

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Psalm 25:14

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The Final Generation Part 4 Final Events and Jerusalem

By Allen Stump

Before we begin this segment of our study, we acknowledge that not all things of the future are made perfectly plain until after their fulfillment. While Bible prophecy foretells the future before it happens, prophecy has a more important role than forecasting the future. Jesus said, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe (John 14:29)." Bible prophecy is given to help strengthen our faith and I pray that our faith will be strengthened as we study and see the events foretold being clearly revealed before our eyes. I am reminded of a statement of James White, who wrote:

Of past fulfillment of prophecy we may speak with positiveness; but of the future, at least as far as it relates to the manner in which the preparatory scenes of the coming of the Son of man are to occur, it becomes those who are watching the signs of the times to speak with carefulness (James White, *The Review and Herald*, February 28, 1854).

Some of the events we are looking at have already been fulfilled and some, such as Daniel 11:45 and 12:1, are still future. Of course, we strive to be careful with unfilled prophecy, but Jesus said that his disciples were to be "children of light (John 12:36)." Paul also noted:

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8).

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:5).

If we are indeed living in the final generation, we do not have time to be wrong again and again in our interpretations and it is time to seek for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to rightly divide the last-day prophecies. So, while we proceed with care and trepidation, we also speak with boldness for the Word is to be plain in the last days and the world is to be lightened with the glory of God.

Last month we noticed that events centered in Jerusalem will signal to God's people that the end of all things is near and that probation is ready to close—Michael is ready to stand up. Daniel writes:

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for

Prayer Requests

We pray that the year 2006 has closed with many of God's blessings being realized in your lives. We also hope that 2007 will be a year of great accomplishments for the Lord Jesus Christ and for our heavenly Father. Often New Year resolutions are like "ropes of sand (*Steps to Christ*, p. 47)" because they are based on our own futile efforts. May the grace of God fill our hearts and minds, enabling us to "do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)," so that when Satan comes to us he will find nothing in us that will give him the victory over us. "This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble (*The Great Controversy*, p. 622, 1888 ed.)."

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the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book (Daniel 11:45, 12:1).

We saw in the last part of this study that the Papacy would establish her see or seat (some kind of “tabernacle”) in Jerusalem. In Daniel 11:45 the Papacy is represented as the King of the North and plants its place of abode between the seas in the glorious holy mountain. Jerusalem lies between the Sea of Galilee on the north and the Dead Sea on the south. It is called God’s “holy mountain” in Daniel 9:16. Yet, the Bible says that the Papacy will come to an end, and as she loses her support, her confederates will finally turn against her (Revelation 17). There will be none to help her. The very next thing mentioned in Daniel 12:1 is Michael standing up for his people. This represents the close of probation because just after Michael stands up the time of trouble such as never was begins.

When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received “the latter rain,” “the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received “the seal of the living God.” Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, “It is done;” and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up; “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,” is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God’s long-suffering has ended. *The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law.* The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the

inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. *The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old (Great Controversy, pp. 613, 614).*

The Sixth Plague

Jerusalem is to be both a sign and an object lesson, as well as an illustration, to God’s people. It is further mentioned in apocalyptic writings in Revelation 16 in connection with the sixth plague:

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon (Revelation 16:12-16).

Although the Bible does not use the phrase, “The battle of Armageddon,” we do find it mentioned, without detail, in the Spirit of Prophecy writings. The few pronouncements seem to place it in a spiritual setting. For instance she writes, “The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide-awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. What is this? Grace, Grace (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 286).”

The Bible says that there is a gathering, but no actual mention of a battle occurring nor the nature of the battle is stated in the Bible. So, why is this gathering mentioned and what is its importance?

Carefully reading through the 16th chapter of Revelation, we find a principle of interpretation set forth. The plagues are God’s response, after probation has closed, to what man has done during probationary time. The first plague involves “noisome and grievous” sores. This happens to those who have accepted the mark of the beast (Revelation 16:2). The second and third plagues involve waters being turned into blood. The rational is given: “And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments (Revelation 16:5-7).” Both the acceptance of the mark of the beast and the murder of the saints happen before, not after, probation closes. During the fourth plague the sun is given power “to scorch men with fire

(Revelation 16:8).” Men have worshiped the sun and claimed that they could worship God on the day of the sun. The fifth plague involves darkness upon the seat of the beast power that had professed to have great light.

During the sixth plague, the river Euphrates dries up “that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared (Revelation 16:12).” But this is not all that is mentioned under the sixth plague. An ecumenical gathering is portrayed. The beast, the dragon, and the false prophet (Catholicism, spiritualism, and apostate Protestantism) are all symbolized as working together in confederation. Jesus warns the reader in verse 15 that he will come as a thief in the night. This is an event after the seventh plague so we have before us events that are being given that do not necessarily follow chronological order. Verses 13 and 14 provide the rationale for the drying up of support for Babylon that is mentioned in verse 12. In verse 16 we find the statement that these verses are leading up to: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” The New King James Version renders this: “And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.”

The confederates of Babylon *do not* meet together at Armageddon, but they assemble at “the place called in the Hebrew tongue ‘Har-Magedon’ (Young’s Literal Translation).” The Greek work *Ἄρμαγεδδον* (*Armageddon*) has a rough breathing symbol before the alpha giving it a “har” sound. The two Hebrew words that make up Armageddon are *הר* (*har*) meaning mountain, and *מגידו* (*Megiddo*), meaning a place of crowds. The Greek transliterates back into the Hebrew as our English equivalent, *Har-Mo’ed*, which means, mount of the congregation. *Mo’ed* is translated “congregation” 127 times in the Old Testament expression, “tabernacle of the congregation.”

In researching *Har-Mo’ed* on the Internet, I discovered some very interesting facts concerning the gods of the Canaanites. I found a link at the Missouri State University Libraries that took me to the following:

El, king of the gods (El means “God” - the plural is Elohim), a fertility god, represented by a bull or by a man wearing a helmet with bull horns. An elderly man with a mustache and goatee. He lives on a place called Har Mo’ed (the apostrophe represents a glottal stop, it used to be represented by “h” in English), “*the mount of assembly*”, or “*the mount of the North*.” *The Hebrews called this “the place of the last battle” or Armageddon* (Richard McLaughlin, <http://www.maryforrest.com/mythology>).

The chief or main god of the Canaanites was El. That is right! Just like the Hebrews, the Canaanites called their god, El and his place of abode was called *Har Mo’ed*, the mount of the assembly or congregation, the sides of the north. “The Hebrews called this ‘the place of the last battle’ or Armageddon.” The Canaanite god, Dagon was also a fertility god and a brother to El.

The god, Baal “. . . was the son of El or Dagon, the high god of Canaan, and lived on a *mountain in the north* (http://everything2.com/index.pl?node_id=154836&lastnode_id=0).”

We will shortly see the importance of the mountain in the north. Most common interpretations of Armageddon call for it to be located in the valley of Megiddo where Josiah fought his last battle. A major flaw in this idea is that a valley is not a mountain and a mountain is not a valley! So where is the mount of the congregation? It is somewhere that Satan has desired to sit because it represents worship and veneration to him. “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the *mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north* (Isaiah 14:13).” “Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion [Jerusalem], on the sides of the north, the city of the great King (Psalm 48:2).”

Jerusalem a Focal Point

Is Jerusalem really a focal point of Satan’s attack? Jerusalem answers the call of these verses. Satan, of course, cannot be at God’s throne in heaven today, but he chooses to receive worship in the manner that will be given him by all of humanity that will follow his deceptive and artful ways. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).” Seventh-day Adventists have long known that Satan will personate Jesus Christ before the real second coming. We have been warned by the messenger of the Lord:

Satan came as an angel of light in the wilderness of temptation to deceive Christ; and he does not come to man in a hideous form, as he is sometimes represented, but as an angel of light. He will come personating Jesus Christ, working mighty miracles; and men will fall down and worship him as Jesus Christ. We shall be commanded to worship this being, whom the world will glorify as Christ (Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 18, 1888).

“Satan’s masterpiece of deception is popery (Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894).” The prophecy of Daniel states that popery, which is directed by Satan, will establish its tabernacles at Jerusalem—the mount of the congregation, the sides of the north. Why? Because that is where Satan is going to first appear and he wants his viceroy there waiting to hand him the scepter representing world rulership. It is also logical that Satan will personate Christ at Jerusalem. While New York may be the media center of the world, all eyes are focused on Jerusalem! It is the city of the three great religions of the world. Even the pagans look to it with awe. Satan will appear as a dazzling being who will claim to be the messiah that the Jews and Muslims have looked for, he will claim to be the son of God that the Christians look for, and to the Krishnas he will be the “Christ spirit” that they are waiting for. His supernatural appearance

will convince the pagans, spiritualists, and atheists; and he will gather the people of the world together to a “place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

Beloved, why cannot we see this clearly? We are to be children of light. God desires us to know where we are at in the stream of time and that things are about to finish. While some of these events have not yet occurred, we are told that “the final movements will be rapid ones (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 11).” God “will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness (Romans 9:28).”

Jerusalem as a Sign to God’s People

God used Jerusalem as a sign in the time of the disciples and he will use it as a sign today. Adventists have long understood that the 70th week of Daniel 9 began in A. D. 27 with the baptism of Jesus. In the midst of the week (A.D. 31) Jesus was crucified. In A.D. 34 the rejection of the Jewish nation was finalized with the stoning of Stephen. While we commonly think of the close of the Jews’ probation as being a one-step process, a careful reading of inspiration reveals that it was a two-step process. Firstly, there was a rejection of the Jewish leadership in A.D. 31, and, secondly, the whole nation as a group was rejected in A.D. 34. Let us examine some evidence for this concept.

When Jesus turned the moneychangers’ tables over at the beginning of His ministry he said, “unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not *my Father’s house* an house of merchandise (John 2:16).” In A.D. 27 Jesus called the Jewish temple, “my Father’s house.” During the second cleansing of the temple he stated, “Behold, *your house* is left unto you desolate (Matthew 23:38).” That which had been *His Father’s house* had now become *their house*. In the chapter entitled, “A Doomed People” we find the following statement in *The Desire of Ages*: “The last appeal to Jerusalem had been in vain (p. 580).” Obviously, Jesus was not appealing to stone buildings and dusty streets but to that which was represented by Jerusalem—the leadership of the Jewish nation! As Jesus went to Jerusalem during that final week, he cursed the fig tree and gave an acted parable. Ellen White noted:

The cursing of the fig tree was an acted parable. That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ, was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Saviour desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and the certainty of Israel’s doom. For this purpose He invested the tree with moral qualities, and made it the expositor of divine truth. The Jews stood forth distinct from all other nations, professing allegiance to God. They had been specially favored by Him, and they laid claim to righteousness above every other people. But they were corrupted by the love of the world and the greed of gain. They boasted of their knowledge, but they were ignorant of the requirements of God, and were full of hypocrisy. Like the barren tree, they spread their pretentious

branches aloft, luxuriant in appearance, and beautiful to the eye, but they yielded “nothing but leaves.” The Jewish religion, with its magnificent temple, its sacred altars, its mitered priests and impressive ceremonies, was indeed fair in outward appearance, but humility, love, and benevolence were lacking (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 582).

It was the leaders of this church that took council to condemn Jesus, despite the fact that they knew He was the Son of God. They accused Jesus of having a devil while they knew that He was the Christ, thus condemning themselves to eternal damnation. “What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 634).”

Christ told them [the Pharisees] plainly that in attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan, they were cutting themselves off from the fountain of blessing. Those who had spoken against Jesus Himself, not discerning His divine character, might receive forgiveness; for through the Holy Spirit they might be brought to see their error and repent. Whatever the sin, if the soul repents and believes, the guilt is washed away in the blood of Christ; but he who rejects the work of the Holy Spirit is placing himself where repentance and faith cannot come to him. It is by the Spirit that God works upon the heart; when men willfully reject the Spirit, and declare It to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. When the Spirit is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 321, 322).

The rejection of the Jewish leaders is confirmed by the action of the Holy Spirit through the disciples. When Peter was preaching on the day of Pentecost, he told his listeners that they crucified Jesus. “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).” The response of the people was, “what shall we do (v. 37)?” Peter quickly responded: “*Repent, and be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (v. 38).” Peter called upon these people to repent and accept the gospel. The Holy Spirit was showing that the door of mercy was still open to these people. When called before the Jewish leadership, Peter also told them that they were responsible for the death of Jesus (Acts 4:10, 11); however, one never finds an appeal given to them to repent, to accept the gospel, or to be baptized! Why? Because the Holy Spirit was teaching that their probation was over.

In A.D. 66 a sign was given to the Christians in Jerusalem when the city was surrounded by Cestius Gallus. Perhaps the Christians did not at first know how they were to flee, but when Cestius withdrew, they obeyed the words of Jesus and fled. Destruction came soon in A.D. 70 when Titus besieged the city.

According to Daniel 11:45, Jerusalem will once more be a sign to the Christians that destruction (Daniel 12:1) is soon to

be upon those who reject the gospel. God has tried to warn his people for decades but his entreaties of mercy have fallen upon deaf ears. Instead of repenting from her apostasy, modern Israel has only dived deeper into the cesspool of ecumenical Babylonism. As we noted in an earlier installment of this study, by 1967 the leadership of the church had set its course firmly on apostasy and has not changed. During the 1980 General Conference Session in Dallas, Texas, the laity gave its stamp of approval in accepting the new statements of belief that include the Trinity doctrine and a denial of the final atonement. This parallels the Jewish leadership's rejection of Jesus in A.D. 31, followed by the laity's rejection in A.D. 34.

The surrounding of Jerusalem in A.D. 66, followed by its destruction in A.D. 70, parallels Daniel 11:45 in which Jerusalem is again a sign to God's people that destruction is soon to come, and this is prophesied in Daniel 12:1. (See chart below.)


Brethren, it is time to awake! The final events are transpiring before our eyes. Will we have our lamps trimmed and burning brightly so that we may see the way for ourselves, as well as show a clear path for others? Or will we be sleepy virgins who will be left outside when the bridegroom comes? Jesus said that we are to be children of light. Darkness never goes away by itself. The only way that darkness is displaced is by emitting light. The prophecy of Jesus was given so that we might know we are at the end of all things and be ready for the coming of Jesus and help others to be ready. Perhaps we have failed to speak to our families or neighbors regarding the claims of the gospel, thinking that we could do it later. Away with such thinking! Our time is almost spent. We must redeem the time for the days are evil and are only going to wax worse and worse.

Oh, for a living, active faith! We need it; we must have it, or we shall faint and fail in the day of trial. The darkness that will then rest upon our path must not discourage us or drive us to despair. It is the veil with which God covers His glory when He comes to impart rich blessings. We should know this by our past experience. In that day when God

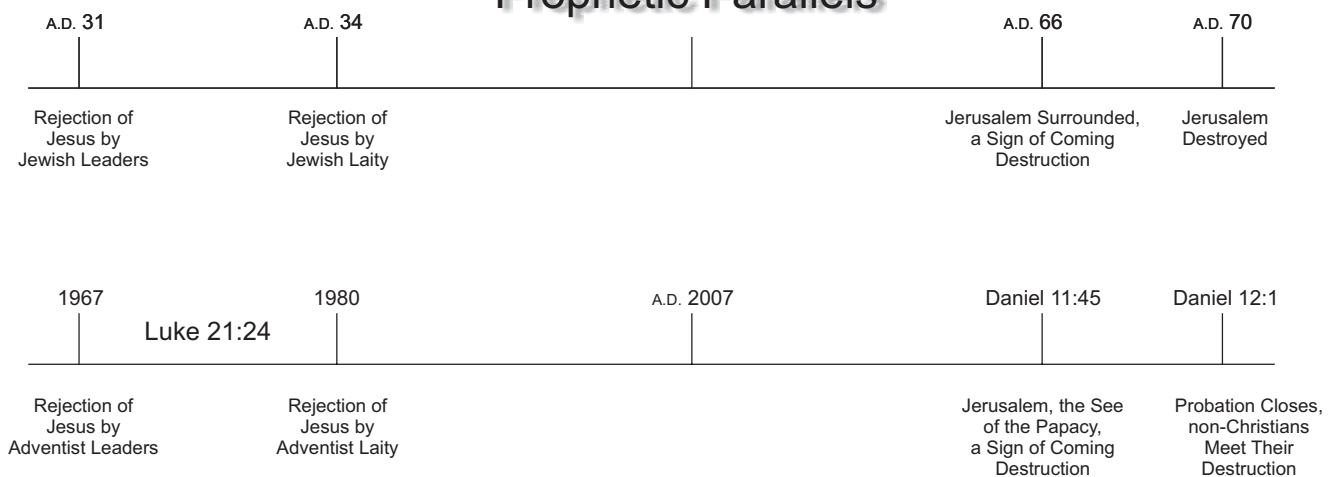
has a controversy with His people this experience will be a source of comfort and hope.

It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character. "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." We are in a most trying position, waiting, watching for our Lord's appearing. The world is in darkness. "But ye, brethren," says Paul, "are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." It is ever God's purpose to bring light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, and rest out of weariness for the waiting, longing soul.

What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 215, 216). 

Prophetic Parallels



Preparing for the Great Reunion

By Allen Stump

The blessed hope of the second appearing of Christ, with its solemn realities, needs to be often presented to the people. Looking for the soon appearing of our Lord will lead us to regard earthly things as emptiness and nothingness (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 406).

The second coming of Jesus will be a time of reunion. This reunion will encompass the redeemed we have lived with and loved, as well as all of God's people who have lived throughout the ages of this earth. We will then live through the ceaseless ages of eternity with them, never to part again.

The Bible records some interesting reunions. Jacob had to flee from his family due to dishonestly obtaining the birthright from his father and from his brother. He spent nearly twenty years in Mesopotamia, and when he decided to return home, he knew he had to face his brother Esau, from whom the birthright was stolen. This reunion was fearful to Jacob, but God assured him that things would work out. Another reunion occurred when Joseph reunited with his father, Jacob, after having been separated from him for many years, following Joseph being sold into slavery. The Bible speaks of a reunion between Moses and Aaron, when they both returned to Egypt to help deliver God's people from bondage. They had been separated from each other for at least forty years. David was reunited with Absalom through the efforts of Joab, only to be later betrayed by Absalom. The greatest reunion that has ever occurred, however, is when Jesus Christ returned to heaven.

We now see through a glass darkly on some of these matters. For example, the Bible is not extremely explicit concerning the details of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and on what it was like in heaven for Jesus before he became a baby in Bethlehem. You may have heard various comments on what Jesus really laid aside when he came to this earth, but there has never been, and I am sure never will be, two individuals in this universe with a closer intimate relationship than that of our heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus. I am sure to be separated physically for even a short period of time brought sorrow to their hearts. When Jesus came to this earth, he did not come as Michael or as a shining prince. He came as a lowly babe in Bethlehem and he, who knew no sin, met the challenge of sin in sinful flesh.

As a child growing up, Jesus did not have memories from heaven. When children play together, they often share experiences they have had about what they have done and where they have been, but as Jesus played with his companions, he could not tell them stories about when he was Michael in heaven and how, as the leader of the angels, he cast Lucifer

out of heaven. He did not have a memory of these stories to tell, and as our heavenly Father watched his Son grow, he had to re-educate him. Perhaps you have not thought about this before, but if you were to have an accident tomorrow and experience amnesia because of it, you would not be able to remember who you were or anything about your past life. As Jesus matured, he had to be re-educated, and his experience with the Father had to be built from scratch.

For us, there will be a great reunion, greater than any reunion that has ever occurred on this earth, in which all the righteous followers of Jesus who have ever lived will be united and reunited. Let us look at John 14. Jesus told his disciples that he was going away, and he spoke to them about his death. They were vaguely beginning to understand some of what he was saying, but they did not quite have the faith, it seems, to really accept and believe that the one who had walked with them for the past few years was really going to leave them. So, their hearts were troubled. Jesus had even mentioned that he would be betrayed by one of them and that they would all leave and forsake him. Peter especially had a difficult time understanding and relating to this. They were sorrowful and Jesus said to them: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3)." The Lord has a plan that we do not need to be sorrowful. Neither do we need to fear that we may not see our loved ones again or share in their fellowship.

When I first became a Seventh-day Adventist, I was *sure* the Lord would come within five years, if not sooner. All the signs of the times seemed right. My zeal was right at the time, and, in fact, after I received my call to the ministry, the brethren wanted me to go to Andrews University for two years, but I told them, "I can't go because the Lord is going to come before then. I don't have time for that now. I have to go to work!" That was twenty-seven years ago. I am twenty-two years off on my estimate, but I *know* now, based on a better understanding of Bible prophecy, that we are *now* living in the last generation. The second coming of Jesus will be very soon!

Perhaps one of the great questions we should ask ourselves is: Have we made provision to attend the heavenly reunion? When we have a family reunion, someone contacts the rest of the family to let them know when and where the reunion will be held. Then we look at our calendars and plan to attend. Even if we already have something planned for that date, we try to rearrange our schedules so that we may attend.

In Genesis 3, we read about the entrance of sin into this world and the hideous and horrible things that were to come upon mankind as a result of man's disobedience. The worst consequence of sin is that it separates us from God. It caused Adam and Eve to leave the presence of God and it separates

us from him too. Isaiah 59:2 says: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” We know that when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God had to drive them out. That garden represented God’s presence to them and they could no longer have the face-to-face, direct communion with God that they had had before.

Romans 5:12 says: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” This is a serious issue. “The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).” We know that we serve a God who is omniscient, but do we believe this? Does God really know everything? Is there anything he is unacquainted with? I was reading some interesting things recently. In a recent issue of *Discovery* magazine, a science journal, there is an article about our DNA code. (See article on p. 12 for further information.) We know our DNA code contains the building blocks of what composes us, and, until recently, we believed this code predetermined the kind of person we would become—whether we would be large or small, plump or thin, fair or dark, or even soft or harsh-tempered. Scientists have thought that our DNA predetermines just about everything about us and once this code is set, *it is set* and cannot be changed. We now understand, however, that DNA is not all that there is to our genetic makeup. There are little, what I will call, software packages, that sit on top of the DNA. The DNA is like the hardware of the computer system of your body, performing certain functions, but these little packets of information that sit on the DNA are like the software that tell the hardware what to do. They can tell the hardware to turn on or they can tell the hardware to stay turned off.

It is very interesting to know that there are things we can do that affect the way these little packets of software work. For instance, what we eat can affect the way the epigenome, as the little packets of software are called, works. If we eat in a certain way, the epigenome works in a certain way; and if we eat in a different way, it may work in another way. What this means is that even though we may have a DNA that gives us a susceptibility to obesity, diabetes, or other diseases, we are not necessarily predisposed to these diseases based upon the DNA alone. The epigenome also plays a part. Scientists now believe that much of how our genetic code manifests itself is determined by the way we live. Even the lifestyles of men and women before they become parents affect their epigenomes and the epigenomes are transmittable unto three and four generations, interestingly. Now, it took a very wise God to put all that together, a God who knows the beginning and the end of all things.

There are some types of cancer, for example, that you are four hundred times more likely to get if you have a certain gene mutation. To the person that has that mutation it sounds like a death sentence, but now we understand that having that gene does not mean the person will automatically acquire cancer. We now have the possibility, and maybe even

probability, of turning that gene off through our epigenome, thus preventing malignant cells from growing. This is a wonderful thought! Do you know who taught us, as Adventist people, that we can live in a way that will help us, and our unborn children as well, to be healthy? God taught us this through Ellen White. God gave us an understanding about what the connection is between our lifestyle and our health, so that we do not have to follow the world into sickness and poor health. This is a beautiful thing God has done for us.

God was not taken by surprise when sin occurred. Galatians 4:4 says: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” When the time was just right, God sent his Son. God had a timetable for when his Son was to come to this earth and God knew in advance when it would be. He had all this planned out and was not taken by surprise.

Paul says about Jesus: “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father (Galatians 1:4).” Whose will was it that Jesus should come and deliver us from this evil world? It was God’s will. He wanted it done. He loves us so much that, as the Bible says, he gave us his only begotten Son. It was our sins alone that necessitated this gift and necessitated Christ taking upon himself humanity and dying. The Bible says, “The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6).” God sent Christ to die upon the cross because of one thing—love. God’s love demanded that he do something to redeem us, so he sent his Son.

I think of Brother Austin Jones who died several years ago. Soon after I became a Christian, Austin became the minister of the Spencer, WV, Seventh-day Adventist Church I attended. He was a retired brother who had been a colporteur for a few years. He was a saintly-type of person. This was when I was sure Jesus was going to return within five years and I was pretty sure that Brother Jones’ vitality was going to hold up until that time. We talked about living through the time of trouble together and I wanted to do that so badly, but Brother Jones died. I am looking forward, however, to seeing Brother Jones again, but the greatest thing that we will have in heaven is not meeting our loved ones again but having the ability to intimately associate face-to-face with Jesus and with the Father.

It is like this: If I see you again in a year, in five years, or when Jesus comes, we may talk about things that have transpired between the time that we last saw each other. We will be happy to see each other, but we will not have to get to know each other in heaven because we already know each other. That is somewhat the way it is going to be in heaven with Jesus. We must have already been introduced to him and have accepted him as our Saviour.

In Hebrews we read: “But without faith it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6).” God has made provision for us,

but he says that we have to believe. We have to believe in him and believe that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him. To put your hand in the hand of God, as in the hand of a friend, takes faith. We have many problems in our lives that we try to correct, but the greatest dysfunction, of course, is the problem of sin. We might think that we can correct the problem of sin on our own. Sometimes we make a mistake, and we feel quite a burden to correct it and make it right with the person we have harmed, but sin is something we have done against God and we cannot correct it or make it right. We need God to help us. The Bible says that “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).” We cannot be forgiven or cleansed without his help. We cannot even *come* to him on our own without his help, but as we see his love, we are drawn to him, our hearts are changed and we experience what the Bible refers to as the new birth. A conversion takes place. God has made this experience available to each one of us. There are no exceptions. It does not matter what our DNA code says. God has made it available to us. I am encouraged by this, just as I am encouraged that he is so wise and so kind.

God has promised to receive and help us. Sometimes children sit around and wonder, “Is there anything God cannot do?” Well, there is one thing God cannot do. God is omniscient and knows everything. He is omnipotent and has all power, but there is one thing God cannot do. What is it? He cannot lie (Titus 1:2). So, if God has promised to forgive our sins if we confess them and to cleanse us from our unrighteousness, then he will do those very things. This forgiveness and cleansing is what we need to be ready for Jesus when he comes and to have an entrance into the city for the great reunion.

Genesis 1:26 says that God originally made man in his image, yet today we seldom see the image of God in people. We know that God made man not only physically but also morally in his image. The plan of the gospel is to restore that image to man and to reunite him with God. God tells us that we can be changed. In Romans 12, Paul uses an expression to emphasize the radical nature of that change. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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 (Romans 12:1, 2).” Paul says not to be *conformed*, or formed, after the likeness of this world, but to be transformed. The English word *metamorphosis* comes from the Greek word translated “transformed” in the Romans 12:2. Paul says we are to experience a *metamorphosis*. A butterfly goes through a metamorphosis, growing from a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly. There are very few butterflies more beautiful and regal than a Monarch butterfly. God wants us to go through a similar transformation because we have become quite sickly, but, by God’s grace, we can be changed.

In Second Corinthians, Paul tells us how this change comes about: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).” The principle is by beholding we become changed. This is a law of the mind. We become like that which we keep our thoughts and our minds fixed upon. This is one reason parents should guard their children’s companions, for children become like those they are around. If we are in the presence of Christ, we become like him.

Christ offers us the experience of committing our lives to him. In Revelation 3, Christ makes an appeal to his people: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (v. 20).” This is what Jesus wants for each one of us. To be ready for that great heavenly reunion, we have to follow the Lord Jesus all the way now. If you talk to the Methodists, they will have a different idea of what following Jesus means than we have, and the Baptists will have a different idea of what it means than what it means to the Methodists, and if you really want to get a lot of ideas of what it means to follow all the truth, you need to talk to Seventh-day Adventists. There seems to be no church that has had more of a unified position on doctrine, and yet today has more diversification of positions on doctrine than Seventh-day Adventists have.

I want to look at a statement from Ellen White in what we call the 1884 *Great Controversy*, because it speaks to my heart and I think it might speak to yours as well: “The true followers of Christ do not wait for truth to become popular. Being convinced of their duty, they deliberately accept the cross, and thus remove the greatest obstacle to the reception of truth,—the only argument which its advocates have never been able to refute. It is weak, inefficient world-servers that think it praiseworthy to have no principle in religious things. We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God. To men of principle, faith, and daring, is the world indebted for its great reforms. By such men must the work of reform for this time be carried forward (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 293).”


We are living in the last generation. This is it. We are at the end of all things, and we realize certain events are to occur at the end of time. One of these events is the personation of Jesus Christ by Satan himself.

Let us notice something in Second Corinthians. Friends, we must not be deceived and lost at the end. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).” Satan is not going to come as a devil with horns and a pitchfork. He is going to come as an angel of light. Before his personation of Christ occurs, he does something else. He performs his most artful work of misrepresentation. Before impersonation comes, misrepresentation occurs.

There are two aspects of Christ's second coming that we think about and do not want to be fooled about. One aspect is the individual who comes. We had better know who he is. The second aspect is the manner in which he comes. As Adventists, we have emphasized the manner of the second coming of Jesus. He will come with all the angels and he will not touch the earth, for example. This emphasis is not wrong of itself, but I am concerned that if we do not see the importance of the first part—understanding who the individual is and what he is like—then we will be deceived on the second part as well. When Satan impersonates Christ, because we have really not known Jesus, we will think we have been wrong in our understanding about how Jesus will come and we will be deceived. We have to know who Jesus is. Every false presentation, and *please think on this carefully*, is a presentation of a false Christ (Mark 13:22), and so if we are looking for a Christ to come that is not the true Christ, we will believe Jesus has really come even though he has not come in the manner portrayed by the Bible. If we think we truly know who Jesus is, but are mistaken, we will also accept an inaccurate manner of his coming as well. Through a misrepresentation of Christ's identity, we will be susceptible to deception on the manner of Christ's coming as well.


In 1893, a prophecy was written that bears thought for us today. "Fanaticism will appear in the very midst of us. Deceptions will come, and of such a character that if it were possible they would mislead the very elect. If marked inconsistencies and untruthful utterances were apparent in these manifestations, the words [of warning] from the lips of the Great Teacher would not be needed (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 16)." Let us consider this again: "If marked inconsistencies and untruthful utterances *were apparent* in these manifestations." Ellen White says they are not going to be apparent. She also says they are "untruthful utterances and marked inconsistencies" but they are very subtle and most people do not catch them. As a result, many people are going to be misled and deceived. She says, "Fanaticism will appear in the very midst of us. Deceptions will come and of such a character that if it were possible they would mislead the very elect." We can be ready, but we have to prepare ourselves now. We cannot wait until that time and think that we can then make all of our preparations. There is going to be another reunion. It is found in Revelation 20. We know that when Jesus comes back the second time, without sin unto salvation, that "the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17)." But, we realize also that when Jesus comes the wicked that are living will be slain by the brightness of his coming (Thessalonians 2:8) and they will not be resurrected at that time. Jesus spoke of a resurrection of the just and a resurrection of the unjust, so we know there will be a resurrection for the wicked. Revelation 20:5 says, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the

thousand years were finished." There is a thousand year period mentioned in Revelation chapter 20. That thousand year period begins with the second coming of Jesus and ends with the resurrection of the wicked. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea (Revelation 20:7, 8)." Now this is a different kind of reunion. The fact is, we will all participate in one reunion or the other, but this is a reunion that none of us want to be in. It is not going to be a happy one. It is not going to be one that has joy, peace, gentleness, goodness and meekness in it. We are all going to either be inside or outside the city, and the tragic result of following self and a false christ will be clearly demonstrated by all those who are outside that city.

Which reunion do you wish to be in? The Bible says that by faith we can accept Jesus as our personal Saviour, that by faith as we ask him to cleanse us and forgive us of our sins that he will. He has promised to do this. Or, we can depend upon the works of our own hands. We can look to a false god—a false christ—and we will not find the salvation that is there for us. Where will we be in a thousand years? There is going to be a reunion, in a larger sense, of all of humanity at that time, when the wicked dead are raised, all of humanity that has ever lived will be there, and some are going to be inside the city and some are going to be outside the city. What a tragedy that anyone would have to be outside the city. How many of those people *have* to be outside the city? Not one. God has made every provision for all of us to be inside the city, and he has desired it so much that he sent his only begotten Son to help us to be inside the city, together with our God and with our Saviour. I look forward to that day and to seeing Brother Jones and others who have been laid to rest. Through my ministry, I have had a chance to travel to many different places and I am quite sure I will not be able to return to every one of those places again, but I do want us all to be ready for Jesus to come so that we can fellowship together in the heavenly reunion. 

"Prayer Requests" from page 1

We would like to entreat your prayers again on behalf of Brother Michael Sibanda. We first presented his situation to you in our prayer request column in February 2002. He continues to be on death row, but, as the letter on p. 18 reveals, God is using him mightily in his adverse circumstances to bless others. Please keep his fellow prisoners in prayer, especially the one requesting our prayerful intercession on his behalf as the Supreme Court reviews his case.

We also hear from brothers and sisters who are faced with controversy in their homes and in their churches over their beliefs about who God is and what he is like. They need special wisdom from on high about how to present these precious truths and we ask that you uplift them in prayer also. 

Youth's Corner – Resourcefulness

(This story was presented to the children at Smyrna Chapel on a recent Sabbath and is adapted from The Long Road to China, The Story of Dr. Harry Miller, by Joy Swift.

Onycha Holt)

Our story is about the l-o-n-g word resourcefulness and the story starts a long time ago, in 1902, with Harry. Harry wanted to be a doctor. Have you thought about what work you would like to do when you grow up? Well, Harry wanted to be a doctor, but he had a problem. He did not like the sight of blood, and he did not want to be around anyone who had died. In fact, these thoughts made him very scared, so do you know what he did? He prayed about his problem, and then he prayed some more, and he continued praying about it until the first time he had to be in the room where a dead person was being examined to determine why he had died. He was very afraid to go in the room, but he knew that he had prayed about it, so he just walked right in, and do you know what happened? All his fears slipped away and a great calmness came over him! God had answered his prayers and now he *knew* he could become a doctor. He was not afraid anymore and he studied at a medical school where Dr. John Harvey Kellogg was one of the teachers. Harry learned to be a very skilled surgeon, and while he was at school, he met another person who was also studying to be a doctor. After they both finished school, they married, and now Harry and Maude were ready to be missionary doctors!

Do you remember the l-o-n-g word our story is about? R-e-s-o-u-r-c-e-f-u-l-n-e-s-s, and to a Christian, resourcefulness means that you are able to solve difficult problems or situations that no one has solved before by asking for God's help and then thinking about what you can do to fix the problem. Well, Harry and Maude wanted to go to China, but they did not know how to get there or what to take with them, but they knew they could pray about it. They also knew they wanted to take a printing press with them because once they arrived in China, Harry wanted to be able to tell the people about Jesus. Even though Harry and Maude had not learned the Chinese language yet and even though they knew the language had over 50,000 characters in the alphabet, Harry and Maude still wanted a printing press.

Harry learned about a printing company that might donate a press, so he went to the office and spoke to the manager. As he stroked his chin, the manager said, "Well, I will think this over and let you know," and then Harry left the office. The next day the manager called Harry and said, "I have decided to give you a press, but it is not an electric one." "Oh good!" said Harry. "Where we are going there is no electricity!" Now Harry had his press and with it he received a container of over 3,000 pieces of Chinese type to print with. Then Harry talked to another company and that company donated an operating table and surgical supplies. Someone else

donated a typewriter, and the Iowa and Ohio Seventh-day Adventist Conferences agreed to pay the expenses of their ocean voyage, plus a small stipend once they arrived, so they were ready to go. In 1902, Harry and Maude boarded a ship for China! They were finally on their way!

After arriving in China and seeing how the people lived, Harry said, "I really want to enable these people to help themselves." For example, even though Harry was a very good surgeon, almost every time he performed an operation, the people's surgical wounds would become infected and people even died from the infections because, as Harry found out, the people in China did not like water. They did not like to wash and be clean and they would not keep their surgical wounds, or any wound, clean. Even the local doctors did not understand the need for cleanliness and these doctors would cover up cuts and sores with plaster. The wound then continued to fester and grow worse under the plaster, and people became very sick because of it. Harry tried to teach the people they needed to wash and keep their bodies clean, especially where the wounds were, and he tried to teach them how to use hot and cold treatments to promote healing, but they still would not use water. They were too afraid they would catch pneumonia or some other disease from the water and die! So Harry had to be *resourceful* if he was going to help them, and, remember, being resourceful means to first pray and ask God for wisdom to help you solve the problem that you are not quite sure how to solve, and then, after prayer, use your mind as God shows you what to do to solve the problem. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him (James 1:5)." Harry knew the Chinese people needed to use water to stay clean and healthy, especially after surgery, but he was not sure how he could convince them. He tried to teach them about hot and cold treatments, but they would not even consider them because it was *water*! So this is what Harry did. He put potassium permanganate in the hot water. All this chemical did was turn the water red! In the cold water, he added methylene blue and all that did was turn the water blue! The people, however, thought it was medicine! It was red medicine and blue medicine and they would use them! Patients came from all around for Harry's special medicine.

Harry encountered another problem when he tried to set up the printing press. His press had a round cylinder that sent a sheet through every time he turned the handle, but he had 3,000 little pieces of type that he had to put together to make sentences in the Chinese language. It did not take him long to realize, "I can't do this! It is taking too much time to sort through all of these pieces of type in order to print a paper." So, he thought about his problem and was *resourceful*. "I need to make a special table and a special cabinet with little


cubbyholes to keep the type organized. I also need shelves and a stand to put the press on.” So, he took a piece of paper and a pencil and he began to draw just what he needed. A lot of boys and girls like to draw and drawing can be very helpful. It helped Harry. He drew the shapes and sizes of all the things he needed, he next obtained the materials, and then he built the stand, the table, the shelves, and all the cubbyholes. Harry also had another problem. The building they were working in did not have heat and the ink kept freezing. What could he do? He prayed and then thought a lot about it. He tried experiment after experiment until he finally found a solution that kept the ink from freezing! Now they were able to print tracts that told the people how much Jesus loved them.

Another problem really concerned Harry. In the early 1900’s the only milk for babies in China was from the baby’s mother, but if the mother became very sick, she could not feed her baby and the baby would cry from hunger. Many babies eventually died because there was no milk to give them. There were no cows or goats in China at that time, so there was no way to obtain any other kind of milk for the hungry babies. So, Harry thought, “I have to be resourceful about this.” He noticed on the streets of the town many vendors selling tofu. These vendors ground up soy beans to make tofu and Harry noticed that they discarded some of the liquid from the soybean. Harry thought, “They are throwing away liquid. Maybe this is something the babies can drink!” He was excited about this but when he tried it, it tasted bitter. It also gave the babies stomachaches and caused them to cry, so he thought, “What I am doing is not right. I have to try another way.” And that is what he did. He tried many times and finally came up with a good recipe for soy milk that the little babies could drink if their mothers were not able to give them enough milk or if their mothers were too sick to feed them. This was a wonderful thing. Now they had something to give the hungry babies.

In fact, Harry brought his soy milk to America when he came back for a visit, but it did not sell well because we have plenty of cows and goats here that give us milk. Later Harry sold some of his recipes for soy milk and vegetarian products to Worthington Foods and Loma Linda Foods and then used the money for further research because Harry wanted to help people. Harry also developed a small machine to make tofu easily and the Ministry of Health in Japan ordered 30,000 of them to put in the tofu shops in Japan.

Harry did all this because he wanted to help people. It was not important to him to make a lot of money from his *resourcefulness*; he only wanted to help the people in China and Japan and around the world. In fact he even helped two presidents of the United States, Presidents Taft and Wilson, by being a consultant to them. He helped little babies and grown-ups too.

When you have a problem and you are not quite sure how to solve it, you should first pray and ask God to help you and then you need to think about what you can do to fix the problem. Even grown-ups have to think hard about solutions. If a mechanic is trying to fix a car and things just do not work the way they are supposed to, he has to be resourceful and discover a way around the problem. A carpenter building a house will meet many problems that will take resourcefulness to solve. Teachers think a lot about how they can best help their students learn what is important for them to learn.

Boys and girls can be resourceful too. When you are around your house, what you can be resourceful about and think is: “How can I help people in my house? How can I help my Mommy and Daddy and my brothers and sisters?” Or, “How can I help my neighbors and my friends?” That is how Harry thought. He thought about how he could help the Chinese people and he ended up helping people all around the world. You can start small in your home and one day you also may be a help to people all around the world. 

Man May Be As Pure in His Sphere As God Is in His

By Ellen White

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and 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). The heritage of the people of God is discerned through faith in the Word of God. “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

Through faith the children of God obtain a knowledge of Christ and cherish the hope of His appearing to judge the world in righteousness, until it becomes a glorious expectation; for they shall then see Him as He is, and be made like Him, and ever be with the Lord. The sleeping saints shall then be called forth from their graves to a glorious immortality. When the day of deliverance shall come, then shall ye return and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. When Christ shall come, it will be to be admired of all those that believe, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Those who are looking for the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, in life and character will seek to represent Him to the world. “And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 3:3). They will hate sin and iniquity, even as Christ hated sin. They will keep the commandments of God, as Christ kept His Father’s commandments. They will realize that it is not enough to acquiesce in the doctrines of truth, but that the truth must be applied to the heart, practiced in the life, in order

Continued on page 22

Your Lifestyle Affects Your Genetic Code-Fact or Fiction?

By Allen Stump and Onycha Holt

You may be familiar with the Human Genome Project completed in 2003 under the auspices of the U. S. Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health. It was a 13-year project to identify the approximately 25,000 genes in human DNA and the sequencing of the 3 billion chemical base pairs that, in various combinations, compose these 25,000 genes. The chemical composition of genes ranges from 51 million to 245 million base pairs. The DNA sequences for each human chromosome announced in 2003 at the completion of the project were only rough draft sequencing and in May 2006 researchers announced their final findings on the sequencing of human DNA (http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/faq/seqfacts.shtml).

Even though it will take many years to analyze the Human Genome Project's findings, it has been the conventional scientific wisdom for many decades that our genetic structure is overwhelmingly basic and critical to the person we are and to the person we are yet to become, physically, mentally, and even emotionally. This genetic material is inherited from our parents and manifests itself from the moment of conception onward. While scientists acknowledge the truth that environment has an impact on our development, environment has been considered to be secondary, and often insignificant, in its influence compared to the genetic composition with which we are born, but for decades scientists have also known about the epigenome, and this knowledge is of very special significance to us as Seventh-day Adventist Christians living in the end of time. The *entire* genetic DNA data is replicated in every new cell that is formed in our bodies. Ethan Watters explains this in his recent article, *DNA Is Not Destiny*: "A human liver cell contains the same DNA as a brain cell, yet somehow it knows to code only those proteins needed for the functioning of the liver. Those instructions are found not in the letters of the DNA itself but on it, in an array of chemical markers and switches, known collectively as the epigenome, that lie along the length of the double helix (*Discover*, November 2006, p. 33)."

This is incredible information to us as Seventh-day Adventists. Genes can be turned on or off by these "chemical markers and switches"! "Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency. Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and passion. God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to

impart (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 175-176)." We have known for a long time, for example, that identical twins, which have the very same genetic makeup, can develop physically very differently from one another. Differences have also been noted in what diseases they acquire and even in the personalities they display, and we now know that this is because of differences in their epigenomes, according to Dr. Manel Esteller at the Spanish National Cancer Center in Madrid. One reason The Human Epigenome Consortium and The Epigenome Network of Excellence have been created is to learn how to externally manipulate epigenomes so they will turn off, for example, the culprits that allows diseases, such as cancer, to grow.

A very interesting experiment was conducted at Duke

University in 2000 by Dr. Randy Jirtle and Robert Waterland on agouti mice. These mice are called agouti because they carry the agouti gene, which causes them to have a ravenous appetite, be yellow in color (instead of brown), and have a shortened lifespan due to their susceptibility to cancer and diabetes. Because of their appetite they also are very obese. Jirtle and Waterland, however, produced offspring from typical agouti mice that were brown, slim, and did not have a susceptibility to cancer and diabetes even though they still carried the agouti gene. How did they accomplish this? By simply changing the mother's diet! Starting just before conception the mother mice were fed a diet rich in specific chemicals known as methyl donors and known to attach to the agouti gene and turn it off,

chemicals that are commonly found in many foods such as "onions, garlic, beets, and in the food supplements often given to pregnant women. After being consumed by the mothers, the methyl donors worked their way into the developing embryos' chromosomes and onto the critical agouti gene. The mothers passed along the agouti gene to their children intact, but thanks to the methyl-rich pregnancy diet, they had added to the gene a chemical switch that dimmed the gene's deleterious effects (Ethan Watters, *Discover*, p. 33)."

Even more amazing to this study is the fact that research is also demonstrating the epigenome is sensitive to the environment. "...an added dose of mothering can tweak the epigenome—and thereby alter the software of our genes—in ways that affect an individual's body and brain for life...epigenetic signals from the environment *can be passed on from one generation to the next, sometimes for several generations*, without changing a single gene...changes wrought by one's diet, behavior, or surroundings can work their way into the germ line and echo far into the future. Put



DNA Splitting for Cell Division

simply, and as bizarre as it may sound, what you eat or smoke today could affect the health and behavior of your great-grandchildren (*Ibid.*, p. 34).” (Emphasis supplied in this article unless otherwise noted.)

And most astounding is this thought of Dr. Jirtle: ““Before, genes predetermined outcomes. Now everything we do—everything we eat or smoke—can affect our gene expression and that of future generations. Epigenetics introduces the concept of *free will* into our idea of genetics’ (*Ibid.*)”

Finally, science is catching up with what we, as Christians, should have known all along. Manoah and his wife were told that Manoah’s wife was to beware of all that the angel of the LORD had instructed her concerning her diet *prior* to the birth of Samson. “And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe (Judges 13:13, 14).” It is preciously significant that Jesus was willing to visit this couple twice to instruct them in the importance of prenatal dietary influences. (For Bible references that the angel of the Lord is Jesus, see last month’s article, *Thoughts on the Current Sabbath School Quarterly; Was the Angel Jacob Struggled with God the Father or Christ?*) As our Creator, Jesus knows what counsel to give couples concerning their future children, but how few have been willing to accept it because it has not been understood until now!

God has also, through the inspiration given Ellen White, provided future parents additional guidance with these words:

Every woman about to become a mother, whatever may be her surroundings, should encourage constantly a happy, cheerful, contented disposition, knowing that for all her efforts in this direction she will be repaid tenfold in the physical *as well as the moral character* of her offspring (*Healthful Living*, p. 152).

The effect of prenatal influences has been by many lightly regarded; but the instruction sent from heaven to those Hebrew parents . . . shows how the matter is looked upon by our Creator. The mother who is a fit teacher for her children must, *before their birth*, form habits of self-denial and self-control; for *she transmits to them her own qualities*, her own strong or weak traits of character. The enemy of souls understands this matter much better than do many parents. He will bring temptations upon the mother, knowing that if she does not resist him, *he can through her affect her child* (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 262).

The words spoken to the wife of Manoah contain a truth that the mothers of today would do well to study. In speaking to this one mother, the Lord spoke to all the anxious, sorrowing mothers of that time, and to all the mothers of succeeding generations. Yes, every mother may under-

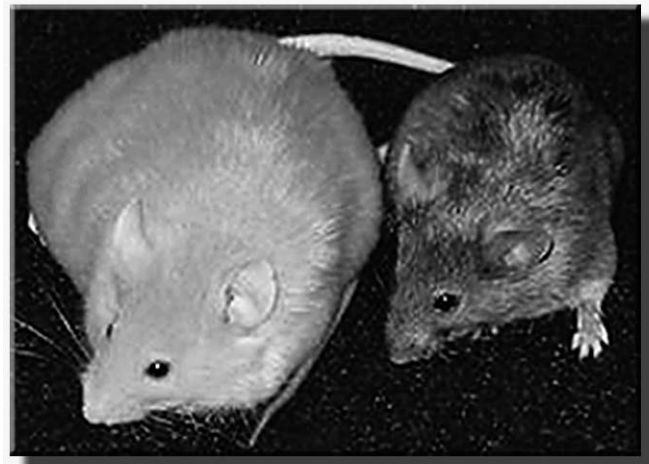


Photo courtesy of Duke University Medical Center

“One-year-old female genetically identical Agouti mice. Maternal methyl donor dietary supplementation shifts the coat color of the offspring from yellow [left] to brown [right], and reduces the incidence of obesity, diabetes, and cancer (<http://www.dukemednews.org/gallery/detail.php?id=1125>).”

stand her duty. She may know that the character of her children will depend vastly more *upon her habits before their birth* and her personal efforts after their birth, than upon external advantages or disadvantages (*The Signs of the Times*, February 26, 1902).

These statements speak of the mother’s role in giving to her children the greatest advantages possible by conducting herself in a righteous manner. But even the lifestyle of the father can have a bearing as well. Notice what God’s messenger has said:

As a rule every intemperate man who rears children transmits his inclinations and evil tendencies to his offspring . . . as an inheritance of woe from father to son, and from generation to generation, and this brings anguish and suffering into the world (*Healthful Living*, p. 57).

How thankful we should be for this instruction from God through Ellen White, instruction that for many years has been scoffed at by some scientists and unbelievers, but instruction that is now being proved to be fully accurate.

When God said, “For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me (Exodus 20:5),” he is telling us that something does pass from father to child, but it cannot be the penalty of sin, for Ezekiel tells us that the punishment of one man’s sin is not to be borne by another. “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son (Ezekiel 18:20).” We can, however, see clearly from current research concerning the epigenome that even what we thought were genetic certainties can be altered.

This has a tremendous application to those living in the last generation, a generation that will completely reflect the character of God in spite of the wickedness surrounding

them. We know that “Satan has not been stupid and careless these many years, since his fall, but has been learning. He has grown more artful. His plans are laid deeper, and are more covered with a religious garment to hide their deformity. The power of Satan now to tempt and deceive is *tenfold greater* than it was in the days of the apostles. His power has increased, and *it will increase*, until it is taken away. His wrath and hate grow stronger as his time to work draws near its close (*Spiritual Gifts*, vol.2, p. 277).

Whenever soldiers prepare for battle, they strive to be in the best physical and mental condition possible in order to have the best chance of being successful. We are at war with the forces of evil and our need for health reform and temperance in order to obtain the best chance of success against Satan and his angels should be clear from what we have studied. You might ask: Does not the Lord Jesus give us the power to obtain victory over sin and Satan? Is it not having the faith of Jesus that makes the difference? Of course. Only Jesus can supply the help we need; however, the methods that he uses vary and we may expect him to work in a manner that is consistent with what he has revealed in inspiration. Remember Manoah and his wife. They were given strict instruction concerning temperance. Paul also mentioned the need he had to be temperate, so that he might run the race and obtain the incorruptible crown:


And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

So while Paul could say, “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57),” Paul also advocated that our lifestyle is important for the Lord to be able to give us that victory. Daniel and his companions deemed temperance so important that they were willing to risk their lives for it (Daniel 1). Peter mentions temperance as a virtue upon which our character is built (2 Peter 1:6). It is important to realize that temperance is more than just the avoidance of eating the wrong things and it is also more than the avoidance of eating the wrong amounts of even proper things. The Greek word translated temperance in the New Testament is (*egkrateia*), which means self-control. The virtue of self-control is needed by all and it will help determine not only our own destinies, but that of our posterity as well. Therefore, it should be with great and solemn care that we consider all that we do. No wonder Paul wrote: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).” However, our lifestyle does not, of itself, lock our descendants into either good or bad outcomes contrary to their free will, but it does affect their tendencies in choice of lifestyle. Living fully for God will give them an opportunity

to have the best advantage possible, or living for self will cause them to be at great disadvantage. Perhaps those of us whose children are grown have learned or accepted these truths too late, but all of our young people who are contemplating being parents should highly consider these concepts. There is *nothing* that they do that does not have some kind of affect upon their future children, to one degree or another.

What about those who have been born with, what some might describe as, “a bad set of genes”? These people need to be very careful in their approach to both mental and physical health. While dealing with a genetically inferior body (at least in comparison to others) they will have the best chance for a healthier, more productive life if they follow good lifestyle habits and practices. It should come as no surprise that Ellen White noted our personal need to become acquainted with human physiology:

Upon fathers as well as mothers rests a responsibility for the child’s earlier as well as its later training, and for both parents the demand for careful and thorough preparation is most urgent. Before taking upon themselves the possibilities of fatherhood and motherhood, men and women should become acquainted with the laws of physical development—with physiology and hygiene, with the bearing of prenatal influences, with the laws of heredity, sanitation, dress, exercise, and the treatment of disease; they should also understand the laws of mental development and moral training (*Education*, p. 276).

As Seventh-day Adventists, we should be very thankful for the instruction the Lord has given us concerning these matters, given long before modern science understood them. God will demonstrate through the final generation that even corrupt DNA is no excuse for sin or for living a sinful lifestyle. “The acceptance of Christ’s atonement is the groundwork of true faith. . . . Those who will look long enough into the divine mirror to see and despise their sins, their unlikeness to the meek and lowly Jesus, will have strength to overcome. All who truly believe will confess and forsake their sins. They will *cooperate* with Christ in the work of bringing their hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong under the control of the divine will, so that sin shall not have dominion over them. Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, they will be changed into His likeness (*Our High Calling*, p. 117).” Remember Dr. Jirtle’s words that “...everything we do—everything we eat or smoke—can affect *our* gene expression and that of *future generations* (*Discovery*, November 2006, p. 34).” The judgment will prove that alcoholism, homosexuality, and other sins that, at times, are blamed on genetics, need never to have captured people with their enticing grips. May we, as Daniel, purpose in our hearts not to defile ourselves and that we will serve our magnificent Creator, whose work is described by David: “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well (Psalm 139:14).” 

Smyrna Services and Studies Broadcast via the Internet and Phone Conferences

A couple of years ago I began to think seriously about the possibility of broadcasting the weekly Smyrna Chapel services, as well as our camp meeting services, live over the Internet. At the time, the cost for such services was high and



Brother Ben Turner Teaching Sabbath School

as we only had a slow dial-up connection available we did not have the speed needed to stream live signals, especially



Pastor Stump Preaching

video signals. Like most services of technology, the cost of internet data transmission has decreased and we now have a satellite connection to facilitate internet transmissions. Country living in the little hollows of West Virginia has many advantages; however, very high-speed internet access is not one of them.



Young People Listening to Children's Story

Our satellite, while being much faster than a dial-up connection, is barely fast enough to stream audio signals, and, even then, it is choppy at times.

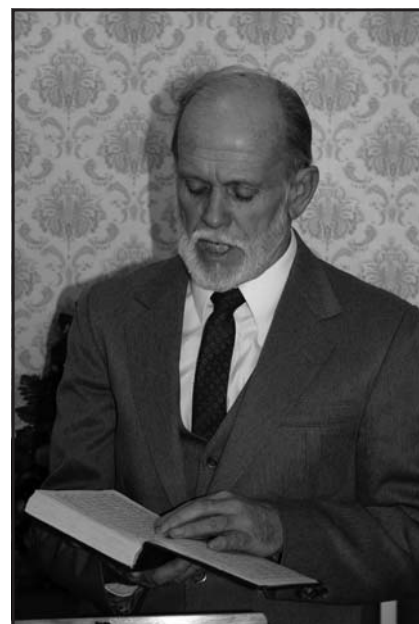
However, despite this, we began broadcasting in July 2006. Our listeners had to be patient with us due to the poor signal. Since then, we have been able to transmit via phone conferencing and this has helped. By using this means, one can access our broadcast on the Internet via Skype or by simply dialing a number and listening over the phone. The quality has improved dramatically by this process, and we are very thankful that the listeners can now hear much better.

To access Chapel services by the Internet, you need to

have Skype installed on your computer. Skype is free and is available at www.skype.com and allows communication on levels from chat to audio conversations. You may go to our home page at www.smyrna.org to directly access Skypecast and/or to be involved in a chat session. If you are currently running Skype on your computer, you may dial +99008275126052 within your Skype program to access our broadcast.



Sister Holt Telling the Children's Story



Brother Holt Leading Song Service

In addition to being able to access the services directly from the Internet, you can also listen to the broadcast through the phone by dialing: 1-712-432-4990 and entering room #5126052 when prompted. In Germany, you may call 01805007620 and from the UK you may call 08701191313 and then enter the above-listed room number. Long distant charges do apply, but if you have free weekends on a cell



**Sisters Bethany Turner and Elizabeth Kessler
Sharing Special Music**

phone or a phone plan such as Verizon's Freedom Plan you will not have any cost to listen.

Recently, we have begun broadcasting our Wednesday evening prayer meetings (7:00 p.m. EST), in addition to our



Sharing a Moment of Fresh Air

Sabbath worship services (11:00 a.m. EST). For all those who do not have a regular church service during these times, we earnestly invite you to join us. We are also now recording our services though

highspeedconferencing.com. These recordings are being archived and you can access them, by date and time, through this website for either listening or downloading. The programs are listed in GMT (Greenwich mean time), which is the equivalent of eastern standard time plus five hours.

We are hoping to have a question and answer mode working soon whereby we can have a discussion time in which callers can be systematically unmuted to share thoughts or ask questions.



**Ladies in the
Kitchen**

For those not familiar with our services, please let me explain a little of what you might expect. Our Wednesday evening prayer meeting begins with an opening prayer and is followed by a



**Pastor Stump Makes
a Point**

brief song service. We then open the floor for testimonies and experiences that the brothers and sisters wish to share. This is followed by a Bible study. After our study, we share our prayer requests, and then have a season of prayer. We encourage you to listen and to invite your friends and neighbors to listen also! If you have prayer concerns we try to open the lines so that prayer requests can be shared from the long-distance part of the congregation.

Our Sabbath worship service resembles a historical Adventist worship service except there are no calls for offerings. (We do provide a box in our foyer for tithes and offerings.) We begin with prayer, which is followed by a welcoming thought and an opening hymn. After requests are shared, we have prayer. If you have prayer requests you would like to have mentioned on Sabbath to be remembered during our seasons of prayer, you may email them to us and we will gladly include them in our prayers. (Due to the larger congregation and complexity of Sabbath services compared to the Wednesday night prayer meeting, we are not currently able to unmute and open the lines during the Sabbath morning service.) After prayer, someone usually shares a special musical selection and then we have a children's story.

After this, the minister breaks the bread of life by opening the Word of God. After the sermon, we usually close with a song and a prayer of commitment and consecration. We are considering ways to encourage more interaction with our Skype

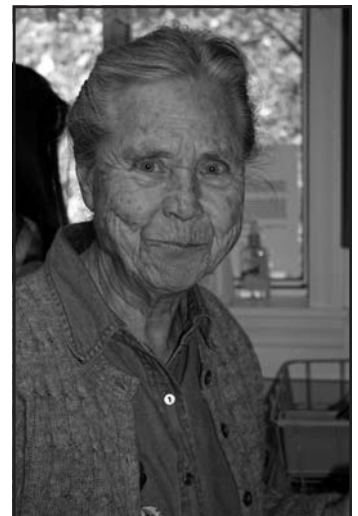
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Brother Luke



**Sister Turner
Serving Rolls**



**Sister Arlene Bailey
Always Makes Us
Smile**



Brother Hans Stump Leading Song Service

listeners during the Sabbath services.

While not part of our Skypecast, there are almost always a few people, and sometimes the whole church, that will stay to have dinner together, using our church kitchen and fellowship hall. I realize that one of the sad problems of many of those who are faithful is their lack of having fellowship with like believers each Sabbath.

I truly love and appreciate the opportunity to worship



Fellowship Dinner



Sister Dolly Uhl and Her Son Brother Allen

with God's people each Sabbath. I think often of Paul's admonition:

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:24, 25).

Those who now have the privilege of assembling together should by all means take advantage of it, for the day is not too distant when we will no longer have this ability. For those who have no one to worship with, we sincerely invite you to be a part of our fellowship, despite being physically separated.

Other Broadcasts

Brother David Sims from historyinfo.net also does a regular Internet broadcast over Skype. Being on the west coast of the United States, he begins about three hours after we do at Smyrna. If you use Skype you may dial: +990008275782729. From a standard telephone line you may call 1-712-432-4990 and when prompted for the conference room number, key in 5782729.



Brother David Sims

Brother Willis Smith of God's Word, God's Way has two weekly radio broadcasts on 1220 AM and 1440 AM. There is a Saturday evening broadcast that runs from 8:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. and a Sunday evening broadcast that runs from 9:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. These broadcasts reach several states with the three angels' messages. I was recently blessed to be the speaker for the Saturday evening broadcast as Pastor Smith had asked me to speak on the origin of the Trinitarian doctrine. We were able to broadcast this service over the Internet as well.



Elder Willis Smith

Please keep all of these services and evangelistic programs in your prayers and we greatly appreciate you being a part of the services when you can!

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:25).

Letters

Please send me the Bible lessons on the Righteousness of Christ. I do enjoy *Old Paths*. **MD**

Enjoyed the video you sent—we need them. **MT**

Thank you for your response about rebaptism...I have a Worldwide Church of God background...a lot of what I learned early on and believed for years was dead wrong. For example, I believed...that once converted, any sin committed by a believer that was not covered by a specific sacrifice (in Leviticus) was not pardonable...I have been told I'm twice dead and that to read the Bible or pray would be to take God's name in vain. **IL**

I am...incarcerated in Harare Central Prison here in Zimbabwe, Africa. I am one of the inmates with Michael Sibanda whose name is familiar with you. We are both in death row. The interest to know God better has driven me to write you this letter asking for some books and other reading material you are able to send, not forgetting to ask you to pray for me to be exonerated if ever this will be according to God's will. I have been introduced to you by Brother Michael who has turned everyone on death row to be a Christian through the material you gave him. Unfortunately Michael is also an incapacitated individual who cannot provide enough books to every one of us to get full information about the love of God. What touches me most is to know that God is love despite the condemnation we receive from the world. Some of us used to fear when considering our fate, but through Michael's admonition that we should not fear execution but God instead, has given me courage. He told us that death is not an issue but what is most important is to know God's love and his Son Jesus Christ who was offered to us as an expiation for our sins. I would like also to receive your monthly newsletters, the Present Truth. As for me, I am still having a chance to get an alternative sentence since my case is yet to be reviewed by the Supreme Court. That's why I am earnestly asking you to pray for me. **Zimbabwe**

Let us remember those in bonds (Hebrews 13:3). Editor

Thank you for your magazine, *Old Paths*. I read both issues from cover to cover. The quality and content of your magazine is excellent...I read under Letters someone from Florida said, "But I need to get your magazine, *Old Paths*, especially the issues on the Holy Spirit, which you published earlier this year in conjunction with the church quarterly." Would you be gracious enough to send me these issues on the Holy Spirit? **TN**

I heard your teaching tonight on the radio and I decided I needed to reconsider my belief in the Trinity. Please send me what information you can on the origin of this doctrine and the Scriptures used to prove or disprove it. Thank you. **NC**

The November 2006 issue of *Old Paths* has been opened. It seems there was a production error: two copies of the sheet containing pgs. 5 and 6, and no copy of the sheet containing pgs. 2 and 3. Do you have a complete copy you can send along? I love to keep my issues, and don't want to miss out on what is being said. Thanks so much, and God bless. **CA**

We are glad to send a complete copy. We invite anyone who does not receive a complete copy of Old Paths to let us know as soon as possible so corrections may be made! Editor

Sabbath Morning after worship and a hurried breakfast ...I listened to your sermon [broadcast on the Internet]. You know Pastor Allen, I so much appreciate you broadcasting them! **CA**

Two or three years ago I received your Advancing In Light handout at the Florida camp meeting. I do not put my faith in the hands of man (my pastor), and I believe that we should follow the instructions of the Bible. So following Paul's advice in 1 Thess. 5:20, 21, I read the pamphlet, which at the time I thought interesting but put it aside as not having too much weight. Well, about six months later I decided to start reading the Spirit of Prophecy series starting with *Patriarchs and Prophets*. That's when I started having questions about the Holy Spirit. All the sermons that I've heard were that the Holy Spirit was an active part of creation but Ellen White never mentions the Holy Spirit [in the creation]. She states that only Jesus was allowed into the councils of the Father. Then when she uses the part of Proverbs 8 that speaks of wisdom and says that Jesus is referring to himself, I came to the conclusion that she did not believe in the Trinity doctrine. That's when I re-read your pamphlet and it started making more sense. Since then I believe that this is the doctrine that is going to bring on the great shaking time. I have experienced the beginning of the persecution that I see coming against God's people starting in our own churches. I believe that believing in the Trinity doctrine is breaking the 1st & 2nd Commandment. It is the way SDA's are going to receive the mark of the beast. We are sealed with the law not just the Sabbath. They say that truth is progressive. I wonder how long it is going to be before they progress to Sunday worship. **FL**

I wanted to let your readers know that I am a certified herbalist with more than thirty-five years of experience working one-on-one with people suffering from different diseases. I have written a book on cancer, *Cancer and You, The Good News You Should Know*, and a book on diabetes, both giving a full natural program to help the body heal. I also have available reports on different types of diseases, herbal products, and juicers. For more information, you may contact me, Joyce Trout, at 175 Music Barn Lane, Monterey, TN 38574, or call 931-498-2844. **TN**

Amazu Ebenator in Oru west local government of Imo State, requested enough copies of your following tracts for their GREATER AMAZU EVANGELISM CRUSADE : According to them, they said that they only want your tracts because of the truth they found. So they requested the following tracts: One hundred bible facts on the Sabbath question, 2) the love of God 3) the one God of the bible. They requested about 5000 copies of each. Date for their crusade is 2-9th December 2006. **Nigeria**

We were sorry that due to the limited time between receiving this request and the crusade we were not able to meet the need. Please pray that the Lord will provide us the raw materials to produce these tracts and the wisdom to help us all plan so we can help meet such needs in the future! Editor

Mission Trip Update

by Lynnford Beachy

For the past two months my family and I have been traveling across the United States holding meetings and visiting people in their homes. I would like to share some of our experiences.

Stonecave, Dunlap, TN - October 6, 7

Brother John Felts hosted meetings at a former church school, called Stonecave, near Chattanooga, Tennessee. Pastor Allen Stump and I spoke at these meetings. It was a pleasure to meet some of these brethren for the first time. We focused on what the Bible says about God, His Son, and His Spirit. The Lord blessed in the presentations and several people heard the message for the first time.

One brother in the local area had received one of our tracts a few weeks earlier, and called our office two days before the meetings, not realizing we were coming to his area. I informed him of the upcoming meetings, and encouraged him to attend. He came out on Sabbath afternoon to hear the message for the first time. He told us the story of how he received the tract in a “free book” box in a nearby store. We could see the Lord’s hand in it all. It was a blessing to see how God worked this out.

We also met a lady there with four young children, whom she was raising on her own. My wife visited with her and they instantly became good friends. We found out that the next family we were to visit were mutual friends of ours, and we planned to make the three-hour trip and visit them together. Some other friends from Canada happened to be visiting at the same time and we had an evening meeting with a few other local brethren. Our host exclaimed, “Only God could have worked this out. This is like having a mini camp meeting in our home.” It certainly was a blessing to meet together and study about the righteousness of God. We had some discussion regarding whether death was a natural unavoidable result of sin, or if God had deliberately instituted death as the wages of sin. After some study and discussion someone pointed out that after Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit:

The LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: . . . So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Genesis 3:22-24)

The fact that God chose, in mercy, to keep Adam and Eve from living forever after they sinned, proves that a sinner could have lived forever if God had not stepped in

to prevent it from happening. Therefore death must have been imposed by God as a way to deal with sin, rather than a natural, unavoidable result of sin. God did this because He loves man too much to allow him to live forever in a sinful condition in the misery caused by sin. We ended our study with a desire to study further. It was refreshing to study with our friends again.

Prayer request: A few weeks after our meetings in Stonecave, Brother John Felts had a stroke, and he still has not regained his speech and movement. Please keep him and his family in your prayers. I pray that the Lord will raise him up to continue ministering to others.

Stonefort, IL - October 14

Our first stop in Illinois was at the home of a man who used to have a large part in spreading the gospel, hosting several camp meetings at his home. After suffering a seizure he lost much of his memory and was left with the burden of trying to discover himself again. Things really changed in his life and we have not been in close contact ever since. The Lord worked things out to enable us to visit. The only phone number I had for him was his work number. I called him in the morning and reached his son, and planned a visit for that afternoon. In the afternoon I called again, and a message said the number has been disconnected. I couldn’t believe this because I had just spoken to someone a few hours earlier. I called again and received the same message. I later discovered that they had disconnected the phone for about two years, and three weeks before my arrival they had reconnected the telephone and had it disconnected the day of my arrival. Again I could see the hand of the Lord at work to enable us to visit together. We had a very nice visit and we returned on Sunday for another visit. It was good to see my brother again. Please pray for this family, as they are going through some difficult times.

On Sabbath morning brother Merritt Mills arranged for me to speak at a Seventh-day Baptist church in Stonefort, Illinois. I showed how the Bible prophesied that the papacy would introduce many pagan teachings into Christianity, and concluded with the prophecy in Daniel 11:36-39, where the Bible foretold that the papacy would introduce a “strange god,” which is none other than the trinity doctrine. The Lord really blessed, and several of them requested that I return to do a week-long prophecy seminar next year.

The following day we visited with Merritt Mills, his wife, Anita, and his mother, Mildred. We had worked together for

a few years in a home church in their area. It was a real blessing to see them again.

Kansas City, KS - October 21

We were able to spend a few days with our friends, Tim and Alicia Kritzell, in Kansas City. We were scheduled to have meetings on Sabbath in a local church, but things did not work out as planned. Yet, the Lord was able to work it out for good. We visited the church, and had some good opportunities to distribute some books and have a few Bible studies with people. I was glad for the opportunity to witness for the Lord even though my plans were not realized. Sometimes man's plans fail so that God's plans can be accomplished.

Mountain View, AR - October 27, 28

It was a blessing to spend some time with our friends, John Mark and Jeri Anne Brown, in Arkansas. We had meetings Friday night and all day Sabbath. We studied on the subject of righteousness by faith. We saw that we are completely helpless to do good on our own, and that Christ living in us is the only hope of glory. Brother John Mark also shared some insights into receiving God's righteousness. It was a pleasure to meet some of our brethren for the first time.

While we were in Arkansas we visited a family who had recently begun studying what the Bible says about God. We had a nice study on this topic, and they committed to study the subject for themselves. We were very happy that we were able to visit this family, especially considering the fact that we had a difficult time finding their home.

Crawford, CO - November 3, 4

We visited a family in eastern Colorado whom we had not seen for a few years. It was a real blessing to see them again. Afterwards we drove across the Rocky Mountains to hold meetings in Crawford, Colorado, at the home of Chuck and Lisa Clifford. At these meetings, the Lord blessed with some insights into His righteousness and our relation to it. We saw that we must acknowledge our filthy condition, ask God for a new heart, and then walk by faith, continually yielding our wills to God. James wrote, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) Even resisting the devil is something we can only do by faith, for we cannot stand in our own strength. "Be strong in the Lord, and in *the power of his might*. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:10, 11) Resisting the devil includes a steadfast determination not to yield to temptation, and a firm faith in God's

promises of victory. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling." (Jude 1:24) We had a wonderful Sabbath together.

Brother Clifford has nice tool shop, and he graciously allowed me to utilize it. When we left West Virginia we were towing our car using a quick-release tow bar, but the connection failed within a couple hundred miles. (The car did not completely come loose, but it soon would have if not corrected.) I switched to using an older tow bar that attaches with chains around the bumper. On Sunday morning, when I jacked up the car to reconnect the quick-release tow bar, I found that the bumper worked itself so loose that it nearly came off. Of the four small bolts that held it on, three of them were easily removed with my fingers. My wife said that several times she had prayed that God would send angels to hold the car on. I thank God that He answered her prayers. It was providential that Brother Chuck had everything I needed to reinforce the bumper and mount the brackets for the quick-release tow bar. It was like working inside of a hardware store. In several cases he had just enough of a particular item to complete the job. When I was finished, one trip to the hardware store was sufficient to replace the things I had used. It was a blessing to spend a few days with the Cliffords before leaving for Utah.

Moab, UT - November 10, 11

Shortly before arriving in Utah the motor that runs our heater in the RV failed. We were praying that the Lord would work something out, because it was cold in the area. On our way to Utah, Brother Doug Carroll, who was hosting the meetings there, informed me that he owns an RV repair shop, and offered to fix it. I was thankful for God's intervention to supply our needs. I was even more surprised when Doug refused to accept payment for the repair. I am grateful to God, and to my dear Brother, Doug, for their kindness to us.

We had meetings Friday night and all day Sabbath. The first two meetings focused on the new birth and receiving Christ's righteousness, with the remaining focusing on the truth about God and answering questions, such as 1 John 5:7, John 1:1, etc. (For Bible explanations of these texts, please visit our website or request further information from us.) There were several new people at the meetings, who seemed to enjoy learning more about God and His love for us.

The next day we visited Arches National Park, which was an amazing demonstration of the effects of the flood of Noah's day. Afterwards, we visited a church school where we had been invited to visit and eat dinner. It was a blessing to meet some new brothers and sisters and share a few books at the school. I believe we should share wherever we are. Nothing happens by chance, but God has a plan and is able to work all things together for good. (Romans 8:28)

Lookout, CA - November 17, 18

Brother David Sims hosted meetings in his home, where he invited his neighbors to attend. He also arranged to have all of the sermons broadcast live over the Internet and by phone conferencing through Skype.com.

A childhood friend of my wife had been traveling across the continental United States, visiting from her new home in Hawaii. When we were in Tennessee she contacted my wife attempting to visit us there, but our schedules did not synchronize so we missed her at that time. We did not hear from her again until we neared California. Brother David Sims informed us that a family from Hawaii was going to be visiting while we were there, and to our surprise it was the same family. We saw this as providential, as they are new to the truth about God and have reluctance about accepting it. They attended some of our meetings at David's home, and had many new thoughts to study. They told us that they would have been at David's home much earlier, but they had several delays that forced them to arrive at the same time we were there, though neither of us knew it.

Our first meeting was Friday evening. I shared a study on God's love in giving His Son. In addition to the group in David's home, there were about thirty people who listened over the Internet Skype.com, many of whom had not listened to David's broadcasts before. Some of them were from Russia, China, Brazil, Italy, and several other countries. After the meeting we answered questions. Along with a few questions from the room, there were several from those listening over the Internet. A man from West Virginia spoke up, sharing some thoughts on righteousness by faith that were very good. He was the first person I have encountered from a Sunday church who believes that God has provided a way for us to live without sin in this world. He rightly pointed out that this could only happen with Christ living in us. He was full of enthusiasm as he shared, and said that very few people want to listen to him because it is an unpopular message. We were all encouraged by his input.

The following morning I shared a message on the one God of the Bible, which was broadcast over the Internet. Some in the audience were skeptical of the message, but the Lord blessed, and His truth came out clearly, with very few questions at the end. We then took a break for a delightful lunch. This was the first time I had ever eaten tumbleweeds. They are gathered in their early stages, and then cooked as greens. They taste a little like asparagus, but look like collard greens.

The next two meetings covered the state of the dead and the mortality of the soul. Some of David's neighbors attended, and we had a very lively and enjoyable Bible study together on this subject. Several objections were addressed, and questions answered, such as the witch of Endor, the thief on the cross, the rich man and Lazarus, etc. We saw that the dead know not anything, and even King David has not gone to heaven yet. (Acts 2:29, 34) We closed the meetings with

everyone committed to studying these things out for themselves. Please pray that the seeds sown at these meetings will bring forth much fruit.

Conclusion


The previous month and a half has been a great blessing for my family and me. We have been encouraged to see the Lord work in so many ways. Time does not allow me to share all the interventions and blessings of God, nor of all the visits we made. We have found it to be far better to travel in an RV than it was in our car or in a van. Our children have a sense of being at home wherever we go, because they sleep in the same bed every night, with their normal evening routine.

Even though we have our meetings scheduled with time between for visits, we have not been able to visit everyone we wanted. For that I am sorry. If you would like to host meetings in your area, or if you would be interested in attending meetings or receiving a visit or study in your home, please contact me on my cell phone: 304-633-5411. I have a limited number of minutes on my cell phone during the day, but if you call before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. (my local time - currently Pacific time) I have unlimited minutes. Also, if you call using a Cingular cell phone we can talk anytime without using *your* minutes, nor mine. You may also e-mail me at meetings@presenttruth.info to arrange a meeting. We hope to see you soon. Until then, keep looking up, "for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28)

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area

Here is the currently-planned 2006/2007 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

- Dec. 15, 16** **Yuma, Arizona**, contact John Brown, 501-766-2386.
- Dec. 22, 23** **Yuma, Arizona**, contact John Brown, 501-766-2386.
- Dec. 29, 30** **Tucson, Arizona**, contact Lynnford Beachy, 304-633-5411.
- Feb. 16, 17, 2007** **Dallas, Texas**, contact John Fibranz, 817-380-3000.
- Feb. 23, 24, 2007** **Pensacola, FL**, contact Chaplain Jack VanOrd, 850-458-55491.
- Feb. 28-Mar. 4, 2007** **FLCM near Orlando**, contact Jim or Jerri Raymond, 407-291-9565.

Between these meetings we will be available to visit people in their homes and to have additional meetings. Check upcoming issues of *Present Truth* (available on our website) to keep informed about these meetings and others in your area. If you would like to host meetings in your area please contact me at (304) 633-5411. 

Books for Study and Sharing

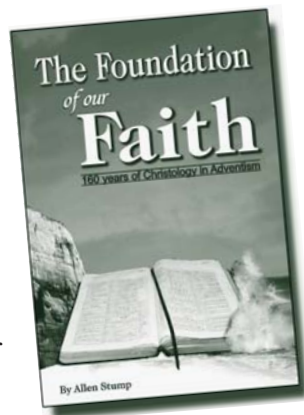
The Foundation of Our Faith Reprinted

We are thankful to announce that the book, *The Foundation of Our Faith*, is being reprinted for the fifth time.

This volume explores the roots of Seventh-day Adventism from the Christian Connection and the Millerite movement to our present time. Believing that the voice of Ellen G. White presents an inspired history of the Advent movement, this book explores Adventist Christology and demonstrates the harmony between the Bible, the writings of Ellen G. White, and the writings of the Advent pioneers concerning the doctrine of God.

We have performed a major upgrade to this book. Several pages of truth-filled information have been added on the Holy Spirit and the sonship of Jesus Christ, and answers to many difficult Bible texts and Spirit of Prophecy references have been provided. We have redesigned the cover, and we have changed the dimensions of the book, so that it can be held more easily.

We are working very hard to have the book ready by the time this issue of *Old Paths* is published. Please be patient with us if we are not exactly on schedule. The suggested donation for this book is \$7.50.



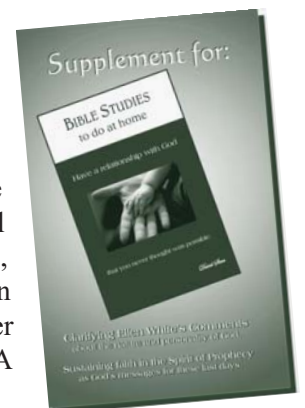
Bible Studies to do at Home written by David Sims

We are pleased to announce that Brother David Sims has written a booklet entitled, *Bible Studies to do at Home*. This booklet is designed to encourage and teach people how to know God as a personal friend. This book is excellent to share with non-Adventists since it is based on the Bible alone.

The topics covered are: “This is Life Eternal,” “Personality of God,” “That They Might Know Thee,” “The Father and the Son,” “The Only True God,” “To Know Christ,” “The Holy Spirit,” “A Day Without God,” and “God’s Love on Trial.”

There is also a supplement available clarifying Ellen White’s comments on the nature and personality of God. We believe you will be blessed by his studies.

Both of these booklets can be obtained through Smyrna Gospel Ministries for a donation of \$3.00, or \$1.50 each. You can also obtain the booklets by contacting Brother Sims at P.O. Box 33, Lookout, CA 96054.



“Man May Be...” continued from page 11
that the followers of Christ may be one with Him, and that men may be as pure in their sphere as God is in His sphere.

Not Hearers Only, but Doers

There have been men in every generation who have claimed to be the sons of God, who paid tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and yet who led a godless life, for they neglected the weightier matters of the law—mercy, justice, and the love of God.

There are today many who are in a similar deception; for while bearing an appearance of great sanctity, they are not doers of the Word of God. What can be

done to open the eyes of these self-deluded souls except to set before them an example of true piety and be ourselves not hearers only but doers of the commandments of the Lord, thus reflecting the light of purity of character upon their pathway?

Not Like the Worldling

The sons of God will not be like the worldling; for the truth received in the heart will be the means of purifying the soul and of transforming the character and of making its receiver like-minded with God. Unless a man becomes

like-minded with God, he is still in his natural depravity.

If Christ is in the heart, He will appear in the home, in the workshop, in the marketplace, in the church. The power of the truth will be felt in elevating, ennobling the mind and softening and subduing the heart, bringing the whole man into harmony with God. He who is transformed by the truth will shed a light upon the world. He that hath the hope of Christ in him will purify himself even as He is pure. The hope of Christ’s appearing is a large hope, a far-reaching hope. It is the

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Florida Revival Retreat

By David Fahnstock

hope of seeing the King in His beauty and of being made like Him.

When Christ shall come the earth will tremble before Him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself” (Psalm 50:3-6). In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing.

The Fate of Transgressors

John saw the fate of those who choose the path of transgression: “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).

A terrible doom awaits the sinner, and therefore it is necessary that we know what sin is, in order that we may escape from its power. John says, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Here we have the true definition of sin; it is “the transgression of the law.” How often the sinner is urged to leave his sins, and come to Jesus; but has the messenger who would lead him to Christ clearly pointed out the way? Has he clearly pointed out the fact that “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that he must repent and forsake the breaking of God’s commandments? . . .

God could not alter one jot or tittle of His holy law to meet man in his fallen condition; for this would reflect discredit upon the wisdom of God in making a law by which to govern heaven and earth. But God could give His only-begotten Son to become man’s Substitute and Surety, to suffer the penalty that was merited by the transgressor, and to impart to the repentant soul His perfect righteousness. Christ became the sinless sacrifice for a guilty race, making men prisoners of hope, so that through repentance toward God because they had broken His holy law, and through faith in Christ as their Substitute, Surety, and righteousness, they might be brought back to loyalty to God and to obedience to His holy law.

Christ’s Righteousness Makes Obedience Possible

It was impossible for the sinner to keep the law of God, which was holy, just, and good; but this impossibility was removed by the impartation of the righteousness of Christ to the repenting, believing soul. The life and death of Christ in behalf of sinful

There will be a “February Revival Retreat,” February 28—March 4 at the River Forest Campground, located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest on the scenic St. Johns River. All are invited to attend. While brothers and sisters from the Georgia and Florida areas will be coming, many others from different areas farther north will also be attending.


The theme of the meetings will be, “Discerning The Signs of The Times.” There will be much time for prayer.

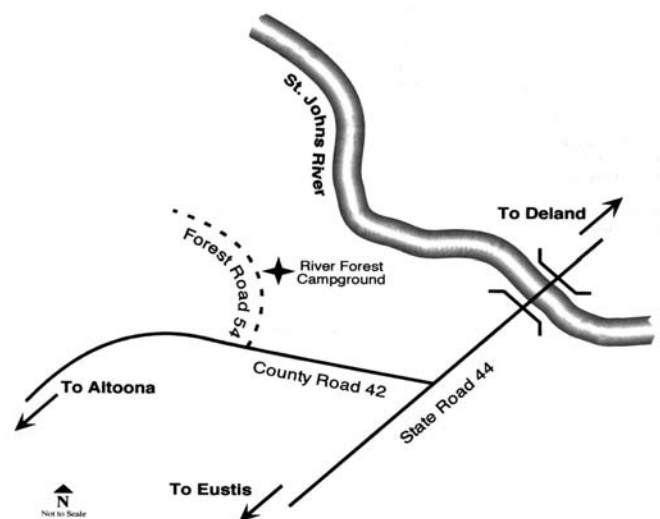
Speakers will be: Willis Smith (Ohio), Jeff Pippinger (Arkansas), Allen Stump (West Virginia), David Clayton (Jamaica), Ann Ford (West Virginia), Lynnford Beachy (West Virginia), and Barrington Hendricks (Florida).

A lunch will be provided on Sabbath. Each one will be responsible for their meals, and a nice kitchen is available. You might wish to consider bringing simple fruits and pancakes or waffles for breakfast, and simple salads and bean dishes for dinner in quantities enough for your family. This way, if you choose to combine your meals with others, they will be compatible.

There are no RV hookups, but plenty of room for RV’s and tents. There is a main building for meetings, showers, rest rooms, and, as mentioned earlier, a kitchen. If you can make it, please come. Mosquitoes may be present, so be prepared.

The River Forest Campground is approximately six miles west of Deland and twenty-five miles northeast of Eustis. It is located near the St. Johns River on County Road 42, about ¼ mile west of Crows Bluff, off of State Road 44.

For more information, please contact Jerri Raymond, (407) 291-9565. Hope to see you there! 



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man were for the purpose of restoring the sinner to God’s favor, through imparting to him the righteousness that would meet the claims of the law and find acceptance with the Father.

But it is ever the purpose of Satan to make void the law of God and to pervert the true meaning of the plan of salvation. Therefore he has originated the falsehood that the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross was for the purpose of freeing men from the obligation of keeping the commandments of God. He has foisted upon the world the deception that God has abolished His constitution, thrown away His moral standard, and made void His holy and perfect law. Had He done this, at what terrible expense would it have been to Heaven! Instead of proclaiming the abolition of the law, Calvary’s cross proclaims in thunder tones its immutable and eternal character. Could the law have been abolished, and the government of heaven and earth and the unnumbered worlds of God maintained, Christ need not have died. The death of Christ was to forever settle the question of the validity of the law of Jehovah. Having suffered the full penalty for a guilty world, Jesus became the Mediator between God

and man, to restore the repenting soul to favor with God by giving him grace to keep the law of the Most High. Christ came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them to the very letter. The atonement of Calvary vindicated the law of God as holy, just, and true, not only before the fallen world but before heaven and before the worlds unfallen. Christ came to magnify the law and to make it honorable. ✍

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