a like punishment with his fellow in crime.

The remaining prisoner, while sensing the enormity of his offense and the immutability of the law, was simple-minded enough to take thankfully the gift of mercy, and was set free immediately. The prince paid the judge the ten thousand dollars, and there was good feeling all around. This youth became a friend of the royal family, and was later adopted into the reigning house, and shared in the inheritance.—By R. B. Thurber, Signs of the Times, May 7, 1918.

Quote: “The Lord is fitting out this old world with wires and bulbs—missionaries in every land. When He fully turns on the current of His Holy Spirit, there will be a tremendous blaze, and the work will be ‘cut short in righteousness.’”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, May 7, 1918.

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Shortly after Thomas Edison’s death there appeared in large headlines in the leading city papers the following: “Edison late in life changes views on the soul’s immortality.” The reporter said, “What brought Edison to change his views may never be known.” In an
interview, Edison is reported to have said: "I cannot believe in the immortality of the soul. . . . This speculative idea of the immortality of the soul needs but to be analyzed to fall wholly to the ground.

On another occasion he said: "Soul? Soul? What do you mean by soul? The brain? There is no more reason to believe that any human brain will be immortal than there is to think one of my phonographic cylinders will be immortal."

In reading the headlines calling attention to Edison's changed views regarding the soul's immortality, and the statement, "What brought Edison to change his views may never be known," naturally I thought of a letter addressed to Mr. Edison several years before this, at a time when the public press came out with glaring headlines saying Edison was conducting experiments to prove the soul’s immortality, and that if this could be proved his next step would be to communicate with departed souls. The letter referred to, I have since re-read with considerable interest. It reads as follows:

**My Dear Mr. Edison:**

You have been accredited by the public press with conducting a series of scientific experiments, the aim of which is to communicate with the dead. As a friend, and an admirer of the great service you have been instrumental in rendering mankind, and as a believer in the Bible as a communication from God to man to aid him in his scientific investigations and research, I am writing this letter. . . .

- [CLICK HERE](#) to read the entire letter written by Seventh-day Adventist Dr. Daniel H. Kress to Thomas Edison!

. . . I am sure, Mr. Edison, that you will pardon me for writing this lengthy letter, but I have felt concerned, knowing what I do about the deception that confronts us all. Communication has been established between earth and heaven. When the Saviour prayed on the banks of Jordan, the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; and it is our privilege to see the open heaven and the angels of God, who are sent to be ministering spirits, ascending and descending on the Son of man.

*I Am Yours Sincerely,*

* D. H. Kress.

That Mr. Edison changed his views in regard to the popular belief that the soul is
immortal, there exists no doubt. “What brought Edison to change his views may never be known,” but there is a possibility that my letter may have had something to do with it.—By Daniel H. Kress, M.D., *The Watchman Magazine*, September 1942.

Quote: “Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. To keep our faces toward change and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate is strength undefeatable.”—By Helen Keller, *Signs of the Times*, October 1996.

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PERFECT

I may not always know the way
   Wherein God leads my feet:
But this I know, that ’round my path
   His love and wisdom meet;
And so I rest, content to know
He guides my feet where’er I go.

Sometimes above the path I tread,
   The clouds hang dark and low;
But, thro’ the gloom or thro’ the night,
   My heart no fear can know,
For close beside me walks a Friend
Who whispers low, “Until the end.”

   I may not always understand
   Just why He sends to me
Some bitter grief, some heavy loss,
   But, tho I cannot see,
I kneel and whisper thro’ my tears
A prayer for help, and know He hears.

My cherished plans and hopes may fail,
   My idols turn to dust,
But this I know, my Father’s love
   Is always safe to trust;
These things were dear to me, but still
Above them all I love His will.

O, precious peace within my heart;
   O, blessed rest that knows
A Father’s love in constant watch,
   Amid life’s ebbs and flows;
I ask no more than this; I rest
Content, and know His way is best.—By Lillie M. Alexander, Signs of the Times, October 7, 1903.