

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



Cathedral of Nimes France

Prayer Requests

Jesus spoke of the signs of the times, and the world is reeling under tragedy and trials everywhere. Recently in India, there has been a flood that displaced over one million people, and the conflict between Russia and Georgia has resulted in much bloodshed. Certainly, we must pray for those under such terrible conditions and for peace.

In the United States, a presidential election has grabbed the spotlight, and we are reminded of the counsel of Paul: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (1 Timothy 2:1, 2)." While

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"God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, Continued on page 2, col. 1

..... neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Where Christ is, even among the humble few, this is Christ's church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church. Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate place of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city, [or] enclosed in prison walls. The glory of God has penetrated the prison walls, flooding with glorious beams of heavenly light the darkest dungeon. His saints may suffer, but their sufferings will, like the apostles' of old, spread their faith and win souls to Christ and glorify His holy name. The bitterest opposition expressed by those who hate God's great moral standard of righteousness should not and will not shake the steadfast soul who trusts fully in God (Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, p. 315)." This is from a letter written in 1886 to Ellen White's sister and husband from Nimes, France, after viewing the Cathedral of Nimes and being exposed to the state churches of Europe.)


Report on Europe Trip

The entire month of August 2008 was devoted to visiting brothers and sisters in Europe. During this trip, I was able to meet with many new people, as well as with some that I already knew and love.

The planning of the trip was one that involved much prayer and some very wonderful, direct answers to our prayers. I had been invited to visit a group in the Netherlands and some folks in Germany. I had prior invitations, as well, from other brothers and sisters in other areas, so we began to pray that God would help me to schedule a trip in such a way as to see as many people as possible.

My trip began in France and progressed through the countries of Switzerland, Italy, the Vatican, Hungary, Romania, the Netherlands, Germany, and Norway. During the month of August, I visited with several home church groups and shared many Bible studies.

We are sorry that due to the size of this issue and due also to pressing issues that we must publish on next month, we will not publish the full trip report in *Old Paths*. We will, however, publish a full Internet report with several pictures on our website at <http://www.smyrna.org>. Just go to the main page and look for the link concerning the trip. This link will be archived later in the *Old Paths* menu. If you do not have access to the Internet and would like to read the report, we will send, as we are able, a copy of the report if you request one.

You will certainly wish to read this interesting and exciting report of God working firsthand in the giving of his message. I want to thank the many people who were daily praying for me and my meetings while I was away that many may be established in the present truth. 

The Holy Spirit

We are sorry it has taken so long to return to our series on systematic theology. The last article in this series was printed in the May 2008 issue of *Old Paths* and was on the topic of the Holy Spirit. Since then, other issues have required my attention—the Adult Sabbath School Quarterly for April, May, and June and my recent trip to Europe, for example. It is important, however, that we return to our coverage of these crucial doctrines, for we must understand the great truths our faith is built upon, and we will begin to do so this month with the concluding article on the Holy Spirit. This article is an edited compilation taken from *The Foundation of our Faith*. Let us leave the realm of tradition behind and notice the simplicity of the Bible teaching on the Holy Spirit as we examine very plain Bible texts.

Jesus is the Holy Spirit

It is very clear that Jesus is the Comforter and the Holy Spirit, for Jesus himself said that "the Comforter . . . is the Holy Spirit (John 14:26)" and then Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:17 that "the Lord [Jesus] is that Spirit." We find the basis for Christ being the Comforter in the incarnation. To be able and qualified to comfort and help his people, Jesus had to be made like his brethren.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren (Hebrews 2:9-11).

Paul continues:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham (Hebrews 2:14-16).

Christ partook of the seed of Abraham. Paul, in Romans 1:3, says that ". . . Jesus Christ our Lord . . . was made of the seed of David [not immaculate or sinless] according to the flesh." Paul leaves the reader with no doubt that he has a Saviour that comes close to him.

Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconcilia-

tion for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted (Hebrews 2:17, 18).

The word translated “behooved” in the Greek is *opheilo* (ὀφείλεν) which means “to be bound to,” “under obligation,” “indebted,” “owe.” Commenting on this, Elder M. L. Andreasen wrote:

If Christ is to be a merciful and faithful high priest, Paul says it behooves Him “in all things” to be like His brethren. This is obligatory. It is a duty He owes and must not avoid. He cannot make reconciliation for men unless He takes His place with them and in all things becomes like them. It is not a question of choice. He should, He must, He ought to, He is under obligation to, He owes it. Unless He has to struggle with the same temptations men do, He cannot sympathize with them. One who has never been hungry, who has never been weak and sick, who has never struggled with temptations, is unable fully to sympathize with those who are thus afflicted (*Letters to the Churches, Series A, no. 1, p. 6*).

Christ did not partake of the human experience in order to send somebody else to comfort us! Let us notice closely the words of Jesus to the disciples on the night of his betrayal:

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you (John 14:15-18).

Two points should be noted about the Spirit of truth. Firstly, the world cannot receive him. Secondly, neither can the world know him. Notice what John writes about Jesus in John 1:10, 11: “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” Here we see that Jesus was not received nor known by the world.

Jesus stated that he would send the “Spirit of truth” who was already dwelling with them. He clearly stated, “I will come to you.” The question that must be settled is: Did Christ mean that he himself would come or that he would send an associate? The word comforter is from the Greek *parakletos* (παράκλητος) which means “an intercessor,” or “one called beside.” *Parakletos* is also found in 1 John 2:1: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate [*parakletos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” John says that our advocate or comforter is Jesus.

Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul describes the work of a comforter:

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Fa-

ther of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort (*paraklesis*); Who comforteth (*parakaleo*) us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort (*parakaleo*) them which are in any trouble, by the comfort (*paraklesis*) wherewith we ourselves are comforted (*parakaleo*) of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation (*paraklesis*) also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation (*paraklesis*) and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted (*parakaleo*), it is for your consolation (*paraklesis*) and salvation. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation (*paraklesis*) (2 Corinthians 1:2-7).

While God is acknowledged as the one sending the comfort, he does it through his Son, “who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2 Corinthians 1:4 NKJ).” A person may sympathize, but he cannot empathize with another unless he has had a similar experience. A comforter can give comfort because he has suffered the same trials and struggles as the one he seeks to comfort. This is why Paul stated that it was imperative for Christ to accept the fallen nature of man so that he could properly comfort him. This concept makes the following Spirit of Prophecy statements shine with increased clarity:

The reason why the churches are weak and sickly and ready to die, is that the enemy has brought influences of a discouraging nature to bear upon trembling souls. He has sought to shut Jesus from their view as the Comforter, as one who reproveth, who warns, who admonishes them, saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” Christ has all power in heaven and in earth, and he can strengthen the wavering, and set right the erring. He can inspire with confidence, with hope in God; and confidence in God always results in creating confidence in one another (*The Review and Herald, August 26, 1890*).

What saith our Saviour? “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” When trials overshadow the soul, remember the words of Christ, remember that He is an unseen presence in the person of the Holy Spirit, and He will be the peace and comfort given you, manifesting to you that He is with you, the Sun of Righteousness, chasing away your darkness. “If a man love me,” Christ said, “he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Be of good cheer; light will come, and your soul will rejoice greatly in the Lord (Letter 124, 1897; *Daughters of God, p. 185*). (See also *Adventist*

Home, p. 350; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 179; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 296; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 49.)

If Jesus is the Comforter, why did he speak of “another Comforter?” The text in question is John 14:16 where Jesus says: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” To express the thought of Christ, John uses the Greek word *allos* (allos). *Allos* means another of the same kind, as opposed to *heteros* (heteros) which means another of a different kind. Notice the usages as given in these examples:

Another [*allos*] parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field (Matthew 13:24).

And there were also two other [*heteros*], malefactors, led with him to be put to death (Luke 23:32).

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another [*heteros*] gospel: Which is not another [*allos*]; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:6, 7).

Thus when Jesus said that he would send “another [*allos*] Comforter,” he was saying that the comfort that the disciples were to receive was to be of the same nature as the comfort that he had given them. Receiving “another Comforter” did not imply receiving a different Comforter.

If Jesus is speaking of himself as the Comforter in John 14:16, he is referring to himself in the third person. This would also be true in the following texts:

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John 14:17).

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you (John 14:26).

Are there any Scriptures which give a clear precedent of Jesus speaking of himself in the third person? Yes, in the following texts Jesus refers to himself in this very manner:

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is con-

demned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:13-18).

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise (John 5:19).

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent (John 17:3).

The truth that Jesus is the Spirit is also revealed in Ellen White’s writings:

Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to his father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 23).

No wonder Sister White wrote that the Holy Spirit was “the soul of his [Christ’s] life (*The Review and Herald*, May 19, 1904).”

Close Link in the Incarnation

The first chapter of Luke records Gabriel’s announcement to Mary that she would be the mother of the Christ.

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

Though not noted in the King James Version, the word “thing” is a supplied word with the adjective “holy” in the neuter gender. The same adjective “holy” is used in the beginning of the verse with the word “Ghost” (pneuma—Spirit). Therefore, the missing word to be modified in the second usage could be “spirit” instead of “thing.” The verse would then carry the following meaning: The Spirit of the Father would overshadow Mary and the Holy Spirit that would be born would be called the Son of God. This understanding parallels a statement from Sister White:

Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: *a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh*. He united himself with the temple. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” because by so doing he could associate with the sinful, sorrowing sons and daughters of Adam (*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 20, 1900; emphasis supplied). (See also *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1147.)

A parallel scripture for Luke 1:35 is found in Matthew's record. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18)." Joseph was then told, "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (v. 20)." The Adventist pioneers were quick to realize that if the Holy Spirit were coequal and coeternal, a person in all the same respects that God and Christ are, then Jesus would not be the Son of God, as the Scriptures clearly state, but rather the Son of the Holy Spirit.

The Pioneer Understanding of the Role of the Holy Spirit in the Incarnation

Hampton W. Cottrell, an old pioneer in the movement writing to the young LeRoy Froom, commented on Matthew 1:18, 20:

The conclusion drawn at that time [the time of the pioneers] was that the Holy Spirit was not a person in the sense that God and Christ are persons, if so, the same difficulty would be encountered with the Holy Spirit being everywhere present as is held by the Trinitarians concerning God and Christ as persons being everywhere present, and if it should be so conceded Christ would be the son of the Holy Spirit, rather that of God as the Bible declares him to be (Letter of H. W. Cottrell to LeRoy Froom, September 16, 1931).

Elder Cottrell (1852-1940) lived during a time when he had an opportunity to know and work with most of the early pioneers, as well as the new workers that came up after the turn of the century. He, like the rest of the early workers, was not a believer in the doctrine of the Trinity. Elder Froom had written to Elder Cottrell asking for information concerning the early believers' position on the "Trinity-Godhead." Brother Cottrell's letter began: "From my personal knowledge the doctrine of the 'Trinity-Godhead' was not taught by Seventh-day Adventists during the early days of my ministry." He went on to write:

It was taught and presumably believed to be true that the terms God, Christ, Holy Spirit and Comforter were expressions frequently used in the Bible interchangeably as follows:

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:17. "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Mat. 10:20. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8:9-12. "I know that this shall turn to my sal-

vation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:19. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost 2 Peter 1:21 (*Ibid.*)."

After making a few more observations with Scripture quotations, Cottrell concluded his letter by saying:

Elder Froom, It has been several weeks since I received your letter concerning the "Trinity-Godhead." I first thought best not to get mixed up in this or similar questions, so concluded not to write, but today there came to my mind a very strong impression that I ought to refer to a few of the Scriptures that were formerly used in favor [of] the view then advocated, at least in the section of country where I labored (*Ibid.*).

Interestingly, Elder Cottrell labored in many sections of the country and world. The *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* records that Elder Cottrell began his missionary work in Cleveland, Ohio, and then labored in Canada, New England, and Europe. He helped with the transition of the denominational headquarters from Michigan to Washington, D. C. Later in life, he served as president of the Pacific Union, the Western Oregon Conference, and the North Pacific Union; therefore, it is difficult to know what part of the country he was making reference to in his letter. History, however, documents that the early brethren in all these areas were non-Trinitarian.

Parallels in Inspiration

The Apostle Peter states that "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:21)." Here Peter states that the prophets were *moved by the "Holy Ghost."* In his first epistle, however, Peter states: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Peter 1:9-11)." Here Peter states that the prophets were *moved by "the Spirit of Christ."* Peter thus considered the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ to be one and the same.

Chapters two and three of Revelation present seven messages addressed to seven churches. Each message begins with an introduction by Christ using terminology connected with himself in the first chapter that reveals he is the one giving the message. The first message to the church at Ephesus is addressed as coming from the one who "holdeth the seven stars in his right hand (Revelation 2:1)." In Revelation 1:16, Jesus is described as having the seven stars in his right hand. The second message is addressed to the church at Smyrna by "the first and the last, which was dead and is alive (Revelation 2:8)." In Revelation 1:17 and 18, Jesus is described in the same manner. This is the pattern in each of the seven

messages. The speaker is introduced in a way which leaves no doubt that it is Jesus Christ speaking, yet every single message ends with the admonition “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (Revelation 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22).”

Another parallel is found in the record concerning Abraham and Sarah. Galatians 4:29 states that Isaac was “born after the Spirit”; however, in the Genesis account we read that it was “the LORD” who visited Abraham and Sarah.

And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him (Genesis 18:10).

Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son (Genesis 18:14).

Here the one speaking (Christ) said very plainly that he would return unto her.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 records the new covenant experience and states that it is “the LORD” who is speaking, yet in the New Testament it is attributed to the “Holy Spirit.”

Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more (Hebrews 10:15-17).

Isaiah says he heard the voice of the Lord saying: “Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed (Isaiah 6:9, 10).” In Acts 28:25, Paul attributes these verses to the Holy Ghost and then quotes Isaiah 6:9, 10 in the next two verses.

Paul, writing to the Romans, declares that the Spirit makes intercession for the saints. “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26, 27).” The same apostle declares in Hebrews that it is Jesus who “ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).” Also, Paul, writing to Timothy, stated clearly, “For there is *one* God, and *one* mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).” “No middle-man comes between the sinner and Christ (*The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899).”

Receiving the Spirit of Christ

Jesus repeatedly stated that he would be with his followers and dwell with them.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you (John 14:18).

I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:20).

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matthew 18:20).

Most students interpret these texts to mean that Jesus will be with us by the Spirit, the Comforter; however, as we noted earlier, Jesus is the Comforter! This helps the statements of Christ to take on added meaning and depth.

The Apostle Paul wrote the following two parallel passages: “Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27),” and “that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us (2 Timothy 1:14).” This parallel raises questions. If Christ is to dwell in us, how and where does he dwell in us?

Let us address the question of where Christ is to dwell in us. Certainly there is only one place he may dwell and that is the mind. This may be seen from the following texts: “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16).” “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7:22).” The expressions “the inner man” and “the inward man” are identical in the Greek. In Romans 7:22, Paul states that he delights in God’s law “after the inward man,” and then in verse 25 he says that with “the mind” he serves “the law of God.” Therefore, the place that Christ dwells in the believer is in the mind. So, when Paul writes that we are to “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5),” he is telling us to actively have and exercise the mind of Christ which is the mind of the Father (his will, intellect, and character).

Jesus explained the way in which this is accomplished: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life (John 6:63).” Jesus said that “it is the spirit that quickeneth” or gives life. He later declared that he was “the resurrection, and the life (John 11:25).” Jesus gives life by his Spirit and he gives his Spirit through his words. Another place that Paul speaks of receiving God’s Spirit is in his epistle to the Galatians:

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:1-5)?

Paul states that the Galatians had first received the Spirit “by the hearing of faith.” Since “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17),” the Galatians received the Spirit through the hearing of the Word of God. This explains the meaning of Galatians 3:5 where Paul speaks of ministering the Spirit. This text makes no sense when interpreted with a Trinitarian theology; however, if the Spirit that Paul speaks of as being ministered is God’s thoughts and character being served through his words, then the text makes perfect sense. Paul emphasized that this Spirit is ministered by “the hearing of faith.”

The Latter Rain

Inseparable from the concept of receiving the Spirit of Christ is the subject of the latter rain. To have an understanding of the latter rain, its purpose and effect, we must first understand the mission of the Son of God. Jesus stated in Luke 19:10, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Christ also declared himself to be “the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).” Jesus, “the truth,” would send the “spirit of truth (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).” This would be done for the purpose of guiding the disciples of Christ into all truth (John 16:13); therefore, a portion of the work of the Spirit of God is to reveal truth for the saving of souls. As we shall see, the latter rain is light and truth.

Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 507).

At the day of Pentecost, the disciples received the promise of the Spirit in what was prophesied as the “early rain.” This, along with the latter rain, is described by Joel:

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call (Joel 2:23, 28, 32).

The purpose of the message is given in verse 32, “whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered (saved).” Peter quotes the message of Joel 2:28-32 on the day of Pentecost. This was a message of salvation and redemption — the early rain that had been foretold. The disciples

were given a message and then great power to give that message for the saving of souls and the glory of God.

An examination of the day of Pentecost reveals some important points. Concerning physical manifestations on the day of Pentecost, the Scriptures fail to tell us of any lame people being healed; of any blind eyes being opened; of any dead being raised to life; or of any visions being given. There were physical manifestations of healings, visions, and even raising of the dead after the early rain was first given. On the day of Pentecost, the only special physical manifestation of the Spirit was the gift of tongues and that was given for the proclamation of a message! Pentecost reveals God’s plan for the early and latter rain. He first gave a message through the Spirit of truth and then the power to deliver that message. A very special message has been given to Seventh-day Adventists:

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 91, 92; Letter of May 1, 1895 to O. A. Olsen, then president of the General Conference).

God sent a message to deliver us from the bondage of both sin and man. This message was to bring the people to a “genuine faith which works by love and purifies the soul (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 704).”

This faith leads the believer into obedience to all the commandments of God. Sister White states:

Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

Now, it has been Satan’s determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel’s message, in clear, distinct lines (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 92, 93).

As noted, Elders Waggoner and Jones were two young ministers that God used as “messengers” to his church,

especially at the Minneapolis General Conference of 1888. They were presenting “the matchless charms of Christ” with wonderful clarity. Ellen White heartily accepted their message and rejoiced in it. She described the message as the beginning of the loud cry of the third angel!

The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth (*The Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892).

The message that Jones, Waggoner, and Ellen White were giving from 1888 till near the end of the 1890’s was the beginning of the loud cry. The latter rain was beginning to be poured out, yet a search of our church history fails to find great physical miracles during this time. God was sending a message to his people to give to the world. This was a message of salvation, and its proclamation would lighten the whole earth with the glory of God.

The Scriptures plainly testify of the rain that God still wishes to send his people today. “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass (Deuteronomy 32:1, 2).” In verse two, God’s doctrine (his Word) is equated with the rain and his speech with the dew and rain. Proverbs 1:23 says: “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.” Here the pouring out of God’s Spirit is equated with making known his Word. This complements what Jesus said in John 6:63: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” Ellen White simply stated it this way:

God designs that the message of redemption shall come to His people as the latter rain; for they are fast losing their connection with God (*The Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1900).

The latter rain is to be received as light from heaven for a sin-sick world, special light from heaven concerning the redemption of man. This helps enlarge our understanding of the following statements:

If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door (*The Review and Herald*, March 2, 1897).

But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection (*Ibid.*).

Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the

manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light (*Ibid.*).

Truth is progressive. If we do not receive into our lives the light and truth of the early rain, we will not be able to receive the latter rain. The truth may be received by hearts all around us, yet we are unable to discern it or receive it

Satan’s Unholy Influence

The Word of God, not miracles or the excitement of wild celebrations, must be the guardian of our souls. We may walk into churches and see miracles, healings, and celebrations, but that does not mean the latter rain has come. There is a spirit there, but it is the spirit of Satan. We are told that he can breathe his unholy influence upon people, imbuing them with his thoughts, mind, words, and character.

I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, “Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.” Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. On the hem of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, “My Father, give us Thy Spirit.” Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace.

I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, “Father, give us Thy Spirit.” Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God’s children (*Early Writings*, p. 55, 56).

Miracles Are Not the Test

The appeal of certain brethren is to “stay with the ship; she’s going through and the miracles and the thousands being baptized each day are proof.” This must be met with a “thus saith

the Lord.” Miracles are not a proof, especially in the last days. Revelation tells us plainly that many false miracles will be worked in the last days by Satan and his agents:

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 (Revelation 16:13, 14).

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live (Revelation 13:13, 14).

Christians of all times, but especially last-day Christians, must follow the counsel of 2 Corinthians 5:7: “We walk by faith [hearing of the word], not by sight.”

Reaction to the Message

The Spirit of Prophecy has given us insight to the reaction of unconsecrated men to the message to be given in the loud cry:

When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 300).

The third angel’s message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory (*The Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890).

There is to be in the churches a wonderful manifestation of the power of God, but it will not move upon those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord, and opened the door of the heart by confession and repentance. In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations, they will oppose the work (*The Review and Herald*, December 23, 1890).

The timing of the last two statements reveals God knew that the message being given by his “messengers” would be rejected. History testifies that our people did indeed view the message as something dangerous, and perhaps the saddest part of our history is that we are repeating that same rejection today. The majority of Adventism today has rejected the

light that was understood and taught by Jones and Waggoner. The nature of God, Christ in the incarnation, and Christ’s high-priestly ministry are all under attack by the new theology. Sadly, many who profess to oppose the new theology under the heading of “Historic Adventism” reject the truth about God and his Son, and, in so doing, reject the early leading of God in the Advent Movement.

Brothers and sisters, it is time that we left our own ideas of righteousness behind and accept Christ’s righteousness which is “pure, unadulterated truth (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 65).” Only as we receive of the early rain can we be ready to receive the latter rain. When we deny doctrines fundamental to the three angels’ messages we cannot expect to be led further into truth and righteousness. “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do (Psalm 11:3)?”

Two aspects of the truth about God that so beautifully dovetail into the message of righteousness by faith are the truths that Jesus is the literal begotten Son of the Father and that the Comforter is, in reality, Jesus who is able to personally live out his beautiful life in the believer. These two great truths involve both our justification and our sanctification.

The truth that Jesus promised to come and live within humanity as the Comforter is a great truth that ties in with righteousness by faith. We have seen clearly that man is depraved and must have a power outside and above himself. To live righteously day-by-day and moment-by-moment, we must continually have the presence of God in our lives. Ellen White noted:

A power above and outside of man is to work upon him, that solid timbers may be brought into his character building. In the inner sanctuary of the soul the presence of God is to abide (*The Review and Herald*, October 25, 1892).

And in the Scriptures we read:

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Corinthians 6:16).

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17).

What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the

Some Pictures from the Recent Trip to Europe

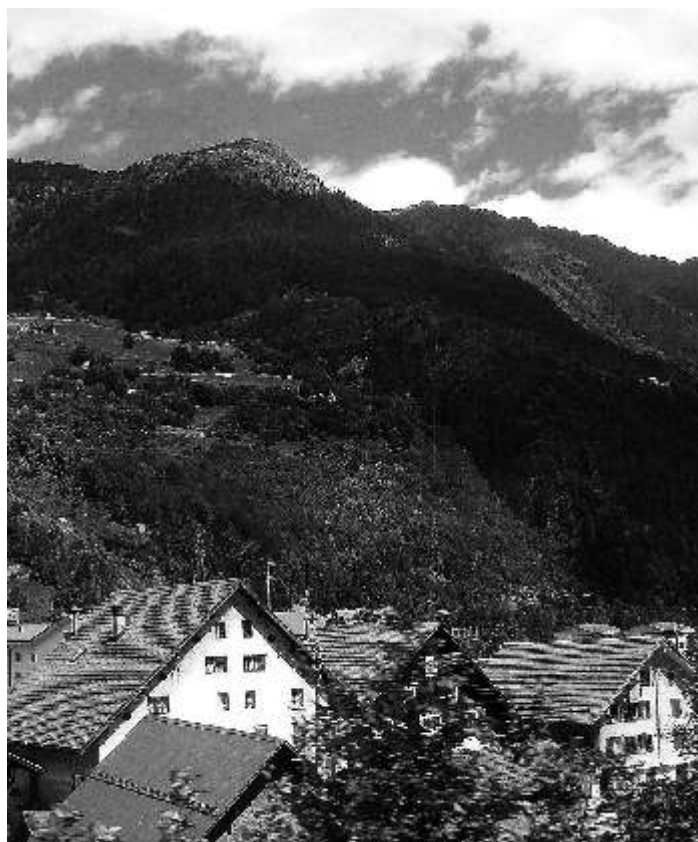


Relief from the Arch of Titus in Rome that commemorated the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70A.D. and the plundering of the Temple.

chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:18-22).


Ellen White further states:

Man does not build himself into a habitation for the Spirit, but unless there is a co-operation of man's will with God's will, the Lord can do nothing for him. The Lord is the great Master worker, and yet the human agent must co-operate with the divine worker, or the heavenly building cannot be completed. All the power is of God, and all the glory is to redound to God, and yet all the responsibility rests with the human agent; for God can do nothing without the co-operation of man. When a man believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, and accepts of his righteousness by faith, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and he escapes from corruption through the indwelling of the holy Spirit. Without divine nature, without the influence of the Spirit of God, man cannot work out his own salvation. Said Christ, "Without me ye can do nothing." When human effort does not combine with divine agency, how deficient is its influence; but he who is endowed with divine power can present Christ to the world as one who is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God through him (*The Review and Herald*, October 25, 1892).



Scene from the Alps in Switzerland

The trinitarian doctrine makes no such allowance for Christ to dwell in our hearts by faith. If you were to ask most Trinitarians if Jesus is present at their meetings and abiding with them, at first they will say, "Yes, of course." But if you ask how Jesus is at their meetings and abiding with them, they will respond, "By the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit." To the Trinitarian, neither Jesus nor the Father are actually present for they are in heaven, but the "third member of the Godhead," the Holy Spirit, is there to represent them. This teaching, however, takes Jesus and the Father away from the believer.

It is no wonder that as God was raising up the Advent movement, he needed to give them a correct understanding of himself, his Son, and their Spirit before they could understand and appreciate righteousness by faith as he wished them to know it. Yet, we must learn a lesson from history. The Advent people understood in 1888 that God was not a Trinity, but many rejected, spurned, and scoffed at the message that was presented by Jones and Waggoner. Just having an intellectual knowledge of the truth about God, or even about justification and sanctification, is no assurance that we will experience the reality of these truths in our hearts. Beloved, we want the presence of God abiding in the inner sanctuary of our souls so that our characters will be built on the solid rock of his perfect righteousness, and then our faith will be revealed by deeds of love (Galatians 5:6). 

True Remedies Part 3 – Sunlight, Calcium, Vitamin D, and Cholesterol

(The following study is an edited version of a discussion on health between Dr. Waite and the congregation during the 2008 camp meeting. Editor)

I am a medical doctor, and I also have a master's of public health degree in nutrition. My medical degree is from Montemorelos University in Mexico, which is a Seventh-day Adventist institution, and my master's degree is from Loma Linda University, which is also a Seventh-day Adventist institution.

I am sharing a handout which contains quotations from Ellen G. White regarding the areas of natural, or true, remedies. (You may request a copy of this handout by calling or writing us.) Many of them were written over 100 years ago, and research is still trying to get up to speed with what she has said. One of the latest pieces of research that came across my desk recently is an article in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* about a ten-year study involving 18,225 men that measured fatal and nonfatal myocardial infarcts. The study found that low vitamin D levels were directly associated with both nonfatal and fatal heart attacks independent of any other risk factors— independent of cholesterol, triglycerides and LDL levels; independent of blood pressure; and independent even for age. The results are very direct, and it is now being recommended that doctors measure vitamin D levels along with blood lipids. Most everyone knows that people who are in good health will get adequate vitamin D manufactured from the skin with sufficient amounts of sunlight.

Vitamin D helps the absorption of calcium from the intestine into the bones so you do not get brittle bones. Brittle bones are especially a problem for women in their postmenopausal state, but now a large amount of brittle bone disease is being found in men over the age of seventy. Men over the age of seventy-five are now being targeted to get bone density studies and then therapy to prevent brittle bones. Now there are more men getting this disease at an older age than even women.

How much vitamin D does a person need? If you currently have an adequate level of vitamin D in your body, then 400 IU (International Units) a day is recommended for prevention. If you are low in vitamin D however, physicians will sometimes put you on a supplement of 50,000 IU once a week for 4-6 weeks and then have you take 1,000 IU a day until your levels come up, at which time you go back to a maintenance intake of 400 IU a day.

What is the normal level for vitamin D in the body? This depends on how the laboratories test. It depends on the method used in measurement, so you need to check with the

lab that does the test. If you get plenty of sunlight each day, however, you should not have a problem, but your calcium level is also important because calcium and vitamin D work together. You also need some magnesium. Natural nondairy sources of calcium are greens. Many green vegetables have calcium—spinach, kale, swiss chard, and broccoli, for example. Almonds and other nuts also contain calcium. Calcium is important with vitamin D. Cows are vegetarian, but they get plenty of vitamin D and they have plenty of calcium in their diet. They are out in the sunshine, and they consume greens; but some people have a hard time eating greens, so they have to take supplements. Perhaps the next time you go to a health fair, you could ask if they will measure your vitamin D level also, in addition to the other levels, and see what they say.

A problem with the daily intake recommendations is that they are sometimes based on a statistical bell curve of several individuals who are taken from a diseased population so you get erroneous results from your research. This is what happened several years ago in cholesterol research. Cholesterol levels were taken from a diseased population and based on this it used to be said that a total cholesterol level of 220 and 250 was okay, but now researchers say anything below 200 is okay, and some of the researchers are even saying it should be below 150.

Let me explain cholesterol for you. Anyone who has ever cooked in the kitchen will know that if you put oil in a pot of water the two will not mix together. Remember, blood is mostly water and when you consume fatty substances, the two will not mix. So the Designer, our Creator, did a very wonderful thing. He created it so that the fat combines with a protein—it rides on a protein molecule—in the blood stream, which is unique. This is what we call a lipoprotein. Lipoproteins are categorized according to their weight—low density lipoprotein, very low density lipoprotein, heavy density lipoprotein, and medium density lipoprotein. Cholesterol is a portion of each lipoprotein, no matter what the density is.


What happens is that you get fatty deposits, some of which is cholesterol, in the endothelial lining of the blood vessels and this leads to what are called fatty streaks in the vessels. Low density lipoprotein and very low density lipoprotein carry the cholesterol and other fatty substances to the cells, which include the cells in the endothelial lining of the blood vessels. The heavy density lipoprotein carries the cholesterol and fatty substances back to the liver which eliminates them through the bile. This is why they encourage you to have a

TRIALS

By Allen Stump

high level of heavy density lipoprotein (HDL) and a low level of low density lipoprotein (LDL). The aim is a level of 100 for low density lipoprotein. If yours is above this figure then you are at risk. The aim for heavy density lipoprotein is to preferably be above 42, but if you can get it above 50 it is better. One way that you increase your heavy density lipoprotein is, if you smoke, to stop smoking and also exercise. This is very important. You should get at least thirty minutes of vigorous exercise such as brisk walking, jogging, or bicycling each day. If you are trying to lose weight, you should engage in sixty minutes a day of this type of exercise. This will raise your HDL. You should also increase the amount of good fats you ingest—monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats such as olive oil, almonds, and avocados.

Your body produces some cholesterol. When I was studying nutrition in the public health program at Loma Linda University twenty years ago, a little-known study was conducted. In the study, rabbits and monkeys were, throughout their lifetimes, fed a diet that had no cholesterol in it. Cholesterol comes from animal sources. Then the researchers took another set of animals and fed them the typical western diet that had cholesterol and everything else in it. Then they killed the animals, at a certain point in time, and looked at the endothelial linings of the blood vessels in the animals, including a microscopic study of the linings. Some of the animals that had had no cholesterol intake all their lives had cholesterol levels as high as 800 mg/deciliter, which is very high. Even though they had had high saturated fat in their diet, possibly from coconut oil or other plant oil, they had ingested no cholesterol. Their endothelial linings had no potholes, even on microscopic examination! The arteries were completely clean with no damage.

They also did a study of a group of animals that were given pure cholesterol that was not oxidized while another group was given oxidized cholesterol. The ones that had the pure cholesterol had very few potholes. The ones that had the vegan diet plus the supplement of oxidized cholesterol all had lots of potholes in their endothelial linings. So, the thought was that there is an injury and repair, injury and repair, and then a complicated lesion forms where you get calcium in the endothelial lining; and they thought that the oxidized cholesterol caused the initial injury to the endothelial lining. Where do you get oxidized cholesterol? From any type of shelf product of a food that contains cholesterol, and it is more prominent in dried milk and dried eggs. Dried milk and dried eggs are where you have the highest amount of oxidized cholesterol from shelf products. 

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. (3 John 2).

“Pain is a universal experience.” This phrase has achieved the status of an adage today because of its self-evident truth, but there is another universal experience I wish to discuss at this time. We all participate in this experience in a greater or lesser degree and that is trials. What are the characteristics of trials, and are there actually benefits in having trials?

Trials have been defined as hardships that try our faith. Sometimes we have problems that we do not consider to be real trials. They are small things or things that other people would not consider to be trials, but then there are times that very large issues that can be very severe loom in our lives. Notice what Paul says in writing to the church at Corinth:

For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Corinthians 1:8-10).

Even in things that might bring our death, we can trust God. We can trust in the one that can even raise the dead.

I received a very sad phone call recently. When I was in my teens, I rode motorcycles in dirt track racing, hill climbing, and off road riding, and there was an individual that I rode motorcycles with a lot. He was about fifteen years older than I am. He had just started a family, had a good job and a nice place to live, and had the best bike you could buy. He was always a really nice person, but during the last year or two he became ill with cancer, and recently he ended his life. What brings a person to that kind of discouragement? What is it that makes someone feel he cannot go on? How is our hold on God lost so that we do not trust him to keep and strengthen us?

In 1 Peter 4:12 we read: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” Trials will come whether we want them to or not, and some of them are going to be very fiery. Things will be hot, difficult, and challenging, but do not think something strange is happening. Trials are a universal experience, and, as we will see later, trials are one of the appointed means that God has given for the perfection of our characters. If we want our characters perfected, if we want to be come more like Christ, we have to accept trials.

Often we want the easy part of being like Jesus, but we are not willing to accept the cross, the trials, and the hardships that Jesus went through. We want to be able to speak beautiful words like Jesus spoke; to have the ability, even, to perform miracles; to heal the sick; to encourage those who

are down and out; but we must also be willing to go through the trials that Christ went through. The Bible says that even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was made perfect through the things that he suffered.

Sometimes trials come upon us for unknown reasons. We are probably all familiar with the book of Job and the great trials Job went through. Job did not understand, however, what was really happening behind the scenes. His trials were not the result of something he had done nor were they the result of something someone else had done to him. It was Satan working behind the scenes, bringing accusations before God about Job.

How do we relate to those who are experiencing trials? Are we like Job's three friends? Sometimes we want to be friends to those who are having trials, but we need to be careful what kind of friends we are.

Sometimes trials come upon us because of the sins of others. Let us turn to 2 Kings 20. It would seem fair that we get into hot water because of our own wrong doings, but it does not always work that way. Hezekiah was a king in Judah who became ill.

In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore (2 Kings 20:1-3).

God then sent Isaiah to Hezekiah with the message that God would heal him, and a sign was given. The shadow on the sundial went backward, and this happened not only in Jerusalem but all over the world. Babylon was famous for astronomy for the purpose of astrology for the most part, and the astronomers noticed this movement on the sundial. Word came to them that this miracle happened for the King of Judah, and Babylon sent ambassadors to Hezekiah. But what did Hezekiah do? Did he tell the ambassadors about the glories of the great God? Hezekiah had earlier said that his heart was perfect. The Bible tells the truth about Hezekiah. Even though Hezekiah said his heart was perfect, the rest of the account says that his heart was lifted up. He showed these men all *his* wealth and all *his* riches:

At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Heze-

kiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon (2 Kings 20:12-18).

Who were four of those eunuchs? Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. This is a side of Daniel of which not much is spoken. He became a eunuch. The trial of going into captivity, becoming eunuchs, and living under the Babylonian system was a hardship to try their faith. The march to Babylon was almost five hundred miles through the desert. It would have been enough to wear anyone out, but this trial did not come upon these men because of their own sin or due to their own fault. We need to keep in mind that we might actually contribute to the trials of others.

We also have trials because of our sins. This is so in all of our lives. We can see it in the Bible in the story of Manasseh (2 Kings 21). Because of his sins and the sins into which he led Israel, Manasseh was taken into captivity in Babylon.

Trials can come in many varieties. We can have physical trials, emotional trials, and spiritual trials. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of some of the events that he experienced:

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong (vs. 7-10).

Many people believe that the Apostle Paul was going blind, and if I were losing my eyesight, I would be very tempted to be discouraged. I would be tempted to think that God was not dealing with me fairly, but after Paul thought about it he realized God had a reason and purpose in everything that happened to him and that he would actually be a stronger Christian, a better leader, and a more able person to evangelize than he was before this trial. God took that seeming curse and seemingly difficult trial and made it into a blessing for Paul.

Hebrews 11 speaks about the experiences of many of God's people, about how some were stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, or wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins. "And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment (v. 36)." God's people have never been promised the easiest lot in life, but even though we may have great trials, God has provided for those trials in every instance.

First Corinthians chapter 10 contains one of the most precious promises found in the Bible: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (v. 13)." For God to be faithful and not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear, he has to know what temptation is coming to you before it comes, and of course, being omnipotent, he knows. As one writer says, he measures every trial before it comes. It is like Satan with Job. God had measured Job's trials beforehand, and he knew what he could allow Satan to do. He told Satan, "This far and no farther," and this is what he does for us today. He says, "This far will I take you and no farther. I will allow you to go this far because there is a blessing in it, but I will allow you to go no further than what you can handle by my grace."

Deuteronomy 33 records the blessing of Moses upon the tribes. "And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be (vs. 24, 25)." "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." In other words, God has promised to give us the strength for whatever days that we have and for whatever they hold. When we are going through spiritual trials, perhaps even to the point of being persecuted, God will help us.

It has been said that attitude is everything. Now, attitude is not everything, but it is pretty important. The frame of mind with which we enter an experience, to a great degree, does determine how that experience molds and shapes us and what benefit or problems it will hold for us. Jesus said:

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Matthew 5:10-12).

Can we be persecuted and it *not* be for righteousness sake? Yes. There are many people who are persecuted every day. Go to Iraq or the Balkan areas where Yugoslavia used to be and look at the bloodshed and strife in those places. In Africa the Hutus and Tutsis have battled each other for years, and it has nothing to do with righteousness. It is because people do not like each other. One is a little different from another and is persecuted because of it. If the persecution is for

righteousness sake and because we are following God and doing his will, then there is a blessing in it, and we can jump for joy even, as it says in Luke 6:23.

Trials test our faith, such as we see in the example of Abraham, and sometimes God has to allow these trials to come into our lives for a demonstration to others. Abraham is known as the father of the faithful, but this is the same Abraham who on two different occasions made some very big mistakes in his life, and he demonstrated a lack of faith in doing those things. God, however, knew his heart. God knew where Abraham wanted to be and what he could be, and, as Abraham developed, God saw in him a man of faith. Satan was there to remind God of how Abraham had said in Egypt that his wife was his sister. How could he then be a man of faith? God demonstrated how by instructing Abraham to take his son to Mount Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice, and Abraham was willing to obey. The Bible does not give us all the details, but Genesis 22 gives us a particular detail that is extremely important. Abraham did not *delay* in obeying but "rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him (Genesis 22:3)." Abraham got right to the job that God gave him to do, and he was willing to put the knife to the throat of his son and would have done so if God had not stayed his hand. Abraham was a man of faith, and this trial tested his faith, but it did not test it as much as it demonstrated the faith that was there. Sometimes God allows trials to come to us to demonstrate to others what becoming a Christian and abiding in Christ can do for an individual.

Trials also have the effect of purifying our faith:

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:6-9).

When was the last time one of us had a great trial and we praised God for that trial because it was more precious than gold? This is the attitude the Bible says we should have because trials help to purify our faith, and this is what we need. We want a better faith, do we not? We want an experience that makes us a better person. Isaiah 48:10 says: "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." How hot do furnaces get? Some of them get very hot, and sometimes the trials that God allows us to go through get very hot, but we have a lot of dross that needs burning out. The more dross there is, the hotter the fire needs to be. God knows best, however, and he who

is all-wise understands and sends us what we need, but he measures each and every trial before it comes.

James says that the trying of our faith works patience. “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing... Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him (James 1:3, 4, 12).”

Trials purify and test our faith, they increase our patience, and they bring us into a better position. “Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved. For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place (Psalm 66:9-12).”

God does all this to us, but he does it to bring us to a better place. You have heard the saying, “This hurts me more than it hurts you.” Do you know what that means? Parents sometime say this when disciplining their children, and if we are a true parent, it does hurt us when we have to discipline our children. Do you think that when we suffer through trials and tribulations that God is happy about the actual trials and sufferings that we endure? Of course he is not, but he loves us enough to carry us to a wealthier and better place, but the only way to that wealthier place may be through fiery trials. The path may be through fire, through water, or through the net, and we may be tried in a hot furnace as silver is tried, but there is a blessing for us in it.

I cannot think of a more wicked king of Judah than Manasseh. Because of Manasseh’s sin, God wiped the plate of Judah clean. Manasseh led Israel into great idolatry. He caused his sons to pass through the fire of Molech (2 Kings 21:1-7). He did tremendously grievous sins. God disposed him of his throne and sent him to Babylon, but while he was in Babylon, he repented and I expect to meet Manasseh—a murderer and an idolater—in heaven. The trials of being in Babylon and of being taken off of his throne brought him to his senses. He remembered the God of his father, Hezekiah, and he repented.

Trials take us to a better place, even if they are fiery trials. Let us go back to 1 Peter 4: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy (vs. 12, 13).” We are to rejoice! “But I can’t rejoice,” you say “because I am having a trial.” Rejoice! “I can’t rejoice because it hurts.” Rejoice! “I can’t because it is too hard.” God did not say it would not hurt. He did not say our life would not be hard and that it would be impossible to rejoice. God *commands* us to rejoice! One of the greatest proverbs I have ever learned outside of the Bible is “One learns to do the

will of God by doing it.” You may not be happy at first, but you are to rejoice anyway. It may not be easy to rejoice, but you will learn to rejoice by doing it! Give God praise and thank him, and your experience through the trial will be different. The change will not come, however, about until you first rejoice. We are to rejoice inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ’s sufferings.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf (1 Peter 4:14-16).”

There are ways that we can suffer, be persecuted, and have many kinds of problems that have nothing to do with Christianity or with righteousness. We can look on our problems and say, “Well, you know the devil is really out to get me.” I have talked to people who have smoked tobacco all of their adult lives and then when faced with cancer or emphysema say: “Satan is really giving me a trial in this. Satan is really trying to destroy me.” Well, Satan does want to destroy us, it is true, but who was trying to destroy himself for all of those years? Is this suffering for Christ’s sake? We can look past our trials, beloved, for the blessings for ourselves and for others.

Let us turn to 2 Corinthians 8: “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality (vs. 1, 2).” Some other translations read:

How while they were undergoing every sort of trouble, and were in the greatest need, they took all the greater joy in being able to give freely to the needs of others (The Bible in Basic English, v. 2).

Somehow, in most difficult circumstances, their overflowing joy and the fact of *being down to their last penny* themselves, produced a magnificent concern for other people (*Phillips, v. 2*).

They were poor. They were down to their last penny and were in need themselves, but they took an offering to help others. They were blessed and strengthened by it.

I remember a story told many years ago about a family at church that was in need. The pastor did not want to mention this family’s name, but he informed the church that a family among them had a real need and a special offering was planned for the next Sabbath to help defray the needs of this home. One of the families at the church was very poor, but they discussed among themselves how they could help. They found some money here and some money there, and on Sabbath they turned in more money, I think, than all the rest of the church put together. Do you know who the family in need

was? It was that very family. Friends, we need to have that same kind of faith. Even though we are under siege, as it were, with trials, if we will look beyond our own trials to help others our own troubles will become smaller.

Here are some helpful and insightful gems from the pen of Inspiration:

Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 61).

All trials that are received as educators will produce joy (*The Upward Look*, p. 324).

Now all our trials do not produce joy, but they can produce joy in our lives if we understand they are educators for us.

The faithful discharge of today's duties will be the best preparation for tomorrow's trials (*Ibid.*, p. 44).

How are we going to deal with tomorrow's trials? By faithfully discharging today's duties.

One characteristic about God is persistence. He sees a little defect in my life, so he brings me a trial to smooth off a little of the rough edges, but I fail that trial. I do not perceive it for what it is, and I continue to have that rough edge. God, however, is not content to leave that rough edge there.

A refining, purifying process is going on among the people of God, and the Lord of hosts has set his hand to this work. This process is most trying to the soul, but it is necessary in order that defilement may be removed. Trials are essential in order that we may be brought close to our heavenly Father, in submission to his will, that we may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. God's work of refining and purifying the soul must go on until his servants are so humbled, so dead to self, that when called into active service, they may have an eye single to the glory of God. Then they will not move rashly from impulse, and imperil the Lord's cause because they are slaves to temptation and passion, because they follow their carnal desires; but they will move from principle and in view of the glory of God. The Lord brings his children over the same ground again and again, increasing the pressure until perfect humility fills the mind, and the character is transformed; then they are victorious over self, and in harmony with Christ and the Spirit of heaven (*The Review and Herald*, April 10, 1894).


God is interested in our characters and the rough places in them, so he brings us over the same ground again and again, as necessary, to smooth out the rough places. Do not think it strange when this happens. If it is patience we need, God will give us opportunities to develop it. When we are called upon to endure trials, it shows us that Jesus sees something precious in us to develop. He knows that under the rough carbon there is a diamond. If you have ever seen an unpolished and

uncut diamond, you know it is not very spectacular, but a polished and cut diamond is beautiful and precious. When God tries our faith, we can become a beautiful and precious gem.

Trials and obstacles are God's chosen methods of discipline and his appointed condition of success, and trials well-borne will make the way more precious (see *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 524). So, do not look upon fiery trials as something that must be avoided.

A few years ago, I had a very difficult decision to make about a young man that broke into my house. I had to decide whether or not to press charges and see that young man go to jail. I had to weigh it out very carefully because I really did not want to see him go to jail. I pressed charges because I believed it was in the young man's best interest, for if I did not he would most likely have only continued in what he was doing and would probably die in sin. I say this because here in my area of West Virginia, if you break into people's homes often enough, someone will eventually be in the home and confront you with a gun. People use their guns here, and many have found this out the hard way.

Beloved, let us not despise the chastening of the Lord, but let us be thankful for it. Let us understand that God will not allow a trial to come our way that is more difficult, more grievous, and more challenging than we can handle and receive because he measures every trial out before it comes.

Sometimes trials come seemingly out of the blue. We are not expecting them, but even in this case God is merciful. If we knew beforehand what was coming, we might be so worried, upset, and concerned that we could not deal with it. The anticipation is sometimes worse than the reality, but God is merciful and longsuffering, and he has a crown of life waiting for each one of us. God, however, is not going to take a beautiful gold crown and set it upon a rough piece of carbon. He is going to first cut and polish us, and he allows trials to come into our lives for this very purpose. 



The Basilica of Saint Peter Basilica as seen by Pastor Stump on his recent trip to Europe.

Ellen G. White and The Truth About God, Part 2

By Allen Stump and Onycha Holt

Despite her Trinitarian background in the Methodist Church, Ellen White never used the terms “Trinity” or “Triune God” in her writings. During the first fifty years of Sister White’s ministry, her brethren found nothing in her writings to cause them to alter their anti-Trinitarian theology. A major turning point came in 1898 with the publication of *The Desire of Ages*, the following statement appeared:

In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. (*Desire of Ages*, p. 530)

While clearly speaking of the divinity of Christ, what did Ellen White mean by Christ’s life being “original, unborrowed, underived?” Was she now advocating, as some were to claim, a Trinitarian position? Following the rule given in *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 42; Letter 73, 1903 that “The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given,” we look to an article published one year prior to the release of *The Desire of Ages*. This article appeared in *The Signs of the Times* and was entitled “Christ the Life-giver.” We find in this article a clarification of Sister White’s understanding of the concept.

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. “I lay it down of myself” (John 10:18), He said. *In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. (The Signs of the Times, April 8, 1897 – See also Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 296, 297.)*

There is tremendous significance to this statement! While stating that Christ’s life was “original, unborrowed, underived,” she also states that “this life is not inherent in man.” So far, there is nothing to send up a red flag. The next two sentences, however, opens up a whole new perspective: He [man] can possess it [life, original, unborrowed, underived] only through Christ. He [man] cannot earn it [life, original,

unborrowed, underived]; it is given him as a free gift if he [man] will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour.

According to what Sister White wrote a year before *The Desire of Ages* was published, man is offered the same quality of life that Christ had. If Christ could bestow this life as a free gift upon man, then he could have received that same life from his Father. It was the original, unborrowed, underived life of the Father that Christ possessed and is able to bestow upon man. This is what Jesus meant when he said; “For as the Father hath life in himself; *so hath he given* to the Son to have life in himself. (John 5:26) .”

Beloved, Sister White’s libraries contained well over 1,000 volumes. These volumes were cataloged in two main groups: “One section involved her private library in her ‘sitting room bookcase,’ the other, her office library where her literary assistants worked (*A Bibliography of Ellen G. White’s Private and Office Libraries*; Compiled by Warren H. Jones, Tim Poirier, and Ron Graybill, p. i).” One of the volumes in her private library was *Sabbath Evening Readings on the New Testament*, written in 1856 by John Cummings. On page 5 we find the following statement: “In him was life,”— that is, original, unborrowed, underived. (John Cummings, *Sabbath Evening Readings on the New Testament*, p. 5, 1856)

It’s no coincidence that this statement and the reference in *The Desire of Ages* are almost word-for-word identical. Research reveals that Sister White used the language of Cummings’ book, for we find her quoting these words, and more, here and in at least two other places. These passages have been published in at least thirteen places. In a letter dated November 1, 1905, she wrote to the manager of one of our sanitariums:

In Him is life that is original,—unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life. Our life is something that we receive, something that the Giver takes back again to Himself. (*Special Testimonies*, Series B, no. 19, p. 23)

The parallel statement from Cummings reads as follows:

“In him was life,” — that is, original, unborrowed, underived. In us there is a streamlet from the Fountain of Life; in him was the Fountain of Life. Our life is something we receive, something that the Giver takes back again to himself. (*Sabbath Evening Readings on the New Testament*, p. 5)

Except for one word, these statements are identical. It's not our purpose to discuss the extent of the literary borrowing of Sister White and the problems resulting from it. It has been freely admitted by the brethren that such borrowing was done, and with Cummings' book being in Sister White's private bookcase, it is reasonable to believe that Sister White moved by the Holy Spirit made the decision on its usage, not one of her literary assistants, .

Two areas of Cummings' statement should be considered. Let's examine the context first. Cummings noted that the apostle John: ". . . at once begins by asserting the Deity of Christ as God and Lord of all. (*Sabbath Evening Readings on the New Testament*, p. 5)." While upholding the Deity of Jesus Christ, Cummings makes no statement here concerning the Godhead in relationship to a Trinity or a Triune God. This closely parallels the thoughts of the early Advent pioneers and Sister White who wrote positively of the Deity of Christ but never of the Trinity or Triune God.

Secondly, let's examine the content of Cummings' statement. Christ is said to be the "Fountain of Life." We are said to be a "streamlet." A streamlet is defined as a "small stream (*Webster's Dictionary*)." A streamlet does not carry a large quantity of water nor is it the source of the water. However, it does carry the same quality of water that comes from the source! As we saw in the *Signs of the Times* article, Sister White stated that man may have "original, unborrowed, underived" life, but *he can receive it only as a gift from Christ*. Christ can bestow the same quality of life upon the sinner that he has because he has received it from his Father to give. "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself (John 5:26)." Jesus has received it because he is the only begotten Son of God.

The "weight of evidence" clearly reveals that Sister White believed Jesus to be the literal Son of God. The questions arise: What about Sister White's statements concerning the eternal nature of Christ? If Jesus was eternal, then how could he be the begotten Son of God *before Bethlehem*? First, let's notice a typical statement from Ellen White:

The world was made by Him, "and without him was not any thing made that was made." If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. *He was with God from all eternity*, God over all, blessed forevermore.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, *existed from eternity*, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. (*The Signs of the Times*, April 26, 1899) (See also *The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1899 and *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 247.)

This statement *seems very clear* to most people. The following Bible statements *also seem very clear*:

And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. (Revelation 14:11)

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20:10).

Adventist Bible students have found that these Scriptures mean what they say; however, they do not teach what most people, who only surface read, think they do. The same is true with some of Sister White's statements. Her writings must be kept in line with Bible concepts. When she wrote "eternity," we have no reason to believe she meant otherwise. But what does the Bible say about "for ever and ever"? The Bible teaches that God uses this expression relative to different situations and in the case of the wicked it simply means as long as the wicked last until they become ashes. Scripture must be compared with Scripture to find the Biblical meaning of passages that might otherwise be interpreted using human wisdom instead of divine wisdom. If the different statements that Sister White wrote concerning Jesus Christ, his eternal nature, and his begottenness are true, then they must be reconcilable. We cannot use six or seven statements that *seem* to teach a Trinitarian doctrine and ignore the scores of references that speak otherwise!

Now, let me speak to you about what I am going to call the 1888 factor. The 1888 factor helps to clarify matters. Sister White wrote that God sent a "most precious message" through Elders Jones and Waggoner. What was the 1888 understanding of Christ's nature and his relationship to the Father? E. J. Waggoner wrote a book entitled *Christ and His Righteousness*. This book was based upon some of his sermons given during the 1888 Minneapolis Conference and therefore reflects his thinking at that time.

The Word was "in the beginning." The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten; but we know that he was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created. Just before His crucifixion He prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." John 17:5. And more than seven hundred years before His first advent, His coming was thus foretold by the word of inspiration: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin. We know that Christ "proceeded forth and came from God" (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man. (*Christ and His Righteousness*, pp. 9, 10)

Waggoner quotes Micah 5:2 and interprets this to mean that Christ was brought forth "so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man." The Hebrew word translated "eternity" or "everlasting" is עולם

(*owlam*). *Owlam* is defined as a “vanishing point; generally, time out of mind (past or future), i.e. (practically) eternity (*Strong’s #5769*).” This word is used in such places as 1 Samuel 1:22 where we read that Samuel was to “appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.” The phrase “for ever” comes from *owlam* and Adventists have been quick to point out that this means only as long as he lived. Another usage of *owlam* is found in Jonah 2:6 where Jonah describes his experience in the fish: “I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever [*owlam*]. (Jonah 2:6) This was only a three-day period. *Owlam* is also translated “everlasting” in Proverbs 8:23, a text that Sister White applies to Christ. *Owlam’s* usages vary and must not violate the weight of evidence from other Scriptures.

Ellen White strongly endorsed the teachings of Jones and Waggoner in 1888, but I ask you, how could she highly endorse their message of righteousness by faith if they held erroneous view about God?

A few years ago after reading what Waggoner had written, there was a conflict within in my mind. I knew that Sister White had recommended his work. I had also read Sister White’s statements on the Sonship of Christ such as those we have noted, but I still did not understand how they could fully and totally agree with Sister White’s statements on the eternal nature of Christ. Then one day I was reading M. L. Andreasen’s book *The Sabbath*, and it all became very clear just as if the light switch had been turned on. Andreasen wrote:


We can understand how God can bless human beings. We can even understand how He can bless animals and give them their work to do in carrying out God’s purpose; but how can God bless a day, a division of time, neither animate nor inanimate, not alive nor dead, a thing without substance, a conception rather than a reality; time, which defies definition, though all mankind is aware of its existence and reality? How can time be blessed so as to be a blessing to man?

The answer is that time does not have any virtue or power in itself to be a blessing or a help to others. Time is as impersonal as space, and equally inconceivable. One difference between the two is noticeable: space extends in all directions, while time might be compared to a one-way road, permitting traffic in one direction only. Man has no power over time, to hasten or retard it. Whether he will or not, he is carried along with it, and despite all protests is one day older tomorrow than he is today. He cannot reverse the process, however much he may wish to do so. Time is superior to him, and he obeys its mandates.

There are those who believe that God did not create time, but that in some way He found it already existing. But this cannot be. Time and space are not self-existent entities, operating apart from God and independent of Him. If that were true, they would be equal with God, or even His superior; for

that which is coeval with God or exists prior to God must at least be equal with Him; and that which is not created by God is self-existent and is God. The Christian believes that “without Him was not anything made that was made,” and that time and space are created by God as verily as anything else He has made. John 1:3.

Though the two conceptions of time and space are beyond human comprehension, each is helpful in understanding the other. Our conception of space, for example, helps us to understand time better, and how it is possible for God to bless time. (M. L. Andreasen, *The Sabbath*, pp. 54, 55)

There can be no concept of eternity without the concept of time. As Andreasen noted, if all things were created by Jesus Christ, then Jesus created time as well. For lack of better words and speaking as Paul did “after the manner of men,” there is a period of history before time or eternity existed. Because Christ is the author of time, he must also be the author of eternity, as we know it. Therefore, Christ, the Son of God, was begotten before time and eternity existed since it was Christ who brought these things into being. With this understanding, we can see how Jesus “was with God from *all eternity*” and how he is also the literal Son of God begotten before Bethlehem. 


Smyrna Broadcasts

We want to remind our readers that we are broadcasting our regularly-scheduled Sabbath worship service at 11:00 a.m. (EST) each Sabbath morning and our midweek prayer meeting on Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. (EST).

These broadcasts can be accessed on the Internet via Skype, a communication program, or by simply listening over the telephone. Please see our website: <http://www.smyrna.org> or call 304-732-9204 for details.

“*Beachy Travel Update*,” continued from p. 20

nearly two years. This is in addition to his other responsibilities, which include writing, editing and printing *Old Paths*. I have been longing to be able to relieve him ever since I had to leave West Virginia for my family’s health.

My wife and I have been praying earnestly for direction from the Lord regarding where he wants us to be, for truly there is no better place than in his will. In our prayers we have never considered the possibility of going to Florida to help get the printing work started there. On this trip we decided to pray about going to Florida, and it was as if God said, “I have been waiting for you to ask.” We believe the Lord wants us to go to Florida and get the printing work established there, so we are moving forward with those plans and expect to be there in October. Please pray for this endeavor that the Lord will richly bless the work there. 

Beachy Travels Update

by Lynnford Beachy

The last time we reported to you, we were heading west for Arizona. We made it back to Arizona in mid-March and stayed in a small town about fifty miles northeast of Tucson called San Manuel. We stayed in an RV park there until mid-July. During this time we visited several churches and distributed literature in each place. We had many wonderful contacts during this time, several of whom have learned the truth about God. We were also able to witness to some of the locals in San Manuel and nearby Oracle.

I know many of you have been confused by the prayer request for Kendra's health since her health has improved since leaving West Virginia. Thank you so much for your prayers for her. While in San Manuel, Kendra visited a local naturopathic doctor because she was still experiencing frequent episodes of dizziness. While in the doctor's office he heard a heart murmur and referred her to a cardiologist. An echocardiogram showed mild mitral valve regurgitation, and a stress test revealed tachycardia. The cardiologist diagnosed her as having inappropriate sinus tachycardia and prescribed a beta blocker to slow the heart rate down. After much prayer and consultation with other doctors, she opted not to take the drug while additional tests were performed. She also went to another cardiologist for a second opinion. That cardiologist put her on a heart monitor and found that she definitely did not have inappropriate sinus tachycardia. Her low heart rate was forty-two beats per minute. Praise God she did not take the beta blocker, which could have been very dangerous with that low of a heart rate. It has been found that she has very low blood pressure, and within fifteen to forty-five minutes of sitting or standing she will experience a drop in blood pressure. This causes a temporary high heart rate of up to 160 beats per minute to compensate. It is not life threatening, as the first cardiologist was telling her; it just makes her feel uncomfortable at times.

As soon as we found the final results of Kendra's testing, we made plans for our next trip. In mid-July we headed north, first to Prescott, Arizona, to visit a good friend there and then to Riverton, Wyoming, to meet with Andy and Christy Whitehurst. Andy and Christy have been doing local evangelism, as well as working on the "Evangelism in a Binder" project that we mentioned last fall. It was a blessing to meet with them again, along with several brethren in the area with whom we had spent time last fall. The brethren there are holding on strong.

Our next stop was near Billings, Montana. The meetings there touched on the millennium, the three angels' messages, the Holy Spirit, and other subjects. We greatly appreciated the kind and loving spirit demonstrated by our brethren there. Andy and Christy came all the way from Wyoming to

attend the meetings, and it was a pleasure to see them again. It was sad to part from our beloved friends in Montana, but we continued our trip east.

As we were traveling through North Dakota, we had an evening meeting in the Foerderer's home. They are delightful people, and we studied long into the night covering many topics such as the rapture, the millennium, the Holy Spirit, the truth about God, the antichrist, etc. This was the first time we had the privilege of meeting this lovely family. We hope to be able to see them again.

Next, we visited some friends in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where we stayed for several days. It was a delight to fellowship with them again.

Our next stop was Fertile, Minnesota, where we visited with our beloved friends, Joseph Lahud and his family. We had meetings in Bagley, Minnesota, that weekend where we were privileged to see some of our brethren near Bemidji. These folks are wonderful, many of whom have been in the message since long ago when Evangelist Bill Stringfellow lived in the area preaching the truth.

Our next stop was to visit my wife's brother near Hibbing, Minnesota. We had a nice visit with Kendra's brother and then headed for International Falls, Minnesota, to see my dad. As usual, my dad was a big help in getting some repairs done to the RV.

Next, we headed to southern Michigan to attend a family reunion on my wife's side of the family. We had a wonderful Sabbath in southern Michigan where we visited a church composed mostly of people from parts of Africa such as Zambia, Rwanda, Nigeria, etc. It was a delight to see some of our brethren from overseas and distribute some literature. Many years ago, Kendra's aunt and uncle were missionaries to Africa, and they are now retired and living in the states. On Sabbath, Kendra's aunt was surprised to see a familiar face in the congregation. It was a girl that she had kept in her home as a little baby in Zimbabwe. There were many happy tears shed at this unexpected reunion.

Next Sabbath, September 6, we will be in Chicago, Illinois, followed by several meetings in Ohio, West Virginia, Tennessee, and then Florida.

When we began this trip we fully intended to return to Arizona for the winter and hold meetings in the western part of the United States during late fall. God, however, has a way of changing our plans. Some dear brethren in Florida have been moving forward with plans to start a printing work in the Orlando area. They have offered to print *Present Truth* there to help relieve the burden from Allen Stump, who has been doing all of the physical printing work for *Present Truth* for

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Youths' Corner - Miracle for the Heathen

Every Sabbath in our children's Sabbath School, we choose four new countries to pray for during the week, and we ask that God will pour out his Spirit and speak to the hearts and minds of the people in these countries and draw them into a knowledge of truth. Sometimes in the countries there are rules and laws that do not allow Christianity to be practiced or preached and if people do so they are arrested and even sent to jail. So, we may sometimes wonder how the people in such countries can learn about the God of heaven if Christians cannot print anything about God in newsletters, like we do here at Smyrna, and when it is against the law to even own a Bible. In one country we have prayed for, students were arrested and put in prison just because they had opened up their *one* precious Bible in a dorm room of the university they were attending to study as a little group. In many countries the people cannot speak freely about God, and we might wonder how anyone there could learn about him, but God has a plan.

Our story this month takes place in the Philippines, and it is about two people who are still living, as far as I know. In the Philippines there is a man named Baget, and in his little village Baget worshipped spirits, but these spirits did not tell Baget to be kind and loving. Instead, he was a robber, and he stole from people in his village and in the neighboring villages, and the spirit leaders did not tell him it was wrong. Not only did he rob people, but, if they got in his way, sometimes he killed them too! No one was able to stop Baget, and the villagers began to fear him. Nobody in his village knew about the God in heaven.

One day a glorious being came to Baget. This being had a bright and shining face, but it was a very kind face; and this glorious being said to Baget: "You must worship the God of heaven on Sabado, God's holy day," which means on the Sabbath. Baget had never heard of the Sabbath, and he had never heard of a God in heaven, but this was not a *human* being that he saw. It was a magnificent and glorious being that had spoken to Baget, and Baget knew he had not imagined it! It was a *real*, glorious being, and later on this being came back to him many times and told him more things. Baget knew he was having a true experience, so he began to share with the leaders of his village what the glorious being was telling him. The leaders believed Baget, and the people started worshipping the God of heaven on Sabbath.


When missionaries came to Baget's village and preached that Sunday was the day to worship God, the villagers knew they were wrong and did not listen to them. Instead, they asked the missionaries to leave because the glorious being had already told them about the God in heaven and about Sabbath.

Finally, Sabbath-keeping missionaries came to Baget's village, and all the people listened to what they had to say

because it agreed with what the glorious being had already told the villagers *through* Baget! So, even though Baget did not have a Bible, even though there were no Sabbath-keeping missionaries that first came and told Baget and the rest of the people the truth about God and the Sabbath, and even though Baget was a robber and had been mean to his neighbors, a beautiful being came to him and told him about the God in heaven and about the Sabbath, and it changed his life!

Jesús lived on another island in the Philippines, and he was a priest who believed that the bread and wine in the communion service was the actual body and blood of Jesus. He believed this for seventeen years! One day, however, he heard a voice that said, "Jesus Christ is not in the Eucharist wafer." He heard this voice very clearly, but he did not know what to do about it! When he had prayed before, it had been from a prayer book, but there was no prayer in the book to help him with this problem! So he decided to close his prayer book and pray just from his heart to the God in heaven. The voice that had spoken to him and had said that Jesus Christ is not in the wafer started him on a path of Bible study and prayer, but then he realized that all the prayers that he had been praying from the prayer book and all the communion he was giving to the people were just rituals because they were not based in God's Word. It made him feel guilty when he realized that these rituals could not remove the burden of sin. He was not even sure that God would forgive him for being so wrong. So he prayed more and more from his heart. He read in the Bible that God is *willing* to forgive him of all his sins that were weighing his heart and mind down and to throw them away as far as the east is from the west and as far away as the sea is deep. Jesús believed God's Word and he found peace, a peace that he had never known before! Jesús stopped being a priest in this religion that taught the people rituals and forms, and he became a faithful Christian in another faith. God led him along. Jesús learned about the Sabbath, and he became a Seventh-day Adventist—a Sabbath-keeping person just like Baget!

God led Baget by sending a shining heavenly being to him to teach him, and Jesús learned about the Sabbath because a voice spoke to him! You and I may not be able to go to these lands to see and teach the people. These people may not even have Bibles to read and study, but God has a way to speak to each person, and God will give them (and us) peace, and he will lead them (and us) along, if we all will just listen to him.

So when we pray for these countries each week, even though we are not able to go to them and help the people, our prayers can help. God has many ways to answer our prayers and lead the people along step-by-step into his truth, and we can be very thankful for that! 

Bible Reading on Genesis 21-24

1. How old were Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born?

2. What did Sarah ask Abraham to do concerning Hagar after Isaac was born?

3. Paul speaks of this experience, mentioned in question two, in what chapter of what book of his writings?

4. When ready to collapse from heat and thirst, why did Hagar go away from Ishmael? About how far did she go away from him?

5. Where did Ishmael dwell after leaving the camp of Abraham?

6. What does the name Beersheba mean?

7. Where was Abraham dwelling when God called to him in Genesis 22:1? Estimate how far he had to travel to the land Moriah? (Hint--Look at a good Bible map.)

8. What was Abraham's reply to Isaac when asked where the lamb for the offering was?

9. Do you think that Abraham felt this would be fulfilled in a manner that Isaac would not need to be offered? What does Paul say in Hebrews 11 about this?

10. Artists' pictures of Abraham ready to offer Isaac upon the altar usually show Isaac as a boy, but he was a young man of twenty at this time (*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 147). Another aspect usually not shown correctly is the manner of how Abraham appears to be positioned with the knife to kill Isaac. How would he actually have used the knife to kill Isaac if God had not intervened? (Hint--See *Desire of Ages*, p. 756, near bottom of page.)

11. What fulfillment of the antitype at Calvary do we find in Abraham when he told his servant, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you (Genesis 5:22)?" (Hint--See *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 152.)

12. What does Jehovah-jireh mean?

13. How old was Sarah when she died and where was she when she died? About how far was that place from Beersheba where Abraham had been? (Hint--Look at a good Bible map.)

14. Who did Abraham buy a cave from to bury Sarah? How much was paid for this cave?

15. What was the one requirement that Abraham made of his servant when he was to go and look for a wife for Isaac?

16. What test did his servant, Eliezer, ask of God to show him the woman that should be the wife of Isaac? (Notice that wealth or physical form played no part in the request.)

17. What redundancy is used in Genesis 24:16 to emphasize the purity of Rebekah?

18. Although given a good welcome into the home of Bethuel, what did Eliezer insist upon doing before he would eat?

19. Although willing to allow Rebekah to go with Eliezer, how long did Rebekah's brother and mother request Rebekah be able to stay before leaving?

20. Did Eliezer agree to what would seem, to most, to be a reasonable request since they were living in an era without any fast communication and when it was possible that they might not see her again?

21. What is the simple narrative on the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah?

Bonus: James 2:21, 22 states: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" How do we reconcile this with Romans 4:2?

For further study, please read and study *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 13. There you will find gems such as:

That day—the longest that Abraham had ever experienced—dragged slowly to its close. While his son and the young men were sleeping, he spent the night in prayer, still hoping that some heavenly messenger might come to say that the trial was enough, that the youth might return unharmed to his mother. But no relief came to his tortured soul. Another long day, another night of humiliation and prayer, while ever the command that was to leave him childless was ringing in his ears (p. 152).

It was to impress Abraham's mind with the reality of the gospel, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. The agony which he endured during the dark days of that fearful trial was permitted that he might understand from his own experience something of the greatness of the sacrifice made by the infinite God for man's redemption. No other test could have caused Abraham such torture of soul as did the offering of his son. God gave His Son to a death of agony and shame (p. 154).

The sacrifice required of Abraham was not alone for his own good, nor solely for the benefit of succeeding generations; but it was also for the instruction of the sinless intelligences of heaven and of other worlds (*Ibid.*)

Answers for August's quiz on Genesis 17-20

1. The name Abram means exalted father and Abraham means father of a multitude.

2. The token of the covenant between Abraham and God was circumcision.

3. In the New Testament, Paul says that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith (Romans 4:11)."

4. In the New Covenant, the heart is to be circumcised.

5. In both type and antitype, the one who would not be circumcised was to be cast out of the camp.

6. Hebrews 13:2 makes reference to Genesis 18:2.

7. The amount of food that Abraham prepared showed his willingness to share a great degree of hospitality. The word translated "hospitality" in the New Testament comes a Greek word that literally means: "lover of the stranger."

8. In regard to Sarah's unbelief that she could have a child, God told her that she would have a child within a year.

9. Abraham gave validity to God's statement in Genesis 18:19 by having his household circumcised.

10. Abraham first asked God to spare Sodom for fifty people but finally settled for ten people.

11. As Abraham pleaded with God over Sodom, he asked, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Genesis 18:25)."

12. When the angels entered into Sodom, Lot was sitting in the gate of the city. He was there because he had moved from the area around the city to within the city itself.

13. According to Genesis 19:4, the pervasiveness of the wickedness in Sodom was very great. See also Genesis 13:13.

14. Lot offered to give his daughters to those who wished to harm the strangers.

15. Even after being struck with blindness, the Sodomites tried to find the door to Lot's house.


16. We are not told the exact number of children Lot had in Sodom, but we know that he had at least two daughters who had married, for Lot's sons-in-law (plural) mocked him, and he had two unmarried daughters that left Sodom with him.

18. Lot was told to escape to the mountain, but Lot instead requested to be allowed to go to the city of Zoar.

19. Shortly after Lot entered Zoar, he had to leave for it was consumed.

20. Sadly, Abraham told Abimelech that Sarah was his sister because of his lack of faith.

21. Because Abimelech was moved by integrity, God blessed him.

Bonus: Genesis 19:14 tells of Lot's son-in-law's reaction to his pronouncement that Sodom was soon to be destroyed. We can draw a parallel between the Sodomites and the wicked today. Just as the wicked in the time of Lot despised the message of repentance for their day, so the wicked at the end of time will hate the message and example of the righteous who proclaim the three angels' messages at the end of time. 



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many are interested in making accusations of misconduct or of conspiracy, we believe that the example of Jesus is the best to follow:

*He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 509).*

Having just returned from Europe where I met with scores of Adventist and non-Adventist people, I realize we certainly have a need to pray now as never before for the Holy Spirit to empower us to give the three angels' messages to the world. Along with that prayer, we need to also pray for a clearer, common understanding of those messages so that we can see eye to eye with all who wish to give the messages. Please specifically pray that all those in Europe who heard the messages last month will follow the truth as it is in Jesus.

Please also continue to remember Brother Lynnford Beachy and his family in your prayers, as they are now in the eastern part of the United States holding meetings.

There are three other requests for which I personally desire your prayers. Two friends or family members of Smyrna have recently been hurt in two different highway accidents. Sherry and Andy were both seriously injured; and, at the time of this writing, Andy seems to be doing better, but Sherry is quite serious so pray for these people. Also, a good personal friend of mine, Rita Falls, is critically ill with cancer, and I would greatly appreciate your prayers for her and her husband, Ellie.

Editor

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“God would have His children appreciate His works and delight in the simple, quiet beauty with which He has adorned our earthly home. He is a lover of the beautiful, and above all that is outwardly attractive He loves beauty of character; He would have us cultivate purity and simplicity, the quiet graces of the flowers. (Steps to Christ, p. 85).”

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Editor Allen Stump— editor@smyrna.org
Assistant Editor Onycha Holt— onycha@smyrna.org