

# Old Paths

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

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

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*“The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7)*



## Faith vs. Presumption

Just about every American has heard the term *the real McCoy*. *The real McCoy* is an idiom and metaphor within certain English-speaking areas to mean *the real thing* or *the genuine article*, in contrast to a false item. Some people believe that the expression originated because of Elijah McCoy. In 1871 McCoy, a Canadian, invented a lubricating device for steam engine locomotives. The success of his invention inevitably spawned imitations which may have led railroad purchasing agents to ask for “the real McCoy.”



**Elijah McCoy**

There are many other stories and myths about where the expression *the real McCoy* came from, but there is no doubt it arose due to false imitations of that which was real and true.

In the animal kingdom there are two types of snakes that look a lot alike. The venomous coral snake has bands of red, yellow, and black, and the harmless king snake has the same or similar bands of color, but in a different order. It mimics the deadly coral snake. Can you tell the difference between the two?



**Can you tell which snake is the dangerous one?**

In the spiritual world we need wisdom to be able to discern *the real McCoy*, for we have been told:

**The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not**

**worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 202)**

When one looks straight down a set of railroad tracks, the two rails seem to converge into one. Railroad tracks are often used in art classes as an example of single-point perspective because they appear to converge into one.

We need spiritual discernment, for often we are presented with error, even from those professing truth. This was painfully made apparent to me recently when I was participating in a service where a minister was speaking on a certain subject. In dealing with one of the sub-points of the topic, without a signal reference of inspiration, he made a remark that was not correct; in fact, it was 180 degrees from the truth. Yet after the sermon, praise was heaped upon the message, and this point of error was even praised as an interesting and informative piece of *new light* by the ones praising it! No wonder we have been told to prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21), but by what standard are we to prove all things? By the word of God: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

When we consider the subject of faith, remember that Satan has a counterfeit for it called presumption. The best way to know the difference between the two is not to study every false idea—they are too numerous, anyway—but to study and know the truth as it is in Jesus.

True faith, *the real McCoy*, must be based upon and originate in God’s word. Romans 10:17 states: “Faith cometh by

hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Notice that *hearing* is emphasized, not seeing, or what we see. In fact, we have been

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told that “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). We walk by hearing the word of God, not by the things we are seeing.

Jesus gave a primer on faith one day, when he entered Capernaum:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (Matthew 8:5–10)

Commenting upon these verses, A. T. Jones wrote:

There is what Jesus pronounces faith. When we find what that is, we have found faith. To know what that is, is to know what faith is. There can be no sort of doubt about this; for Christ is “the Author. . . of faith,” and he says that that which the centurion manifested was “faith,” yes, even “great faith.”

Where, then, in this is the faith?—The centurion wanted a certain thing done. He wanted the Lord to do it. But when the Lord said, “I will come” and do it, the centurion checked him, saying, “Speak the word only,” and it shall be done.

Now, what did the centurion expect would do the work?—“The word ONLY.” Upon what did he depend for the healing of his servant?—Upon “the word ONLY.”

And the Lord Jesus says that that is faith. (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 6, 1898)

Faith is based upon the words of God and Christ. Peter had learned to trust the word of Jesus. In Luke 5, we read of Peter trusting and depending upon the word of Jesus:

And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. (Luke 5:1–4)

It is important to understand that the only profitable fishing on the Lake of Gennesaret (Galilee) was done at night. During the night it was much easier to catch fish. During the day the fish could see the nets and flee. Night was also the time the fish usually ate, so they were then more

active. Peter and his associates had labored all night, during the best time to catch fish, and had almost nothing to show for their efforts. Jesus told them, however, that they were going to make a great catch of fish during the part of the day that does not usually produce any fish. He said to let their nets down into the deep, where there would be many fish. It would have seemed reasonable to Peter and the others to have asked Jesus if he really knew what he was talking about, but Peter did not question the Master. He said, “Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless *at thy word* I will let down the net” (v. 5). Peter took his boat out and deeply lowered his net. The next thing Peter realized was that the nets were so full of fish that they began to tear!

Peter did not go out because he thought that there were now more fish or that it was a better time of day to fish. No, not for a minute did that kind of thinking prevail in his mind; he went out based upon the word of Jesus. We are told:

Night was the only favorable time for fishing with nets in the clear waters of the lake. After toiling all night without success, it seemed hopeless to cast the net by day; but Jesus had given the command, and *love for their Master moved the disciples to obey.* (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 246)

Here we find the key ingredient in the Christian’s faith—love! Paul tells us that faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). You see, the devil has a belief, even faith! “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also *believe*, and tremble” (James 2:19). The Greek word for believe is simply a verb form of the word we translate faith. So, to say we believe means that we have faith, but even the devil is said to have faith. Notice how this gem from the Spirit of Prophecy helps to clarify the matter:

When we speak of faith, there is a distinction that should be borne in mind. There is a kind of belief that is wholly distinct from faith. The existence and power of God, the truth of His word, are facts that even Satan and his hosts cannot at heart deny. The Bible says that “the devils also believe, and tremble;” but this is not faith. James 2:19. Where there is not only a belief in God’s word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love and purifies the soul. (*Steps to Christ*, p. 63)

Faith is an absolute necessity in the Christian’s life, for he cannot please God without faith.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)

This is certainly not because God is capricious, but only faith brings grace and obedience within our reach (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 16:26).

Faith brings victory over sin in our lives: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4).

As we noted earlier, faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). The discipline of science we call physics deals with energy and force and the measurement of those forces. How do we quantify those forces? By the amount of work they do. We measure the efficiency of an automobile engine by measuring how many miles per gallon, or liters per kilometer, the engine is able to obtain. A 2012 Toyota Camry (4 cyl) is listed to obtain 28 MPG combined under normal conditions. This is a measurement of the work done by the engine.

Faith is measured by the amount of work it produces. As James noted:

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James 2:17, 18)

True faith delights in the law of God and brings one into obedience to the commandments of God.

I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. (Psalm 40:8)

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. (John 15:10)

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. (1 John 2:3–6)

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (1 John 3:22–24)

## **False Views of Faith and Works**

Clearly God’s commandments, his holy law, have an important place in the life of the believer. While we cannot be saved by the law, true faith enables us to keep all of God’s commandments. Remember, however, that the track of truth and the track of error can be very close, and the issue of understanding the relationship between faith and works has been an issue that has caused many people, even seasoned workers who have studied the Bible for years, to slip on the Christian pathway. Some people may believe and teach that, since the cross, God’s law and its authority are obsolete, but this is not true. Please do not believe such ideas, beloved.

God’s word says: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3). We have also been told:

I was shown that the third angel proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message, and raise the voice of warning to the world to keep the commandments of God and His law as the apple of the eye; and that in response to this warning, many would embrace the Sabbath of the lord. (*Life Sketches*, p. 96)

Beloved, it is true that the law cannot save, but its authority will never cease. Are we to say today that Sunday could be used for the Sabbath? If the authority of the law is gone, what would prevent such a position? Ellen White quotes Proverbs 7:2 in the previous quotation, without any indication that the authority of the law is past. Most all will agree that the covenant God made with Abraham was the new, or everlasting, covenant. Notice what inspiration says about this covenant:

This same covenant [of grace, the new covenant] was renewed to Abraham in the promise, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Genesis 22:18. This promise pointed to Christ. So Abraham understood it (see Galatians 3:8, 16), and he trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins. It was this faith that was accounted unto him for righteousness. *The covenant with Abraham also maintained the authority of God’s law. (Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 370)

We have further been told that God’s law is holy, as he is, and that in the judgment those who have despised his law will see it in a different light. However, at that time it will be too late:

When the judgment shall sit, and everyone shall be judged by the things written in the books, *the authority of God’s law will be looked upon in a light altogether different from that in which it is now regarded by the Christian world.* Satan has blinded their eyes and confused their understanding, as he blinded and confused Adam and Eve, and led them into transgression. The law of Jehovah is great, even as its Author is great. In the judgment it will be recognized as holy, just, and good in all its requirements. Those who transgress this law will find that they have a serious account to settle with God; for His claims are decisive (*The Review and Herald*, May 7, 1901)

While one’s obedience does not earn any credit toward salvation, God appreciates the obedience of his people and without it, the people cannot claim any covenant relationship to God. God says:

For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with

them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them. Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee. (Deuteronomy 7:6, 9, 11–15)

Lest we be charged with misapplying the verses, may we suggest checking out *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 288, 289, where these verses are quoted in the same context. Ellen White also says:

If God's commandments are to be binding for a thousand generations, it will take them into the kingdom of God, into the presence of God and his holy angels. This is an argument that cannot be controverted. *The commandments of God will endure through all time and eternity. (Special Testimonies on Education, p. 14)*

## The Error of Presumption

Just as there is a counterfeit truth about God called the trinity and a counterfeit Sabbath called Sunday, there is a counterfeit faith, and it is called presumption. David prayed:

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. (Psalm 19:12, 13)

The basis of presumption is pride. The Hebrew word *zed* that is translated *presumption* means arrogant, or proud. Let us notice an understanding of this from both the Old and the New Testaments:

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from *presumptuous sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. (Deuteronomy 17:12, 13)

But the prophet, which shall *presume* to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. (Deuteronomy 18:20)

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh

in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. *Presumptuous* are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. (2 Peter 2:9, 10)

Presumption is sin and leads to death. Presumption carves its own path, claiming the promises of God but not complying with the conditions.

But faith is in no sense allied to presumption. Only he who has obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression. Faith would have led our first parents to trust the love of God, and to obey His commands. Presumption led them to transgress His law, believing that His great love would save them from the consequence of their sin. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions on which mercy is to be granted. Genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126)

Satan attempted to use presumption in the wilderness to cause the fall of Jesus. In each temptation he asked Jesus to step over the divine line where faith is separated from presumption. In the first temptation Jesus was tempted with hunger. Satan knew Jesus had been in the wilderness for forty days and would be hungry. Satan tempted Jesus to perform a miracle to help himself (Matthew 4:2–4), but this Jesus could not do and still fulfill the plan for which he had come—our redemption. Concerning the second temptation we are told:

But Satan was not willing to cease his efforts until he had tried every means to obtain victory over the world's Redeemer. He knew that with himself all was at stake, whether he or Christ should be victor in the contest. And in order to awe Christ with his superior strength he carried Him to Jerusalem and set Him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and continued to beset Him with temptations. He again demanded of Christ that, if He was indeed the Son of God, to give him evidence by casting Himself from the dizzy height upon which he had placed Him. He urged Christ to show His confidence in the preserving care of His Father by casting Himself down from the Temple.

In Satan's first temptation upon the point of appetite he had tried to insinuate doubts in regard to God's love and care for Christ as His Son, by presenting His surroundings and His hunger as an evidence that He was not in favor with God. He was unsuccessful in this. He next tried to take advantage of the faith and perfect trust Christ had shown in His heavenly Father, to urge Him to presumption. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus promptly answered, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (*Confrontation*, pp. 47, 48)

Notice that Satan quoted Psalm 91:11, 12 to Jesus. Let us notice the words:

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (Matthew 4:6)

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, *To keep thee in all thy ways*. They shall bear thee up in their hands, Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. (Psalm 91:11, 12 KJV)

For he shall give his angels charge concerning thee, *to keep thee in all thy ways*. They shall bear thee up on their hands, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (English translation of the LXX)

Thus from the Hebrew and the Greek, we see that the words Satan quoted did not betray the text, but they did not give all the text! Though quoting Scripture, Satan was not rightly dividing the word of God (2 Timothy 2:15).

Satan now supposes that he has met Jesus on His own ground. The wily foe himself presents words that proceeded from the mouth of God. He still appears as an angel of light, and he makes it evident that he is acquainted with the Scriptures, and understands the import of what is written. As Jesus before used the word of God to sustain His faith, the tempter now uses it to countenance his deception. He claims that he has been only testing the fidelity of Jesus, and he now commends His steadfastness. As the Saviour has manifested trust in God, Satan urges Him to give still another evidence of His faith.

But again the temptation is prefaced with the insinuation of distrust, "If Thou be the Son of God." Christ was tempted to answer the "if;" but He refrained from the slightest acceptance of the doubt. He would not imperil His life in order to give evidence to Satan.

The tempter thought to take advantage of Christ's humanity, and urge Him to presumption. But while Satan can solicit, he cannot compel to sin. He said to Jesus, "Cast Thyself down," knowing that he could not cast Him down; for God would interpose to deliver Him. Nor could Satan force Jesus to cast Himself down. Unless Christ should consent to temptation, He could not be overcome. Not all the power of earth or hell could force Him in the slightest degree to depart from the will of His Father.

The tempter can never compel us to do evil. He cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. The will must consent, faith must let go its hold upon Christ, before Satan can exercise his power upon us. But every sinful desire we cherish affords him a foothold. Every point in which we fail of meeting the divine standard is an open door by which he can enter to tempt and destroy us. And every failure or defeat on our part gives occasion for him to reproach Christ.

When Satan quoted the promise, "He shall give His angels charge over Thee," he omitted the words, "to keep

Thee in all Thy ways;" that is, in all the ways of God's choosing. Jesus refused to go outside the path of obedience. While manifesting perfect trust in His Father, He would not place Himself, unbidden, in a position that would necessitate the interposition of His Father to save Him from death. He would not force Providence to come to His rescue, and thus fail of giving man an example of trust and submission. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 125)

The Bible well illustrates presumption. Adam and Eve presumed upon the word of God when they sinned in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3), yet on just the points they had failed, Christ was victorious.

Christ withstood the test upon appetite, upon the love of the world, and upon that love of display which leads to presumption. These were the temptations that overcame Adam and Eve, and that so readily overcome us. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 116)

The disobedience of Saul concerning Amalek is a textbook case of presumption. The directions were very clear—destroy all of Amalek, even the children and animals (1 Samuel 15:1–3). "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs" (v. 9). This was counter to the plan of God. Saul claimed that they brought the best back to sacrifice to Jehovah (verse 15), but Saul could not honor God with a sacrifice of disobedience. Samuel told him: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (v. 22). "Saul presumed upon his exaltation, and dishonored God by unbelief and disobedience" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 633).

## Presumption in Divine Healing

Now we want to come to an area of faith and presumption that is currently getting a lot of attention in some circles. That is the subject of divine healing. Is there a *real McCoy*? Are there still genuine manifestations of the divine touch today? The answer must be a resounding, *Yes!* God's power is certainly not less today, and our pioneer history records various wonderful manifestations of healing. (See *Life Sketches*, pages 74–76; *Manuscript Releases*, volume 5, page 239; etc.)

Jesus has promised to do some great and wonderful things for his people. In Mark 16: 17, 18, he said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." We see an example of this promised fulfilled in the ministry of the apostles in Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 2, 3, and in Paul's life, as recorded in Acts 28 and other places.

I know of the power of God to heal and strengthen through the anointing of oil and through prayer. The first series of evangelistic meetings I had, many years ago, covered all our main Bible truths, including the mark of the beast. I had preached on the prophecies of Daniel, on the law of God,

including the Sabbath, and this night I was to preach on the mark of the beast, but Satan attempted to afflict me so that I could not speak. I became very ill with a fever and sore throat. I could hardly talk during fifteen minutes before the meeting was to begin. The congregation was waiting. What could I do? I followed the counsel of James 5:14, 15:

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Two elders anointed me and prayed for me. We had followed the teaching of God all we could, and he honored his word to us. I was given freedom to be able to preach, and God blessed the presentation.

However, as we all know, our prayers are not always answered right away or even at all. Why is this? Is it, as some say, “a lack of faith”? Let us continue by establishing some principles upon which God works. The first is cause and effect. Paul wrote: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7), and Ellen White wrote:

Teach your children to study from cause to effect; show them that if they violate the laws of their being, they must pay the penalty by suffering disease. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 536)

Galatians 6:7 and this reference would indicate that it is not God’s will to bring healing to those who live in direct violation of the known laws of health.

In the word of God we have instruction relative to special prayer for the recovery of the sick. But the offering of such prayer is a most solemn act, and should not be entered upon without careful consideration. In many cases of prayer for the healing of the sick, that which is called faith is nothing less than presumption.

Many persons bring disease upon themselves by their self-indulgence. They have not lived in accordance with natural law or the principles of strict purity. Others have disregarded the laws of health in their habits of eating and drinking, dressing, or working. Often some form of vice is the cause of feebleness of mind or body. *Should these persons gain the blessing of health, many of them would continue to pursue the same course of heedless transgression of God’s natural and spiritual laws, reasoning that if God heals them in answer to prayer, they are at liberty to continue their unhealthful practices and to indulge perverted appetite without restraint. If God were to work a miracle in restoring these persons to health, He would be encouraging sin.*

It is labor lost to teach people to look to God as a healer of their infirmities, unless they are taught also to lay aside unhealthful practices. In order to receive His blessing in answer to prayer, they must cease to do evil and learn to do

well. Their surroundings must be sanitary, their habits of life correct. They must live in harmony with the law of God, both natural and spiritual. (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 227, 228)

Many have expected that God would keep them from sickness merely because they have asked him to do so. But God did not regard their prayers, because their faith was not made perfect by works. God will not work a miracle to keep those from sickness who have no care for themselves, but are continually violating the laws of health, and make no efforts to prevent disease. (*The Review and Herald*, December 19, 1899)

This brings us to the next point: God does expect us to live in accordance of his health laws and if we will, he has promised to do great things for his people. God told the children of Israel:

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee. (Exodus 15:26)

Interestingly, we know from the Egyptian mummies that most of the Egyptians experienced heart disease. Princess Ahmose Meyret Amon, who was born around 1580 BC and died in her 40s, had blockages in two of her three main heart arteries. These blockages most likely led to one or more heart attacks.

While we can speculate about their diet, we know that they did not have double bacon cheeseburgers, yet they still had heart disease. This should help Seventh-day Adventists to know that half-hearted measures are not always good enough for our hearts! Today we know that heart disease can be virtually eliminated by using a plant-based, whole food diet, such as the Spirit of Prophecy has counseled us.

God designed humanity, and he pleads with his people to obey his commandments. If they do, he will be the Lord that brings healing. Before continuing we want to make something clear. Anointing does not heal anyone; Jesus is the healer. Good food and exercise of themselves do not heal; Jesus heals. But, we use these simple things to show our true faith in Christ, following his word, as he has said. God also said:

Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your

cattle. And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee. (Deuteronomy 7:12–15)

The emphasis in the above texts is one of fertility. Dr. Pam Popper works with couples who have infertility issues. She has found that by simply putting couples on a plant-based, whole foods diet, 99% of these couple are able to conceive children!

## God Does Not Heal Everyone Right Now

We have noted that God does not heal every Christian of faith, at least not at first. Or does he? If someone is not healed, is that simply, as some teach, a failure to claim the promise of God or a lack of faith? Absolutely not. The Apostle Paul was a man of faith who successfully prayed for the sick, even the dead (Acts 20:9–11), yet he was not healed of bad eyesight. In 2 Corinthians 12:7–9, he says:

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.

Here Paul states that it was in God's will for him to carry this infirmity that the glory of God might be made manifest.

Beloved, we do not always know what is best. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought" (Romans 8:26). This includes prayer for the sick.

In prayer for the sick it should be remembered that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought." Romans 8:26. We do not know whether the blessing we desire will be best or not. Therefore our prayers should include this thought: "Lord, thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons. Jesus, their Advocate, gave His life for them. His love for them is greater than ours can possibly be. If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the good of the afflicted ones, we ask, in the name of Jesus, that they may be restored to health. If it be not Thy will that they may be restored, we ask that Thy grace may comfort and Thy presence sustain them in their sufferings."

God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say,

"Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done." Luke 22:42. Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the Garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Matthew 26:39. And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals! (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 229, 230)

The counsel here is directly opposite from what was voiced in a meeting I attended a few years ago, when a person, who clearly was not living within the laws of health reform, asked to be prayed for and to be anointed. The minister conducting this service waxed bold to announce that he would not pray, saying "if it was the Lord's will," for he already knew it was God's will! This is not faith, but presumption.

Some have professed to have great faith in God and to have special gifts and special answers to their prayers, although the evidence was lacking. They mistook presumption for faith. **The prayer of faith is never lost; but to claim that it will be always answered in the very way and for the particular thing we have expected is presumption.** (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 231)

Presumption is one of Satan's great aids against Christians. It is an aid that he finds most successful:

**Presumption is a common temptation, and as Satan assails men with this, he obtains the victory nine times out of ten.** Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and claim by their faith to been listed in the warfare against all evil in their nature, frequently plunge without thought into temptations from which it would require a miracle to bring them forth unsullied. Meditation and prayer would have preserved them and led them to shun the critical, dangerous position in which they placed themselves when they gave Satan the advantage over them. The promises of God are not for us rashly to claim while we rush on recklessly into danger, **violating the laws of nature and disregarding prudence and the judgment with which God has endowed us. This is the most flagrant presumption.** (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 44, 45)

Because of what the Bible and these testimonies say, I am extremely concerned when I read testimonies such as this:

One person who asked for prayer for her eyes, promptly took off her glasses and was about to throw them in the rubbish bin. I asked if I could keep them for I needed this testimony as a constant reminder to myself. My mind at first whirled about a bit when I saw this striking evidence of faith and for a moment the thought crossed my mind, "is this fanaticism?" Just for a moment and then I cursed the thought and rejoiced in the faithfulness of God. I know that it is just such deeply rooted elements of unbelief which prevent us from seeing the glory of God. We ask and then we make provision in case God fails us!! What

terrible attitudes we have as Christians! No wonder God cannot work for us.

This sister knew that she was healed. Why did she know, was it the evidence of eyes that saw with crystal clarity? No, it was the certainty of the word of God who promises to heal all our diseases. God is not a liar and so, she knew she was healed, no matter what appearances may say. This confident trust in God's word will reveal itself in the restoration of her eyes as surely as God is faithful. (*Selected*)

Remember that the track of truth lies very close to the track of error. We need discernment to distinguish between faith and presumption. On the surface presumption may look very much like faith, even great faith, but it is a tool of the devil to trap Christians into his web of destruction.

Today every wind of doctrine is swirling. God has given to his people spiritual gifts to help them so as not to be tossed to and fro:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. (Ephesians 4:11-14)

One of these gifts is prophecy. While others use the Spirit of Prophecy less and less, I do not apologize for needing and using the gift that God, in his wisdom, has given his people so they can avoid pitfalls, such as presumption.

Finally, how do we relate to situations of healing which do not appear to be in accordance with the light God has given his people? Let us remember that not all miracles come from God. The book of Revelation tells us clearly that miracles will be the calling card of satanic agents (Revelation 13:14; 16:14).

In the future, great watchfulness will be needed. There is to be among God's people no spiritual stupidity. Evil spirits are actively engaged in seeking to control the minds of human beings. Men are binding up in bundles, ready to be consumed by the fires of the last days. Those who discard Christ and His righteousness will accept the sophistry that is flooding the world. Christians are to be sober and vigilant, steadfastly resisting their adversary the devil, who is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Men under the influence of evil spirits will work miracles. They will make people sick by casting their spell upon them, and then remove the spell, leading others to say that those who were sick have been miraculously

healed. This Satan has done again and again. (*This Day with God*, p. 336)

Many who refuse the message which the Lord sends them are seeking to find pegs on which to hang doubts, to find some excuse for rejecting the light of heaven. In the face of clear evidence they say, as did the Jews, "Show us a miracle, and we will believe. If these messengers have the truth, why do they not heal the sick?"

Could their eyes be opened, they would see evil angels exulting around them and triumphing in their power to deceive them. The day is just before us when Satan will answer the demand of these doubters and present numerous miracles to confirm the faith of all those who are seeking this kind of evidence. *How terrible will be the situation of those who close their eyes to the light of truth and ask for miracles to establish them in deception!*

Our sanitariums are to reach a class that can be reached by no other means. "Why," asks one and another, "is not prayer offered for the miraculous healing of the sick, instead of so many sanitariums being established?" *Should this be done, great fanaticism would arise in our ranks.* Those who have much self-confidence would start into action, as did certain ones in \_\_\_\_\_ [Indiana], who had a great deal to say about holy flesh. These were carried away by a spiritualistic delusion. At the General Conference in 1901 they were rebuked by a message given me for them by the Lord. Should we carry out the plans that some would be pleased to have us carry out, companies would be formed who would bring in spiritualistic manifestations that would confuse the faith of many.

Errors will come in, and strange doctrines will be advocated. Some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. As far back as the establishment of the first sanitarium these things began to appear. They were similar to the errors that manifested themselves soon after the disappointment of 1844. A strong phase of fanaticism appeared, calling itself the witness of the Holy Ghost. I was given a message to rebuke this evil work. (*Evangelism*, pp. 594, 595)

Please consider well the following counsel and vision, for it may be a saving message to you:

We must examine well the foundation of our hope, for we shall have to give a reason for it from the Scriptures. This delusion will spread, and we shall have to contend with it face to face; and unless we are prepared for it, we shall be ensnared and overcome. But if we do what we can on our part to be ready for the conflict that is just before us, God will do His part, and His all-powerful arm will protect us. He would sooner send every angel out of glory to the relief of faithful souls, to make a hedge about them, than have them deceived and led away by the lying wonders of Satan.

*continued on page 23*

## Youth's Corner—Rodney and His Camels

Our story this month is about Rodney Gilbert, a foreign correspondent and editorial writer for the *New York Herald Tribune* during the early 1900s. He was an expert in Far Eastern affairs and, at one point, was commissioned to travel to the outer edges of China as part of his work, and in order to do this, he had to travel with camels. A few years prior to this assignment, however, Mr. Gilbert had written an interesting article for the *Asia Magazine* about Bactrian camels.

In his article he explained how temperamental Bactrian camels were, how argumentative and how unintelligent they were. Then he described the hard job anyone had who raised these camels because, for example, they ate things that most other animals would not eat. This meant their owners had to take their camels to inhospitable places. In fact, he said, if you grazed Bactrian camels in nice, green fields, they would get sick! Instead, the camels liked to be out in the middle of nowhere—in the desert or in scrubby grasslands, where they ate thorn bushes and other seemingly distasteful vegetation, and, of course, that meant that the camel's owner also had to live in the harsh, scrubby land.

Raising Bactrian camels was not easy in the early 1900s. If a camel became ill, for example, it rarely improved, and if a camel became wet, it was sure to get sick. Also, these camels hated to be restrained and hated anyone who tried to restrain them. They would use their legs to kick out against anyone or any guard dog who came near. However, when they were in danger of harm from wolves or other wild beasts, they instantly forgot all about their strong legs and could only remember to c-r-y and s-c-r-e-a-m and spit. This, of course, did nothing to protect them from the attackers, so the owners would then have to rush to their aid. Another problem the owners had was if the camels were allowed to eat anything during the daytime and were not allowed to get *enough* to eat, they would simply lie down and *refuse* to get up. So trains of Bactrian camels traveled at night to prevent the camels from seeing food to graze on, and during daylight hours, the men rested and allowed the camels to eat and graze to their hearts' content.

In his article for the *Asia Magazine*, Mr. Gilbert wrote that Bactrian camels also easily panicked. At the time he wrote, camels in a camel train were connected to each other with ropes through nose rings, and if any camel became spooked—maybe by seeing a white stone or some bones along the trail or by a little animal running between its legs—they all spooked. The first one would rear up, snort, and scream, tearing out its nose ring and frightening the next animal, who would rear up, also. Merchandise would topple from the camels, and each camel would take off in a different direction. Then camel drivers would have to run after them, capture them and bring them back—a long, exasperating task.

A pregnant Bactrian was another problem for the camel keeper. When it was time for the baby to be born, the mother would know something unusual was happening, and it would

scare her. If the camel owner or driver was not watching her closely, he would lose the mother, for she would panic and take off running and keep running—for one hundred miles! She would just run and run, and the keepers of the camels would have to run after her, so they kept close watch on all the pregnant camels and captured them as soon as they started to get fidgety, otherwise they would have a hard time finding them in the desert or grasslands. The keepers had to stay dressed and have their horses saddled during the camels' rest periods, to prevent any mother from running away.

If Bactrian camels browse in coarse, gravelly sand, it hurts their feet, and if their feet become sore, they lie down and refuse to get up. The owners, therefore, must make boots for the camels. You can see that Bactrian camels need a lot of care and are a high-demand, fragile animal. Also, they lose all their hair every year. This starts in March and continues through the spring, until June. Before the new hair grows in, all you will see is the camel's smooth, leathery skin. When you see pictures of camels with thick, shaggy fur, you know it is their winter coat, and when you see pictures of smooth-faced camels, you know the picture was taken in the springtime. During the springtime, however, the camels get cold, deprived of their fur, and they have to be wrapped up; otherwise, they will become sick, and once a Bactrian camel became sick in the early 1900s, he rarely recovered. Also, when the babies are born, both the mother and the baby get cold easily, for the wind blows across the grasslands, and the keepers have to wrap both of them in felt mats to protect them; otherwise, they, also, will become sick and died.

This is what it was like to raise Bactrian camels in the early twentieth century, and, as Mr. Gilbert wrote in his article, nobody loved a Bactrian and no Bactrian wanted to be loved. That was just the way it was. They were the strangest beasts he had ever seen. But then he was commissioned to go north to talk with the leaders in northern China and in Mongolia, and he had to travel by *camel*—Bactrian camel.

So he purchased a couple of camels and hired a camel expert to travel with him, and everything went well until the camel expert deserted him! Mr. Gilbert was now left to continue on his journey north, with no one to help him with his two quarrelsome camels. He knew that when the drivers wanted to load the camels, they would take hold the rope hanging from the nose ring and pull the camel down, but this was very painful to the camel. So whenever a camel saw a human being coming near with an outstretched arm, it would start to scream, raise its head up as high as it could, and try to get away before the keeper caught hold of the rope. Mr. Gilbert decided, however, that he was going to love his camels and that he was not going to hurt them by pulling on their nose rings. It took a long time for them to learn to not be afraid when he came near and to learn to kneel without being pulled down, but they finally understood Mr. Gilbert was a friend to them.

*continued on page 24*

## From Patmos, Messages for Seven Churches



### Behold! Philadelphia, Part 2

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: *behold*, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. *Behold*, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; *behold*, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. *Behold*, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 3:7–13)

#### A Message about Jesus and His People

The message to the angel of the church of Philadelphia is especially pertinent to God’s people who face conflict over spiritual matters. Under inspiration Ellen White tells us that for “those who in the midst of conflict [who] should maintain their faith in God, the prophet was given the words of commendation and promise: ‘I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.’ ‘Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth’” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 588). If you are facing conflict and seem to have only a little strength in the battle, be patient and maintain your faith in God. God will keep you through the conflict, for Jesus has told us: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give (Greek: δίδωμι, *didomi*) you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

The message of Jesus to Philadelphia also contains a particularly beautiful description of himself—the most comprehensive to be found in all the messages sent to the seven churches. Jesus states that he is holy and true, that he has the key of David, and that what he opens no man can shut and what he shuts no man can open. He also declares that he knows the hearts of those who claim to be Jews and that he knows the future, revealing that an hour of temptation is coming, that he is returning soon, and that the overcomers will be pillars in the temple of God, with the name of his God, the name of the city of his God, and his own new name

written upon them. And Jesus portrays himself as powerful by making the false-hearted Jews worship at the feet of the saints and by protecting his people during the overwhelming hour of temptation. This is the body of the message for Philadelphia, save for one *important* admonition given to the leader—to hold fast that which he had. Why? So that no man would take his crown!

#### One of Authority Speaks

The importance of the messages given to the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3 is seen in the following quotation, condensed from a letter written by Ellen White on September 22, 1903, to the teachers at Emmanuel Missionary College (known today as Andrews University), in response to the new book *The Living Temple*:

In the visions of the night this matter [of teachers sustaining the sentiments of the book regarding the personality of God] was clearly presented to me, before a large number. **One of authority was speaking, and He said,** “If the suppositions and statements found in this book were essential, if these statements were pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from the chaff, *there would be some decided mention of them in the revelation given by Christ to John to give to the churches.* To John the Lord Jesus opened the subjects that he saw would be needed by his people in the last days. The instruction that he gave is found in the book of Revelation. Those who would be co-workers with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in the book of Revelation. With pen and



**“Sleep should be regular . . .**

# Rest for You

*Find rest of soul  
and quietude  
in nature. Let the eyes  
rest on the green  
fields, the groves,  
up to the blue sky  
above the city's dust and  
noise. Breathe the invigorating  
fresh air of heaven. (Ellen G. White,  
Adventist Home)*



**“Be up with the . . .**



# Four Souls

spirit in the beauty  
and peace of  
rest on the green  
and the hills. Look  
y, unobscured by  
d smoke, and  
orating air of  
J. White, The  
me, p. 132)



and abundant.”(Ed, p. 205)



early song birds.” (CG, p. 111)



voice they will strive to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal.”

The first chapter of the book of Revelation was then read, with great solemnity. . . .

Our Instructor presented the solemn messages [the context is the messages to the churches] that have been given in their order in Revelation, and that are to occupy the first place in the minds of God’s people. . . .

The testimony of Christ, a testimony of the most solemn character, is to be borne to the world. All through the book of Revelation there are the most precious, elevating promises, and there are also warnings of most fearfully solemn import. Will not those who profess to have a knowledge of the truth read the testimony given to John by Christ? Here is no guesswork, no scientific deception. Here are the truths that concern our present and future welfare. What is the chaff to the wheat?

Our Instructor passed on to the third chapter of Revelation, and read the following:—

“Unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.”

***These words were spoken with such strength and force that those present seemed to be afraid, and hid their faces in their hands, as if they were arraigned before the Judge of all the earth. Some seemed about to faint.***

Then the subject changed. The Speaker read:—

“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:

for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Courtesy of Holylandphotos.org



**Ruins of an ancient Byzantine church in Philadelphia**

In these words there is no soothsaying. . . .

Then was repeated the message to the Laodicean church. The whole of the third chapter of Revelation, from first to last, was

read. (*The Spalding and Magan Collection*, pp. 320–323; also published in *The Review & Herald*, October 22, 1903; all emphasis in this article supplied unless otherwise stated)

The letter closed with an appeal for the watchmen on the walls of Zion to awaken, but the words of the one of authority are revealing. He (not Ellen White) stated that if the statements in *The Living Temple* were *essential*, were *pure provender*, and were *thoroughly winnowed from chaff*, “there would be *some decided mention* of them in the revelation given by Christ to John to give to the churches.” It certainly behooves us to understand these messages. Not only did they come from our heavenly Father and Jesus, but in 1903 they were re-affirmed, in statement and quotation, by the one of authority who came to Ellen White in vision. In her vision the only messages the one of authority quotes are portions of the messages given to the seven churches and not the messages in Revelation 14, for example, as important as they are. This should give us a greater appreciation for how essential, pure, and thoroughly winnowed they are to meet the great need of God’s people at the end of time. So, let us turn our attention to some of the important aspects of the message to the church in Philadelphia.

### **The Key of David**

The word *key* is used only twice in the Old Testament (Judges 3:25 and Isaiah 22:22) and comes from the Hebrew word *maphteach* and means just what the English word

connotes—an instrument that locks or unlocks something. In the New Testament the word *key* is used only six times (four of which are found in the book of Revelation—Revelation 1:18; 3:7; 9:1; 20:1), but each of the six times the Greek word *kleis* is used, it simply means something that controls the opening or the closing, the binding or the loosening, of something else. It represents power. What, then, is the key of David?

The only biblical reference to the key of David, other than that found in Revelation 3:7, is found in Isaiah 22:22: “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.” The latter part of Isaiah 22 is speaking about Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, but Isaiah is speaking symbolically of Christ in this passage, especially in verse 22, which is repeated by Jesus in Revelation 3:7: “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.” Other parts of Isaiah 22:20–25 speak of the government being committed into his (Eliakim’s) hand, of him being a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah, and of him being a glorious throne to his father’s house. James White states that “the term, ‘key of David,’ in this text [Revelation 3:7], has direct reference to Christ’s reception of the throne of David, which is his rightful throne, the throne of the immortal kingdom” (*The Second Coming of Christ*, p. 79).

### Names

Three names are mentioned in this promise to the Philadelphia church—the name of Jesus’ God, the name of the city of Jesus’ God, and the new name of Jesus himself. E. J. Waggoner explains the use of the word *name* in Revelation 3:12 in this way:

God puts his name upon his people, that all may know to whom they belong. Men put their names upon their places of business for a sign. Christ says, “Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders.” Wherever the men of the world come into contact with the people of God, they are to see the name of God, and recognize at a glance that God dwells within, and does business there. (*General Conference Bulletin*, April 9, 1901)

### Behold! An Open Door

“Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it” (Revelation 3:8). The use of the word *behold* means *notice what comes next*. Something important follows, and Jesus wants us to pay attention to it. The Greek word for *have set* is *didomi* and means *to give*. Jesus has given us an open door. (*Didomi* is also used in John 3:16, for example.) Now, why would any man want to shut a door that Christ has opened for him, knowing that Christ only gives good gifts to his children? It does not make sense, and it probably made no sense to the little flock in 1844, either, but for us, living at a

time when we can look back 167 years to 1844, we can see that what Jesus implied in his message has been, and continues to be, attempted. The ministration of Jesus in the most holy place has been diminished and well-nigh obliterated in the eyes of most people today, but Jesus cautions us to let no *man* take our crowns! Let us read Ellen White’s explanation of the open door:

The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment . . .

After the passing of the time of expectation, in 1844, Adventists still believed the Saviour’s coming to be very near; they held that they had reached an important crisis, and that the work of Christ as man’s intercessor before God, had ceased. . . .

But clearer light came with the investigation of the sanctuary question. Now was seen the application of those words of Christ in the Revelation, addressed to the church at this very time [1844]: “These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” [Revelation 3:7, 8.] Here an open as well as a shut door is brought to view. At the termination of the 2300 prophetic days in 1844, Christ changed his ministration from the holy to the most holy place. When, in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary, the high priest on the day of atonement entered the most holy place, *the door of the holy place was closed, and the door of the most holy was opened*. So, when Christ passed from the holy to the most holy of the heavenly sanctuary, the door, or ministration, of the former apartment was closed, and the door, or ministration, of the latter was opened. Christ had ended one part of his work as our intercessor, to enter upon another portion of the work; and he still presented his blood before the Father in behalf of sinners. “Behold,” he declares, “I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.”

Those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of the atonement, receive the benefits of his mediation in their behalf; but those who reject the light that brings to view this work of ministration, are not benefited thereby. The Jews who rejected the light given at Christ’s first advent, and refused to believe in him as the Saviour of the world, could not receive pardon through him. When Jesus at his ascension entered by his own blood into the heavenly sanctuary to shed upon his disciples the blessings of his mediation, the Jews were left in total darkness, to continue their useless sacrifices and offerings. *The ministration of types and shadows had ceased* [feast days, for example]. That door by which men had formerly found access to God, was no longer open. The Jews had refused to seek him in the only way whereby he could then be found, through the ministration in the sanctuary in Heaven. Therefore they found no communion with God. To them

the door was shut. They had no knowledge of Christ as the true sacrifice and the only mediator before God; hence they could not receive the benefits of his mediation. (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 268, 269)

Ellen White *was shown* that her husband's "relation to the people of God was similar, in some respects, to that of Moses to Israel" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 85), so his understanding of the open and shut doors is of value:

"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth." That Christ is here described, no one will deny. He is the rightful heir to David's throne, hence has the key of David, which may represent power. The throne of David, or Christ, on which he is to reign, is in the capital of his kingdom, the New Jerusalem now above. The opening and shutting can refer only to the change of ministration from the Holy to the most Holy of the heavenly Sanctuary, at the end of the 2300 days, in 1844. It was then that the ministration in the Holy Place closed, and the ministration in the most Holy for the forgiveness of sins, *and* to cleanse the Sanctuary, was opened by him that hath the key of David. "Behold, I set before thee an open door." "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." Rev.xi,19. We can apply texts of this class to no other events than Christ's entering the most Holy, in 1844, and opening his ministration there, where the ark of ten commandments is, hence, since that time the Sabbath, with the whole law of God, has been present truth in a special sense. (James White, *The Review & Herald*, October 16, 1856)

As Seventh-day Adventists we know that the Sabbath commandment has been shining more fully since 1844, but, I am sorry to say, Seventh-day Adventism today completely denies the cleansing ministry of Jesus in the most holy place. Fundamental Belief #24, "Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary," only affirms a ministry of investigation and not one, also, of cleansing; and Fundamental Belief #9, "Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ," only proclaims an atonement of forgiveness (justification) and not one of forgiveness *and* cleansing (sanctification). An investigative process is occurring in the most holy place, but a cleansing ministry is also occurring:

Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, ***their characters must be purified from sin*** by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort ***they must be conquerors in the battle with evil***. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a ***special work of purification*** [final atonement], ***of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth***. This work

is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Malachi 3:4. Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a "glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Ephesians 5:27. Then she will look "forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Song of Solomon 6:10. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 425)

Let us hold fast to our knowledge of the open door set before us and to the complete ministry of Jesus in the most holy place, so that no doctrine of man will take our crowns!

### The Hour of Temptation

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." In this scripture is brought to view the hour of temptation that is to try them that dwell upon the earth. *We are now living in this trying hour*. There is no escape for any from this conflict. If in your life there are defective traits of character that you are not striving to overcome, you may be assured that the enemy will endeavor to take advantage of them; for he is watching vigilantly, seeking to spoil the faith of every one. In order to gain the victory over every besetment of the enemy, we must lay hold on a power that is out of and beyond ourselves. We must maintain a constant, living connection with Christ, who has power to give victory to every soul that will maintain an attitude of faith and humility. If we are self-sufficient, and think that we may go on just as we please, and yet hope to come out on the right side finally, we shall find that we have made a terrible mistake. As those who hope to receive the overcomer's reward, we must press forward in the Christian warfare, though at every advance we meet with opposition. (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, July 9, 1908)

What do we know about this hour of temptation? When Jesus spoke these words, they referred to a future event, but in 1908, when the above words were recorded, it had become a current event, so this hour of temptation cannot refer to the Christian struggle that all of God's people have faced since the fall of Adam and Eve. It has to be something else. The context of the above quotation is the conflict we have with our defective traits of character—all God's people have dealt with this issue—but there is more. It involves overcoming and "victory over every besetment of the enemy." It is a work of purification, a work of perfection. Don't let anyone tell you that those who are translated will be sinning until Jesus comes. It just can't be.

## False Christians

A battle is continually going on between the forces for good and the forces for evil, between the angels of God and the fallen angels. We are beset before and behind, on the right hand and on the left. The conflict that we are passing through is the last we shall have in this world. We are now in the midst of it. Two parties are striving for the supremacy. In this conflict we cannot be neutral. We must stand either on one side or on the other. If we take our position on the side of Christ, if we acknowledge him before the world in word and work, we are bearing a living testimony as to whom we have chosen to serve and honor. In this important period of earth's history, we cannot afford to leave any one in uncertainty as to whose side we are on. (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, July 9, 1908)

There is no natural enmity between fallen men and fallen angels; both are partakers of the same spirit through indulgence in evil. *It is according to the law of the synagogue of Satan that in the controversy of the evil against the good, fallen men and fallen angels shall unite in a desperate companionship.* From the beginning Satan has worked continually to dethrone the Creator, and whatever may be the divisions among evil men and evil angels, there is no division in their opposition to God. *They are banded together as with iron cords* to oppose the Creator and Redeemer of man. Satan is determined to utterly deprave human nature through making of none effect the commandments of God. He originates traditions, and through his maxims he succeeds in assimilating to his own nature the nature of those who do not yield allegiance to the law of God. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, June 11, 1894)

The church of God, despised and persecuted by the world, are educated and disciplined in the school of Christ. They walk in narrow paths on earth; they are purified in the furnace of afflictions. For Jesus' sake they endure opposition, hatred, calumny. They follow Christ through sore conflicts; they endure self-denial, and experience bitter disappointments; but their painful experience teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they look upon it with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of his glory. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, June 18, 1894)

We have discussed the synagogue of Satan in earlier articles, but one thing to note in this message is that the worship that occurs here has to be at the end of *all* time—it will never happen before then. It cannot, for we have just read that “evil men and evil angels” are “banded together as with iron cords to oppose the Creator and Redeemer of man,” and we know this opposition will never end until Jesus comes and delivers his people.

Another important comment Jesus makes is that the synagogue of Satan will know that Jesus has loved the church of Philadelphia. Why would he say that? Because just before

Jesus comes, his people will be appear destitute, ragged, and worn; threadbare, lean, and homeless, and the SS (synagogue of Satan) will hurl epithets and derogatory comments at them, such as “**You** think you are God's people; **you** think he loves you and that you are the apple of his eye?! Just *look* at yourselves!” Satan tried to get Jesus to doubt in the wilderness, and he will try the same with us, but we must “keep the word” of his patience and take heart. Behold! Jesus is coming soon!

We also must be prepared that some of our closest friends in the faith may eventually become part of the synagogue of Satan, for Ellen White tells us that this synagogue is composed of “professed Seventh-day Adventists.” Speaking to Eli Curtis, she stated:

You think, that those who worship before the saint's feet, (Revelation 3:9), will at last be saved. Here I must differ with you; for God shew me that *this class were professed Adventists*, who had fallen away, and “crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” (*A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 12)

## Let No Man Take Thy Crown

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Here again we are admonished to faithfulness, in view of the conflict. ***We must not yield any point that we have already gained*** [such as the final atonement]. From now on till Jesus comes, the battle will wax fiercer and still fiercer. ***We shall have to meet and resist men who are regarded as very wise and learned***, but who are not spiritually wise unto salvation. Our only hope of saving our own souls and of helping others to be saved, is to receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are seeking for a crown, a crown of glory that fadeth not away. As overcomers we are to reign with Christ in the heavenly courts; and we are to overcome through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, July 9, 1908)

## Conclusion

In this article we have covered a few of the main points of the message to the leader of the church at Philadelphia—the key of David, the synagogue of Satan, the open and shut door, etc.—but if you just understand the concepts following the four *beholds* in this message, you will be blessed: “Behold, I have set before thee an *open door*,” “Behold, I will make them of the *synagogue of Satan* . . . behold, I will make them to come and *worship* before thy feet, and to *know that I have loved thee*,” and “Behold, *I come quickly*.” Yes, Jesus is coming quickly, and he is calling us to take our stand—“We cannot afford to leave any one in uncertainty as to whose side we are on.” Beloved, we need to enter into the work of Christ now—that “special work of purification [and] of putting away of sin”—and to “be found written in the book.” Then, on that glorious day, we shall be delivered (Daniel 12:1)!

*Onycha Holt*

# Is There an Eighth Church?

This is the last of a four-part series we have prepared on the subject of the church. We acknowledge that this study is not exhaustive, but it has been the goal to give a basic biblical understanding of the concept of the church, as well as to help believers have an understanding of how to relate to an organization that falsely claims to be the remnant.

Since this study has spanned more than a season, we would like to begin this final segment with a review of some of the vital points that were introduced in the first three studies, with additional material presented to expand the subject matter.

The Greek word translated *church* is *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία), which means the called-out ones. They are called out from the world to serve Christ.

The church is founded upon Jesus and upon him being the Son of God. (See Matthew 16:13–18 and *The Desire of Ages*, pages 412, 413.) The church is the pillar and ground of truth (1 Timothy 3:15), and as such, it must teach truth to remain the church of God.

The church belongs to God and Christ (Romans 16:16; Acts 20:28); therefore, the church never belongs to any man, state, or group; and it can never be run, controlled, or directed by any man, state, or group.

We have seen that “all society is ranging into two great classes, the obedient and the disobedient” (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 296). Despite many denominations, religions, and factions upon the earth, in reality, there are just two churches upon earth, and everyone belongs to one church or the other, even if one does not realize it.

As we studied the issue of the church within the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, we learned that she spoke of a principle whereby we are to take time and place into consideration. While nothing is to be ignored, we are to understand the background and circumstances to the testimonies and realize that they have a determining factor in the testimonies’ origins. (See *Selected Messages*, book 1, page 57.)

This principle is vital to understand if the voice of the General Conference is to be considered the voice of God *today*, as well as if the church, meaning the denomination, can become a part of Babylon.

In part 3 of our study, we examined the Jewish economy. While God called the children of Israel to be his people, they were not given a straight ticket into the kingdom of God. Profession meant nothing if their lives did not live up to the standard to which he had called them. Writing in Romans and Galatians, Paul makes it clear that one’s spiritual birthright and one’s physical birthright are not the same thing. (Romans 9:6–8; Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 3:6, 29; 6:16; see also *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 294; and *The Desire of Ages*, pages 107, 466, 467)

The book of Revelation depicts two women who represent the obedient and the disobedient. God’s people are represented by the pure woman (Revelation 12:1), while Satan’s hosts are marshaled under the banner of a harlot (Revelation 17:1, 2). A more striking contrast could hardly be made. Within his last-day people, God has a special group called the 144,000. Some of the characteristics of this group include:

- Connection with the giving of the three angels’ messages
- No guile; pure doctrine (Revelation 14:5)
- Father’s name in their forehead (Revelation 14:1)
- Sealed in the forehead (Revelation 7:3, 4)
- Serve God in his temple (Revelation 7:15; *Early Writings*, page 18)

The 144,000 have many of the same characteristics of the Philadelphia church. This group is contrasted with another group, the synagogue of Satan, who worship at the feet of the saints (Revelation 3:9; *A Word to the Little Flock*, pages 12, 14, 15). This happens for “a number of days” before Jesus comes (*Maranatha*, p. 287).

In connection with last-day events, we have studied the shaking. The Spirit of Prophecy declares that it began soon after the 1844 disappointment, long before any denomination was formed. Furthermore, this shaking was caused by the straight testimony and would shake people out of the truth, or message.

## The Eighth Church?

We need to now consider a question that has arisen: Is there an eighth church, and what does that expression mean?

Since the seven churches have, for the most part, been interpreted by Adventists as representing seven consecutive time periods of the Christian church, the conclusion is that the seventh (the perfect number) is the last and final church. Therefore, if Laodicea is the last church, it must be the translation church, since there is no eighth church mentioned in Revelation. But is the assumption that the churches form a linear time line valid? Are there other principles of interpretation that should be considered?

Let us consider the way that Christians have interpreted the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3. There are at least four main schemes of interpretation that have been used to try to unlock the meaning in Revelation.

One method, or system, of interpretation is the preterist view. Preterism teaches that Revelation is a prophecy of events that were fulfilled in the first century. The Roman emperors represent the beast, etc. Preterism was first expounded by the Jesuit, Luis De Alcasar, during the counter reformation to attack the prevailing view among Protestants that Rome was the beast of Revelation 13. If the prophecies of Revelation find their fulfillment in the first century and since the papacy did not arise until after the first century,

then, according to this logic, the papacy cannot be the beast power.

Another system of interpretation that is very popular today is known as futurism. Futurism also began during the counter reformation to attack the prevailing view that Rome was the beast power. Futurism interprets the first three chapters of Revelation as dealing with events during the time of the writing of the book and then the rest of the book with events that will happen in the future, usually taught today as being after a secret rapture. The prophecies are considered to be literal descriptions of events yet to happen. This scheme was molded by the Spanish Jesuit, Francisco Ribera, the logic being that since the papacy is in existence now and has been formed for centuries and since, according to this scheme, the antichrist is not to arise until after a secret rapture, then the papacy cannot be the antichrist or the beast of Revelation 13. This scheme did not find much footing until the beginning of the last century, but today is the standard scheme of interpretation by most evangelical churches.

A third view of Revelation comes from the spiritual scheme wherein the book is more designed to teach spiritual lessons than to reveal the future. This scheme “illustrates, in the struggles of the early church, abiding spiritual principles that are applicable to all of human experience throughout history. The symbols can refer to specific people or events in that time, for example, the emperor Nero, but they also become symbols for a larger reality tied to common human experience. The beast symbolizes Nero, while Nero symbolizes the lack of control we experience in our lives, as well as those who exercise power over us in destructive ways” (<http://www.crivoice.org/therevelation.html>). This view also prevents the papacy from being the beast of Revelation 13.

Finally, we come to the historicist scheme. This was the method of interpretation used by the early Protestants. It represents Revelation as an unrolling scroll of church history and, in some cases, world history. This has been the scheme of understanding that has been used by Seventh-day Adventists since their inception. It was this principle that guided Uriah Smith in writing his book *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*. Using this principle the papacy can be identified as the beast of Revelation 13 and the great whore of Revelation 17.

This scheme has also been used to understand the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3. These churches have been considered to represent the church in seven different states that run consecutively from the time of the apostles to the second coming of Jesus Christ. However, is this model for the churches endorsed by inspiration? Let us examine a few statements to find out what we can learn.

**The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the sym-**

**bol**s used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 585; written 1911)

This statement seems to have been based, at least partly, upon the following manuscript, but notice especially the first sentence that is not included in *The Acts of the Apostles*:

*The messages given to the churches in Asia, portray the state of things existing in the churches of the religious world today.* The names of the churches are symbolic of the Christian church in different periods of the Christian era; the number of the churches—seven—indicates completeness and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, and are enforced today; while the figures used are symbolic of the state of God’s professed people,—the wheat developing among the tares; truth standing on its own eternal basis in contrast with error.

I wish to emphasize the fact, that the churches to which John was told to send the instruction given him represent all the churches in our world, and that this revelation to him is to be studied and believed and preached by the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 372; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

These statements remind me of the famous puzzle, the Rubik’s Cube, originally designed by Erno Rubik of Hungary, to solve a problem of internal structural design. After creating the cube Rubik realized that he had also a puzzle which, according to mathematics, has over forty-six quintillion (that’s 46,000 trillion!) possible positions to be wrong, but only one to be correct.

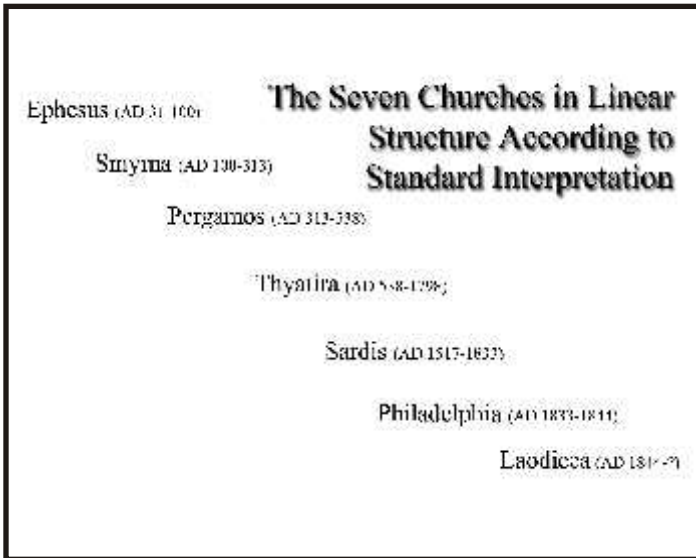
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*“The messages given to the churches in Asia, portray the state of things existing in the churches of the religious world today.” (EGW)*

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As we combine the various parts of the statements from Ellen White, we achieve different looks, but while some arrangements seem nice, just as certain unsolved arrangements of the cube look pretty, it is not the solution that fits all the requirements.

Within these statements we find clear evidence of an endorsement of the historicist principle, yet the instruction of these messages was not restricted to a specific time element. To help clarify the matter, let us look at how Adventism has



historically interpreted these churches in a linear time sequence. (See chart on next page.)

There may be some difference of opinion on the dating, but within a few years, this is an accurate representation of the standard Adventist view. Now let us notice some of the specific points from the statements of Ellen White we quoted earlier.

She does not say that just the last message extends to the end of time, but the messages, plural. Furthermore, she says that “the symbols reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.” This, of course, could be interpreted in two ways: The different symbols of each church represent the church during a specific time for just that church or all the symbols of the churches are relevant at any given time. The former would seem to be the better choice here. Furthermore, as we carefully read what Ellen G. White wrote in *Manuscript Releases*, we also see more. There she is very focused on the fact that all the churches have a message for “today.”

The messages given to the churches in Asia [plural, not just the last one], portray the state of things existing in the churches of the religious world today. . . .

I wish to emphasize the fact, that the churches to which John was told to send the instruction given him represent all the churches in our world [present tense during the time of the writing], and that this revelation to him is to be studied and believed and preached by the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 372)

Perhaps these statements open more questions than they answer. She speaks of the “churches” of today. There seems to be no reason we should restrict this to just different Seventh-day Adventist churches; however, she also says in *The Acts of the Apostles*’ statement that “the names of the churches are symbolic of the Christian church in different periods of the Christian era.” Here she seems to be speaking of the true church—singular—not simply a professed church

or churches. Specifically Ellen White mentions five categories in these statements. Charting the categories with their applications, we have the following three charts:

Categories	Application
All the Messages	Show the state of things existing in the churches of the religious world today
Names of the Churches	Symbol of the Christian church in different periods
The Number of Churches—7	Represents completeness and is symbolic of the fact that the messages [plural] extend to the end of time and are enforced <i>today</i>
The Figures Used	Are symbols of the <i>state</i> of God’s professed people and not necessarily God’s people
The Churches	Represent all the churches in <i>our</i> world [present tense in 1900]

Categories	Time of Application
All the Messages	“Today”—the present
Names of the Churches	“different periods,” though when the periods occur is not defined
The Number of Churches—7	“extend to the end of time, and are enforced <i>today</i> ”— <b>all the Christian era, especially now</b>
The Figures Used	<b>Present</b> , but not limited to the present
The Churches	“churches in <i>our</i> world” [present tense in 1900]

Categories	Direction of Application
All the Messages	“The churches of the religious world”
Names of the Churches	“The Christian Church”
The Number of Churches—7	undefined
The Figures Used	God’s professed people
The Churches	“all the churches in <i>our</i> world” [present tense in 1900]

The first observation we might make is that the messages and the churches themselves seem to be representative of a broad range of professed churches, while the names of the churches and the figures used represent at least those who profess to be God's people. These would appear to be two different groups.

Please note that when Ellen White speaks of the churches as a whole, she makes reference to her time, using the expression "our world." Since the time of 1844, the world has been in the antitypical day of atonement. There seems to be no reason to restrict this, from an eschatological standpoint, to the last part of the 19th century through the early part of the 20th century, since we are still living in the day of atonement and this could, and should, also include our time of the early 21st century. Furthermore, Ellen White states, quoting Revelation 3:10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." In this scripture is brought to view the hour of temptation that is to try them that dwell upon the earth. We are now living in this trying hour" (*The Review and Herald*, July 9, 1908).

Another element that should be considered into the factor of the time of the existence of these churches and their messages is the fact that three of the last four churches have direct references to the second coming of Jesus Christ:

**Thyatira:** "... hold fast until I come" (Revelation 2:25).

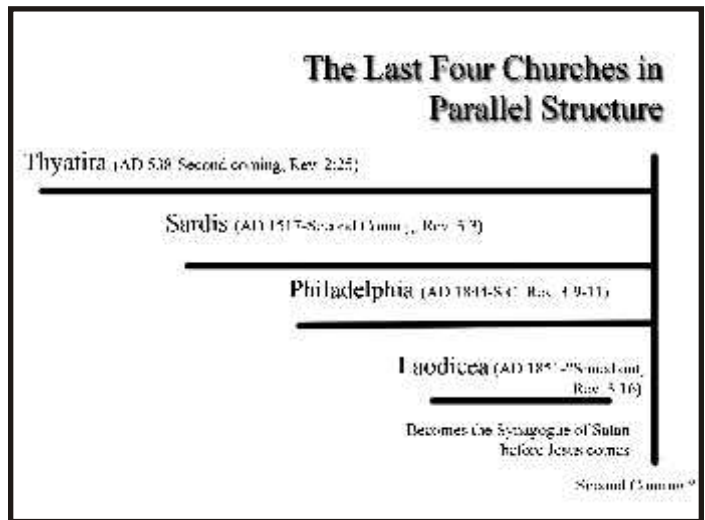
**Sardis:** "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Revelation 3:3; see Matthew 24:43, 44; Revelation 16:15).

**Philadelphia:** "... I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation ... Behold I come quickly" (Revelation 3:10, 11).

Of interest, there is no mention of the second coming of Jesus Christ to the church of Laodicea. The indications that Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia all extend to the second coming of Jesus have caused some to see at least these churches running concurrently, or parallel, until the of the coming of Jesus. This would be charted out in the following fashion:

**In part three of this study, we learned that Philadelphia is the translation church and Laodicea, as a corpus, is spued out** (Revelation 3:16). This is not a conditional prophecy, for Revelation 1:1 says that the prophecies in the book "must come to pass." Not only is Laodicea spued out, but it becomes the synagogue of Satan; therefore, God does not recognize Laodicea as a professed Christian church when Jesus comes. Why do we say that Laodicea becomes the synagogue of Satan? Notice the following testimony:

You think, that those who worship before the saint's feet, (Revelation 3:9), will at last be saved. Here I must differ with you; for God shew me that *this class were professed Adventists, who had fallen away, and "crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an*



open shame." And in the "hour of temptation," which is yet to come, to show out every one's true character, they will know that they are forever lost; and overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, they will bow at the saint's feet. (*A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 12; response to Eli Curtis)

Here Ellen White says that it will be *professed Adventists* who worship at the feet of the saints, and she is specifically making reference to Revelation 3:9, where the ones who worship at the saints' feet are called "the synagogue of Satan." These Adventists in profession also acknowledge that God has loved the Philadelphians. This group, some of whom may have been sued by a corporation for daring to use the name *Seventh-day Adventist*, will be acknowledged by the *professed Adventists* as the true Adventists whom God loves.

Laodicea, whose name means "a people adjudged," has been weighed in the balances of the heavenly sanctuary and has been found wanting (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 8, page 247). The call of Jesus moves from the angel of the church in Revelation 3:14 to the individual in 3:21. All who will receive the eyesalve of the Holy Spirit will not be spued out, but will, rather, be counted with Philadelphia, and not with Laodicea.

While there certainly is no *eighth church*, neither is there a need for an eighth church for Laodicea to fail, but the message of Revelation is not one of only doom. While corporate Laodicea is spewed out, there will be those who overcome and come out of her and who will sit with Christ in his throne. These saints will become a part of the Philadelphian fellowship and will "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" (Revelation 14:4).

*Allen Stump*

*"Behold I come quickly!"*

# Coming Events Cast Their Shadows

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” (Daniel 11:44, 45)

We have been warned: “The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 636). God has told his people through Amos, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Certainly the last great events are even now casting their shadows, and God’s prophets have given warning that the last events are upon us.

Daniel 11:44, 45 has been a focal point of discussion among Adventist prophetic expositors for many years. The king of the north, with “great fury,” makes a last stand and part of this stand is to plant his tabernacles in the glorious holy mountain. The timing of this prophecy is vital, as the very next words in Daniel are: “And at *that time* shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.” (Daniel 12:1). *That time* is just after the king of the north places his tabernacles in the glorious holy mountain. Adventists know that Michael is none other than Jesus Christ, and his standing up signals the close of probation, for after Michael stands up, there is the time of trouble such as the world has never seen.

[Daniel 12:1 quoted] **When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 212, 213)**

All the way through Daniel 11, the king of the north is Rome, in pagan and professed Christian form. There is no good reason to change good hermeneutics and arrive at a different interpretation of the king of the north at the end of the chapter. The text says that the papacy will plant its tabernacles in the glorious holy mountain. A tabernacle is not a permanent dwelling place, or structure, but rather a temporary place of abode. But what is the glorious holy mountain? Some postulate that it is the United States of America. This cannot be for two reasons. Firstly, if there was ever a time when the United States could have been a “glorious holy” place, it would have been in the early part of its ascendancy to power when it had horns like a lamb; not today, when Daniel’s prophecy is being fulfilled, for now the United States is speaking as a beast. Secondly, there is no verse in the Bible that defines the United States as the “glorious holy mountain.”

However, there is a biblical definition for the *holy mountain* found within the book of Daniel. Daniel 9:16

states: “O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from *thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain*: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.” Isaiah 66:20 also calls Jerusalem God’s holy mountain. It might be said that Jerusalem is no longer God’s holy city and that New Jerusalem is the true holy city of God. This is true, but it does not mean that the literal city of Jerusalem cannot still be a focal point of biblical prophecy. According to the words of Jesus in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, literal Jerusalem was a focus of biblical prophecy and a sign to the early Christians of impending doom. This was nearly four decades after the time of the cross.

Furthermore, Jerusalem lies between the two great seas that border the area of Jerusalem—the Dead Sea to the south and the Sea of Galilee to the north. Thus the city of Jerusalem meets all the requirements of the prophecy, and there is no doubt that the papacy has its eyes set upon Jerusalem. This was recently highlighted in a news report from israelnationalnews.com. In an article entitled “The Vatican Wants to Lay its Hands on Jerusalem,” we read of the pressure that the papacy is putting upon Israel to turn over the authority to the Vatican of selected holy sites known as the “Holy Basin,” which include the tomb of King David, the Western Wall, the garden of Gethsemane, and the Temple Mount. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, head of the Vatican’s Council for Interreligious Dialogue, said, referring to these areas:

**There will not be peace if the question of the holy sites is not adequately resolved. The part of Jerusalem within the walls—with the holy sites of the three religions—is humanity’s heritage. The sacred and unique character of the area must be safeguarded and it can only be done with a special, internationally-guaranteed statute. (<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/150757#.Tw2CtZiPWgE>)**

The article from israelnationalnews.com revealed that the Vatican and Israeli governments “are deadlocked in discussions over the status of the religious sites. Vatican officials are now reiterating their *demand* for control over the religious sites in the ancient and holy city founded by King David as the capital of ancient Israel and now the capital of the reestablished Jewish state” (emphasis supplied). The article then stated that “Danny Ayalon, Israel’s deputy foreign minister, declared that Israel might consider giving the Vatican ‘a greater role’ in operating the sites.”

The rationale for such non-Israeli control of Jerusalem is that its unique position as an international city which hosts sacred areas to three of the world's greatest religions must be safeguarded. When Bill Clinton was president of the United States, he began recommending that the areas known as the "Holy Basin" be administered under a "special regime." According to the Obama administration, Jerusalem would be designated an "international zone."

Negotiations have been carried on between the Vatican and Israel since at least 2006, when "then Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister, Tzipi Livni, negotiated to give away the 'holy basin' to the Vatican." However, due to public pressure, the plan was scrapped, and denials were made that they had planned to give away the control of these areas to the Vatican.

With each passing year, though, public sway is being softened to the idea of the Vatican having a major hand in the administration of Jerusalem. It should not come as a surprise to Adventists that the late Pope John Paul II, as well as Pope Benedict XVI, have looked at Jerusalem as the vital piece missing from the Vatican's control. The Vatican last had its hands upon part of Jerusalem four hundred fifty years ago, when the Ottoman Empire wrestled away the papacy's last hold upon the city. They have been plotting for half a millennium as to the means by which Jerusalem can be taken back into the papal fold.

Therefore, with the prophecy of Daniel 11:45 before us, we should not be surprised if very soon the Vatican sets up some type of see in Jerusalem. If you were Satan coming to personate Christ, where you begin? How about the city most known for religion in the world? How about the city that was the place where Christ was put to death? How about the place where the pope would be temporarily lodging? If the pope moved to Jerusalem, he could bow to Satan and hand him the papal scepter, and Satan would speak in a soft musical voice, just like Jesus did, saying: "This is my man; hear ye him." While we cannot say with surety where Satan will first appear, there is no more logical choice than Jerusalem, and today, shadows are casting long upon Jerusalem, indicating that the day is almost done.

*Allen Stump*



**The track of truth and the track of error may appear to be one.**

I saw the rapidity with which this delusion was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. It seemed that the whole world was on board, that there could not be one left. Said the angel, "They are binding in bundles ready to burn." Then he showed me the conductor, who appeared like a stately, fair person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, "It is Satan. He is the conductor in the form of an angel of light. He has taken the world captive. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned. This agent, the next highest in order to him, is the engineer, and other of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition."

I asked the angel if there were none left. He bade me look in an opposite direction, and I saw a little company traveling a narrow pathway. All seemed to be firmly united, bound together by the truth, in bundles, or companies. Said the angel, "The third angel is binding, or sealing, them in bundles for the heavenly garner." (*Early Writings*, pp. 88, 89)

*Allen Stump*



### **WV and CA Camp Meetings Planned**

SGM and PVF wish to announce the dates for the 2012 West Virginia camp meeting (June 26–30) in Smyrna Valley and the dates for the 2012 California camp meeting (July 24–29). There are also plans for a youth camp-out camp meeting, tentatively scheduled for July 30–August 4, 2012. We will have more details next month, but please put these important events down on your calendar now. ✍

**Correction:** We would like to correct a wrong reference given in the January issue of *Old Paths*. At the top of page 16, the first paragraph should have the reference *The Present Truth*, April 1, 1850, instead of *A Word to the Little Flock*. The paragraph below the date on the first line would then read 1850, and the word *sixteen* should be replaced with *thirteen* in this paragraph. ✍

While working with his camels, Mr. Gilbert learned that his camels talked to each other. They would even talk to him with little chirpy sounds when he was close to them, but *nobody* ever had a *pet* Bactrian camel. Such a thing was a mockery among all the other camel drivers. They talked about him and his pets and laughed at him, but Mr. Gilbert kept being friendly with his camels. Over time he learned to love his camels, and his camels learned to love him. They put their heads down voluntarily for him and would take turns coming up behind him and putting their big heads over his shoulder, saying, all the while, “chirpy-chirp-chirp” in camel language, which meant, *Couldn't you scratch behind my ear for me, please?*

Mr. Gilbert had to leave his camels with friends for six weeks while on another assignment. His friends took good care of the camels because they knew Bactrian camels were fragile in many ways and had to be cared for well or they would die.

When Mr. Gilbert returned six weeks later, he opened the gate to the camel yard. His camels heard the squeak of the gate hinges and turned around to look. It was their friend, Mr. Gilbert! They come running toward him! The Chinese friend with Mr. Gilbert saw the camels charging for them and immediately jumped out of the way and starting running away.

Even Mr. Gilbert wondered if they would stop in time, but they screeched to a halt just in front of him, stretched up high as they could, screamed in their secret language, and spat. Pretty unpleasant, but it was a sign of joy and happiness, and Mr. Gilbert was happy just knowing his camels were so happy to see him.

On another trip with his camels, Mr. Gilbert became sick with influenza. When the worst part of his sickness was over, he continued on his way, though he still felt badly. Even though his camels were nice to him, they were still young in spirit, and Mr. Gilbert had to learn the hard way about getting seated on them. When his camel was kneeling down, there was a three-step process for the camel to rise, and once risen, the young camel felt ready and would take off, without giving Mr. Gilbert enough time to be securely settled. The camel's quick start would toss him off into the dust of the trail. To keep this from happening, Mr. Gilbert had to have someone hold the reins of the camel to keep her in one place until he was seated properly. On this particular trip, however, Mr. Gilbert was sick but still needed to continue his journey, which he thought he could do, since he was feeling a little better. So, he got seated on his camel, and off they went. But an hour later he was hurting so

badly that he slowly began to lean forward onto the back of the camel. The wise camel turned her big head back to him and then, ever so gently, knelt down, as if to say in her best camel language, *You need to get off and rest.* And he did. He rested on the ground until he felt like he could continue on. Then he got back on his camel, but when she stood up, she went through the three step process of rising very gently and patiently waited for him to become settled before she starting to walk. When he started to slump forward again, she looked back at him, stopped, knelt down, saying as best she knew how that he needed to rest again. They continued this pattern the rest of the day. His camel knew what he needed and because she loved him, she took care of him in her own special way.

It is true Bactrian camels can be unpleasant—they spit, they drool, they panic—but Mr. Gilbert found them to be creatures worthy of love and affection, and he later wrote an article retracting what he had written earlier about their unloveliness. He said that if you treat the camel right, they will love you in return and be kind and considerate of you. He had to admit that he had been wrong about Bactrian camels.

We may see unpleasant people about us who seem harsh and mean, but if we get to know them and treat them kindly, we might find that under their gruff exteriors are wonderful people, with good qualities.

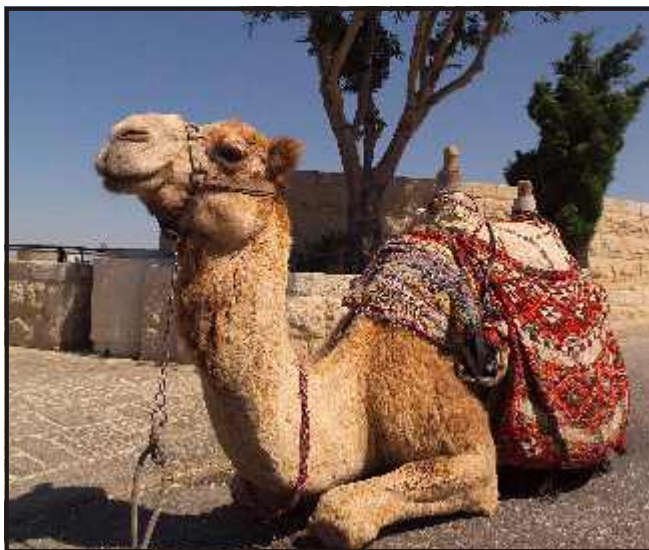
Camels can be loving and affectionate with humans, but they cannot change all of their unpleasant ways. They are still camels and will continue to drool and spit, but in their own way, they can show love and affection. If we are patient and kind with the people around us, we may find the same qualities being shown to us. And if we happen to be one of those gruff people who, like the unpleasant camel, have disagreeable ways about us, there is hope! God will make us new creatures.

*Onycha Holt*

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**Camels are intelligent and affectionate animals.**