



*The Reformation*  
**Messenger**

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 8, August 2019

**Do We Have Faith?**

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**Swallowed up in Victory, Part 1**



**WE BELIEVE:** The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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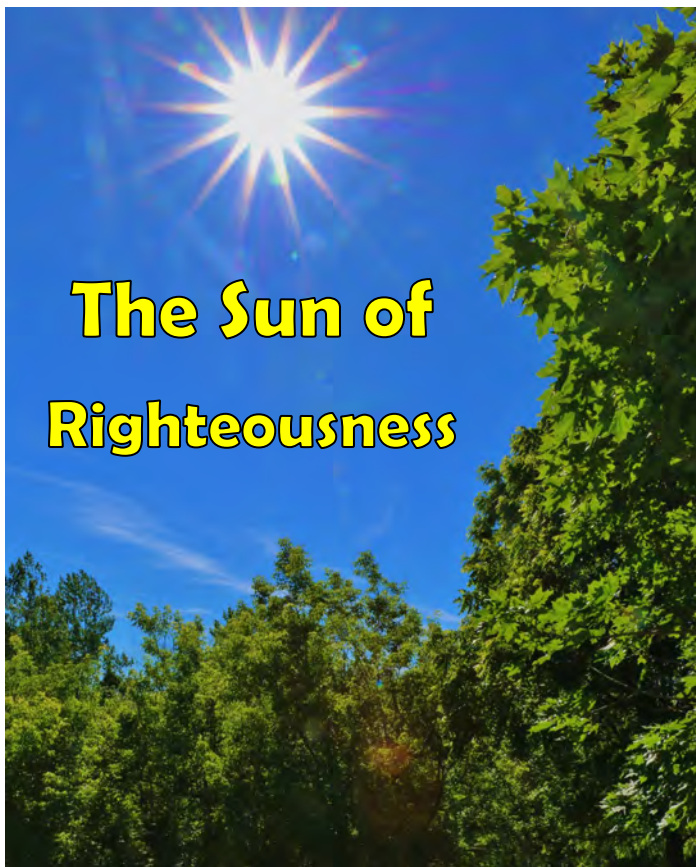
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## The Sun of Righteousness

***“But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings.” Malachi 4:2***

“The Sun of Righteousness did not burst upon the world in splendor, to dazzle the senses with His glory. It is written of Christ, ‘His going forth is prepared as the morning.’ Hosea 6:3. Quietly and gently the daylight breaks upon the earth, dispelling the shadow of darkness, and waking the world to life. So did the Sun of Righteousness arise, ‘with healing in His wings.’ Malachi 4:2.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 261

“He whose heart has responded to the divine touch will be seeking for that which will increase his knowledge of God, and will refine and elevate the character. As a flower turns to the sun, that the bright rays may touch it with tints of beauty, so will the soul turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may beautify the character with the graces of the character of Christ.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 468

“Christians are Christ's jewels, bought with an infinite price. They are to shine brightly for Him, shedding forth the light of His loveliness. And ever they are to remember that all the luster that Christian character possesses is received from the Sun of Righteousness.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 372

“He who draws nigh to Christ need not try to shine. As he beholds the Saviour, he catches the divine rays of light from the Sun of Righteousness, and he cannot help shin-

ing. The light that is in him shines forth in clear, bright rays, in words and works of righteousness. Christ's grace dwells in him richly, and heaven's light shines through him.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 322

“Every man, woman, and youth who professes the religion of Christ should realize the responsibility resting upon them. All should feel that this is an individual work, an individual warfare, an individual preaching of Christ in the daily practice. If each would realize this, and take hold of the work, we should be mighty as an army with banners. The heavenly dove would hover over us. The Sun of Righteousness would shine upon us, and the light of the glory of God would no more be shut from us than it was from the devoted Enoch.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 44

“The light of the Sun of Righteousness is never dim. It is constantly shining upon us. Notwithstanding Satan casts his hellish shadow athwart our path, the light shineth beyond.

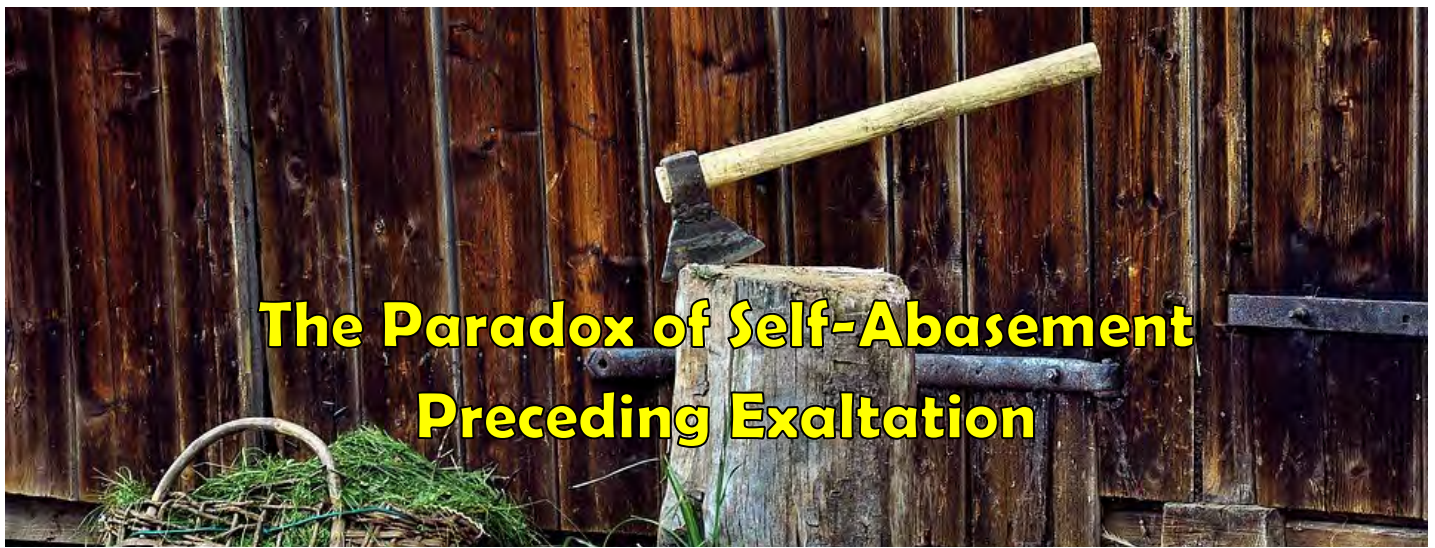
“Then why should not the followers of Jesus walk in His light, reflecting the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness? They may do this. Christ has enjoined upon them to do this, and He makes it possible for them to do this, for He would never enjoin them to do that which it is not possible for them to do. What is possible should be done, not only for their own happiness and peace, but for the good of the world.

“We need daily to uplift the soul heavenward, catching the bright beams of light from the Sun of Righteousness.” —*This Day With God*, p. 364

“All the luster possessed by those who have gained the richest experience is but the reflection of the light of the Sun of righteousness. He who lives nearest to Jesus shines the brightest. And let us thank God that the Master has His hidden ones, who are not recognized by the world, but whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. The luster of the tiniest gem in God's casket will glorify Him. There are many . . . who during this life do not seem to be particularly honored. But the Lord sees those who serve Him.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1184

“With eternal realities in view we will habitually cultivate thoughts of the presence of God. This will be a shield against the incoming of the enemy; it will give strength and assurance, and lift the soul above fear. Breathing in the atmosphere of heaven, we will not be breathing the malaria of the world. We will not remain in the darkened cellar, but come up into the upper chambers where every window that looks toward heaven is open and catches the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 285

**Ellen G. White**



## The Paradox of Self-Abasement Preceding Exaltation

What is a paradox? The dictionary definition of a paradox is, a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well-founded or true. There are a number of paradoxes in the Bible, and we will address some of those prominent Biblical paradoxes within this article.

A truly humble man is hard to find, yet God delights to honour such selfless people. Booker T. Washington, the renowned black educator, was an outstanding example of this truth. Shortly after he took over the presidency of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, he was walking in an exclusive section of town when he was stopped by a wealthy white woman. Not knowing the famous Mr. Washington by sight, she asked if he would like to earn a few dollars by chopping wood for her. Because he had no pressing business at the moment, Professor Washington smiled, rolled up his sleeves, and proceeded to do the humble chore she had requested. When he was finished, he carried the logs into the house and stacked them by the fireplace. A little girl recognized him and later revealed his identity to the lady. The next morning the embarrassed woman went to see Mr. Washington in his office at the Institute and apologized profusely. "It's perfectly all right, Madam," he replied. "Occasionally I enjoy a little manual labour. Besides, it's always a delight to do something for a friend." She shook his hand warmly and assured him that his meek and gracious attitude had endeared him and his work to her heart. Not long afterward she showed her admiration by persuading some wealthy acquaintances to join her in donating thousands of dollars to the Tuskegee Institute.

The first example from the Bible that I want to mention is from the time King David was brining the Ark of Covenant to Jerusalem. "And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. Then David returned to bless his house-

hold. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD." 2 Samuel 6:14–15, 20–23

The paradox from this example is repeated throughout the Bible and illustrated powerfully in Luke 18 with the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. In Luke 18:14 Jesus states the following, "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." In terms of the logic adhered to by the world it does not make sense that if you are humble and lowly you will be exalted. The reality is that the majority of people in the world who become particularly rich or powerful have had distinct advantages in life that had nothing to do with them humbling themselves. Furthermore, even some of those people that have attained significant status in life, who started from humble beginnings, did not always attain their status merely through hard work. There was often a significant element of ambition, or willingness to use others as stepping stones in climbing the corporate ladder associated with their rise.

Clearly a certain level of ambition is an integral component within the character of a successful person. A healthy work ethic, or measured ambition, is an indispensable component of providing for one's basic necessities. However, when one's ambition becomes all-absorbing and distracts an individual from the spiritual matters of life, preventing them from ever establishing a connection with God, their ambition has become a self-destructive force. It is at this point that the Biblical principle of "he who has exalted himself will be abased" is fulfilled, because their desire for worldly success has jeopardized their prospects of eternal life.



Going back to the example of King David, in 2 Samuel 20:6 it is apparent that Michal accuses David of uncovering himself, and acting in a manner not fit for a king. Given the fact that David's behaviour in this scenario was rather eccentric for a king, Michal's accusation appears to contain an element of truth. It is commonly believed within our church that there are too many Christian congregations today who equate public displays of emotion while worshipping God, as the most accurate measure of how much an individual loves Jesus. It is essential to consider the inner motivation which inspires someone to praise God with a particular display of emotion, as opposed to a more subdued manifestation of their devotion to God.

David counters with, "It was before the Lord", and, "I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight." v. 21,22. It is clear in David's words that he is trying to convey to Michal the true reason for his conduct as being motivated by a genuine desire to praise and honour God during a very important moment which was obviously conducive to the spiritual health of Israel; and David's statement that he will be base in his own sight suggests that David was ready to follow any course, however lowly it might appear even to himself, that would be for the honour and glory of God!

If someone is willing to take a similar course of action as David did to make themselves appear lowly or extremely humbled and perhaps even be embarrassing in order to effectively honour and glorify God, could we say that their motivation was one of displaying an exaggerated form of public religiosity in the interests of gaining the praise of men? I think it is safe to say that in this case David's public display came from a genuine love for God and a desire to honour and praise Him to the fullest of his ability.

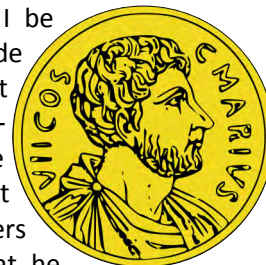
In fact, we must be aware of the risk of merely praising God in a public manner in order to somehow prove our level of devotion or compete with others to make it appear that we are the truest Christians. We also must be aware that if there is no outward manifestation of our love for Jesus, due to the fact that there is indifference and apathy in our hearts, then at this point our apparent dignity becomes formalism.

William Barclay tells the story of Paedaretos who lived in Sparta in ancient Greece. A group of 300 men were to be chosen to govern Sparta. Though Paedaretos was a candidate, his name was not on the final list. Some of his friends sought to console him, but he simply replied, "I am glad that in Sparta there are 300 men better than I am." He became a legend because of his willingness to

stand aside while others took the places of glory and honour.

"Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?" 2 Corinthians 11:7. What does Paul mean here when he says he had abased himself in order that the Corinthians would be exalted? It is apparent that Paul was working in a very self-sacrificial manner by supporting his own ministry and not expecting any financial support from the Corinthians. He was working hard for their salvation and being a servant unto them. Part of our humble lot in this life is also working for the benefit of others! Now why did Paul not choose to receive financial support from the believers as was his right, and as the other apostles did? He repeatedly asserts that he has this right, but then he chooses not to assert it.

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." 1 Corinthians 9:16-19. It is clear according to these verses that Paul chose not to accept financial support from the believers because he wanted to ensure that he was able to preach the gospel and offer salvation without any kind of charge being incurred! He did not want there to be any chance of anyone thinking that his motivation for his labours was financial gain rather than a sincere love for souls and a desire to win as many as possible to Christ. Now, what reward did Paul receive in thanks for his self-sacrificing efforts on behalf of the Corinthians and others? Well, in relation to his self-sacrificing efforts for Corinth some of his opposers asserted that his significant self-sacrifice was actually evidence that he did not deserve support for preaching the gospel as the other apostles received and had thus tacitly admitted that he was not a genuine apostle or labourer for Christ! Have you ever felt that your best efforts for others were not appreciated, or your self-sacrificing efforts were even misconstrued or misinterpreted completely?



Let us look at some other Bible verses which are associated with being humbled and abased in order to be glo-

rified! “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:18–25

The foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than men’s strength! What a paradox that many in the world today think as did the unconverted Jews and Greeks during the time of Christ, that the things of God are foolishness. Believing or trusting in God are courses of action typically taken by the uneducated, ignorant, or easily persuaded. Just like the Jews and Greeks in Paul’s day, many today see any belief in God or true dedication to His cause as foolishness and they mock it, when in reality a belief in Him is the one thing that would have power to save them.

In verse 20 Paul asks, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” Here he points to the complete unreliability of all forms of human thinking and reasoning in terms of the ability to achieve salvation independent of a belief in God! With all their apparent knowledge of the Torah and their knowledge of prophecy the Jews did not accept Christ as the promised Messiah, despite all the miracles they witnessed as direct evidence of His divinity. What good did their pride and self-exaltation in relation to their deep understanding of Scripture do for them in terms of attaining salvation?

Why did Jesus choose fishermen? Partially to show that He is not dependent upon a specific type of human agent and that He can use anyone to do His work. Also because they were humble enough to recognize their need of being saved! In terms of the Greeks, what good did all their deep understanding of worldly philosophy and philosophical debate and arguments do for them when they heard the gospel laid out with power and clarity and refused to accept it?

Earlier I mentioned Paul and his self-sacrificing efforts on the behalf of others, and I now turn to Christ who sacrificed all on behalf of others! “And with Him they crucify two thieves; the one on His right hand, and the other on His left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And He was numbered with the transgressors. And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save Thyself, and come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with Him reviled Him. And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Mark 15:27–34



What paradox do we see in the closing scenes of the life of Jesus? It says in verse 31 that “likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; Himself He cannot save.” We see a paradox that, at this moment, the chief priests and scribes who hated Jesus bitterly became gospel preachers as they sarcastically said that “He saved others; Himself He cannot save.” Was it true that Jesus saved others? Absolutely; it was true! But what about the charge that “Jesus could not save Himself”?

[Emmaeus] “The disciples were reasoning with each other concerning the events of the past few days, and marveling how the fact of Jesus yielding Himself up to a shameful death could be reconciled with His claims as the Son of God. One maintained that He could be no pretender, but had been Himself deceived in regard to His mission and His future glory. They both feared that what His enemies had flung in His teeth was too true— ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save.’ Yet they wondered how He could be so mistaken in Himself, when He had given them such repeated evidence that He could read the hearts of others. And the strange reports of the women threw them into still greater uncertainty.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 207

These terrible words of the scribes and Pharisees that “He saved others; Himself He cannot save”, would un-

doubtedly be on the minds of others as well! It is true that the message of mercy will get out to this world through the people in God's church, but if we fail to preach it the very stones would cry out! The Scribes and Pharisees, (the leaders of God's chosen nation) whose every action throughout their lives was to oppose Jesus and counteract His influence here unknowingly spoke some truth in regards to the mission of Jesus—"Jesus could not save Himself"?

Imagine the paradox of Jesus dying on the cross, who had only ever been merciful and whose tender hands sought to alleviate human suffering at every possible turn; and now, knowing that He could alleviate His own suffering but in order to save others, he refused to save Himself. Jesus, who had the power to raise others from the dead, would now allow Himself to die for you and I. Jesus, who had power over all nature and could calm the storm, but now allowed chaos to reign in the events surrounding His death. Jesus, who had the power to cast out legions of demons, but now allowed Satan and his evil angels to do their evil work in securing His death, and it was all for you and I.

Phillip Brooks, a pastor in the 1800's, living in the United States who supported the North during the Civil War in their opposition of slavery, made an apt comment when he said, "The true way to be humble is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that will show you what the real smallness of your greatness is." We must compare ourselves to Christ because that is what makes us realize how faulty and sin-filled we actually are, and this in turn makes us feel our need of Jesus and our need to surrender all to Him! It all begins with beholding Christ and comparing ourselves to His character.

It is when we compare ourselves to people around us who are just as faulty as we are that we start to feel proud and lifted up. Or when we look at our own selves and the achievements we have made, without any focus on God, that we begin to feel pretty great about ourselves. But, when we look at our own achievements while considering Christ we realize that everything we have accomplished comes from Him anyways, and the greatest thing we have done is nothing compared to what Jesus has done for us. This great achievement means nothing unless it led us closer to Christ or led others around us closer to Christ.

We should be more like Paul in this regard. He stated, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." 1 Corinthians 15:9. "Unto me, who am less than

the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Ephesians 3:8. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15. What do you notice about all those three verses? What stands out as being significant? He wrote the words in 1 Corinthians in approximately A.D. 59, and in Ephesians in approximately A.D. 63, and in 1 Timothy 1:15 in about A.D. 64. First he writes that he is the least of the apostles, then he writes that he is the very least of the saints, and finally that he is the foremost of sinners.

Throughout his life would we say that Paul's experience with Christ was getting deeper and his faith growing, or not? It was definitely growing, and the paradox is that as his opinion of himself grew lower and he became more painfully aware of his weaknesses and shortcomings due to the fact that he was beholding Jesus, simultaneously he was able to preach the gospel with greater power and reach more hearts. This low opinion of himself was his greatest asset because he trusted entirely in Christ!

To the world and the people in it, our choices in terms of being humble and choosing to be a servant to others seem ludicrous and pointless. How is humbling yourself and choosing to have less rather than more in this life going to improve your quality of life or lead to exaltation at all? That is because they are thinking merely in terms of this world and if there was no hope of heaven or anything other than this world it seems logical to grasp for all you can in this life and spend your time in pleasure-seeking and self-exaltation. It is my wish and prayer that we will accept Jesus and truly humble ourselves, thus ensuring our own salvation and the salvation of many others that we reach through our influence! Amen.

**Richard Eaton**





# Do We Have Faith?



For 120 years Noah had been preaching to the people. For 120 years he proved his faith by building the ark. After his great efforts eight souls entered the ark, only one family, and no more. Yet the invitation had been given to every man, woman, and child. What did Noah have that the others did not have?

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house: by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” Hebrews 11: 7

Noah had faith in the word of God, and by faith he saved his life. When the people of Israel left Egypt to travel to their new homeland, out of over 600,000 men 20 years and older, only two entered into Canaan’s land. Why not more?

“For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” Hebrews 3:16–19

The reason for their being lost was unbelief. They did not have faith, yet they kept the Sabbath, paid their tithes, and kept God’s commandments outwardly, even very strictly, but for lack of faith they perished in the wilderness.

Could it be also today that some Sabbath-keepers will perish because of unbelief? History keeps repeating itself. The same mistakes that people did thousands of years ago, they still do today. God’s people have always been a remnant. We are given a number of 144,000 who will be saved in the Three Angel’s Messages. The important question is, will we be among the 144,000 or of the billions that will be lost?

The difference comes between those who have faith and those who are lacking faith. Jesus said to His disciples, “And He said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye

have no faith? Mark 4:40

“Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Matthew 17:19–20

How many of us have faith as a grain of mustard seed, which is one of the smallest seeds? If we do, then nothing is impossible to us, we can move mountains.



“By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:29–31

While the Jewish nation perished because of their unbelief, the thief on the cross was saved by his faith. Without true faith our religion is only an empty form, dead, performing dry ceremonies. But by faith our religion becomes alive, with power in it, filled with love and joy. That moment also our eyes will open to see the way of God clearly; to see what He has designed for us. Then there is no sin too great to overcome, human weakness disappears, and there is no dull, boring moment in our lives, and the great work of saving souls becomes our main interest. Then we truly become the angel of Revelation chapter 18, and this is the only hope that this world has. Jesus sent this angel to finish His work on the earth. Among the thousands of churches, God also has His remnant people. To find the church of God, and be part of it is the greatest honour and privilege we can have—to be a member of the family of God.

Satan has only one target on earth, and it is to destroy the



church represented by the angel of Revelation 18—to hinder his work, and draw people away from the church. Satan has many helpers attacking the little flock of Jesus. Do we realize our calling and our position in this last work of God, and how important it is?

Our strength is not in numbers. Ten converted souls can do more than one hundred half-converted and lukewarm followers of religion. Our strength is not in our knowledge, Satan knows more than we do. Our strength is in that mustard seed of faith.

“For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been made, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.” Isaiah 66:2

We are to tremble at the word of God with a contrite spirit. In the Bible we have clear directions to guide us on how to be saved—how to live, how important faith is to us, and how to increase our faith. In past history many perished for lack of faith, and history repeats itself.

“We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change, some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end.” *—Life Sketches*, p. 191

Jesus said, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

As we are nearing the end, the company traveling on the narrow pathway gets smaller and smaller, and this is because of lack of faith.



In *Early Writings*, p. 270 we read, “Said the angel, ‘Look ye!’ My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken.”

“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.” *—Ibid.*, p. 88

“I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God’s word was obeyed, and as a result there were memorials for Him in every city and village. His

truth was proclaimed throughout the world.

“Then this map was removed and another put in its place. On it light was shining from a few places only. The rest of the world was in darkness, with only a glimmer of light here and there. Our Instructor said: ‘This darkness is the result of men’s following their own course. They have cherished hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil. They have made

questioning and faultfinding and accusing the chief business of their lives. Their hearts are not right with God. They have hidden their light under a bushel.” *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 28–29

This was as a result of lack of faith in God’s leading, and of following their own course.

Jesus said, “But as in the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:37. Noah was preaching 120 years, inviting people into the ark of safety, but only few entered in.

To fulfil prophecy, our expectation is the continuation of the mighty shaking. Our numbers will be smaller.

“The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The observance of the false sabbath will be urged upon us. The contest will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Those who have yielded step by step to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will then yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. At that time the gold will be separated from the dross. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness.” *—Prophets and Kings*, p. 188

Again it is lack of faith that causes many brilliant stars to go out in darkness.

“The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause. The angel said, ‘Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice? No, no. it must be a freewilling offering. It will take all to buy the field.’” *—Early Writings*, p. 50–51

“God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means to keep the church pure.” *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 99

Have faith, brothers and sisters, trust in God. As in the days of Noah, so also today, God has His little remnant who are on the Lord’s side against the mighty enemy. Jesus did not sacrifice His blood in vain; there are people who are clothed in the garments of Christ’s righteousness, who are ready to enter into the fierce battle against the mighty. May the Lord grant that you and I have part in this God’s finishing work. We need faith as a grain of mustard seed, so that we will not perish because of unbelief. After the mighty shaking is finished, it is my wish and prayer that you and I remain on the Lord’s side. Amen.

**Timo Martin**



# The Secret of Success (Is the Godhead a Secret?)

Is the Godhead a secret? What has been revealed to us? Is this a subject we should not discuss? This article will share what has been revealed on this subject, but first we will define secrecy.

When you hear someone say that they have a secret, human nature automatically wants to know what the secret is. They promise that if they are told the secret they will keep the secret from others.

A secret is something that is kept hidden or concealed. Unknown to many; known only to a select few. A secret can also be called a mystery.

We have the terminology in English, “The secret of success.” When you go on the Internet and do a search for “Secret of Success”, you find many quotes offering good advice. For example: “Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success.” Swami Sivananda. [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/swami\\_sivananda\\_390760](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/swami_sivananda_390760). This is very good advice. You can find many more if you look.

It seems that success is not really a secret since there is much advice on how to succeed. It is an odd use of the terminology, as though only a few know this secret on how to succeed. But how many do succeed?

What is success? To some, success is riches, fame and fortune. If this were true then only a small minority of the earth’s population have learned the secret of success, since the poverty-stricken population heavily outnumbered the wealthy population.

To others, success is a university education. To others it

is getting married and staying happily married and having children. And to others it is simply living a happy life, doing whatever pleases them.

To the Christian though, success is reaching the goal of salvation, and eternal life. Living for Jesus and sharing the good news with as many people as possible. This is the success we should all be aspiring to attain. All other successes should be secondary and much less important. The Apostle Paul was one of the most successful Christian missionaries and he had no wealth, no spouse, no home of his own.

“In reality, There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure.” <https://philosiblog.com/2013/10/15/there-are-no-secrets-to-success-it-is-the-result-of-preparation-hard-work-learning-from-failure/>

The word “secret” creates intrigue and interest in human nature. People want to know what the secret is. In many of these instances, success has been coined with the word secret in order to attract our attention.

## **DOES GOD HAVE SECRETS? YES, HE DOES.**

“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 29:29

Moses wrote here that God has some things that are secret—that are not revealed to us at the moment. However, there is enough revealed for our salvation. Those things that are revealed should satisfy us, and we should not be curious and speculate about those things



that are not revealed. Most importantly, God has revealed to us, in His word, the secret to success for our Christian life.

There have been many secrets in the Bible. "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Psalm 25:14

"And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after My name, seeing it is secret?" Judges 13:18

"Just how God accomplished the work of creation He has never revealed to men; human science cannot search out the secrets of the Most High. His creative power is as incomprehensible as His existence." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 113

The Most Holy Place of the temple was a very secretive place. Only the High Priest could enter, and then only once a year.

The contents of the Ark of the Covenant were definitely kept secret. "He smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even He smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men." 1 Samuel 6:19.



The people had never seen the contents of the ark as they had

been placed in there during the time of Moses. Moses had long since passed from this world.

There are prophecies and truths that are revealed that some people (both Christian and non-Christian) do not want to listen to or to study. I have heard many Christians state that they are willing to study the Bible, but please do not study doctrine with them. Why? This is the secret to their success and they do not want to hear about it? The entire book of Revelation is full of revealed prophecies; yet, many Christians avoid Revelation, stating it is too difficult to understand. In other words, it is full of secrets. Although most of the book of Revelation is revealed, there is one portion that was kept secret. "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." Revelation 10:4. John was clearly instructed to keep secret the message that those seven thunders

uttered; however, the remainder of the book of Revelation is revealed.

"The idea that certain portions of the Bible cannot be understood has led to neglect of some of its most important truths. The fact needs to be emphasized, and often repeated, that the mysteries of the Bible are not such because God has sought to conceal truth, but because our own weakness or ignorance makes us incapable of comprehending or appropriating truth. The limitation is not in His purpose, but in our capacity. Of those very portions of Scripture often passed by as impossible to be understood, God desires us to understand as much as our minds are capable of receiving." – *Education*, p. 170

Sometimes the Lord keeps secrets for awhile, and then later reveals the secret. Daniel was told to "shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end." Daniel 12:4

In 1844 the Lord kept secret the mistake of the sincere believers. "I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord. But God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods. . . . God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment." – *Early Writings*, p. 235

What was the purpose of this secret? "The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Saviour were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts." – *Ibid.*, p. 235

We also have the promise that, "The Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants and prophets." Amos 3:7. The Lord revealed all significant events through His prophets. Today, it is revealed that the end of the world is near at hand. Although the exact date is a secret, signs have been given us to show the time is near so we will not make a mistake and be caught by surprise.

Regarding heaven, Paul wrote, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9

Yes, we talk about the secrets of heaven and its beauty that eye hath not seen nor ear heard. However, in the

very next verse we read, “But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:10

We are given glimpses of the eternal world in the last two chapters of the books of Isaiah and Revelation, and in the first vision that Ellen G. White had (*Early Writings*, p. 13–20). Yes, some of the secrets have been revealed.

“None need concern themselves about those things which the Lord has not revealed to us.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 248

Then what about the secret/mystery of the Godhead? What is revealed regarding the Godhead—the nature of God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? There is much that is secretive that we do not understand, but the small portion that has been revealed we must accept. This is the secret of success in our Christian life.

Stop and say a silent prayer now as we are entering on holy ground.

We cannot fully understand God. We cannot put Him in a box, and explain everything about His Nature. It is a mystery and throughout eternal ages, we will be studying His Nature.

While we do not understand much about the nature of the Godhead, we must accept what is revealed to us, and not speculate on what is not revealed. Some say we should never speak of or discuss the nature of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit because they are so clothed in mystery. Truthfully, we are to leave what is not revealed as a mystery, but, are free to discuss what is revealed. Understanding the work of the Godhead, as revealed, is essential for our salvation.

The term “nature” in describing a person is their inborn or inherent qualities. These we cannot completely understand or explain, from the Holy Spirit, from God the Father, or from Jesus Christ. Our human mind cannot fathom these qualities. We leave them alone and do not discuss them.

What is not secret, but is revealed is that, while they are one, all three persons in the Godhead have their own distinct personality. “The Father and the Son each have a personality.” —*Evangelism*, p. 613. “The Holy Spirit has a personality.” —*Ibid.*, p. 617. Personality is the essential character of a person; the sum total of the physical, mental, emotional and social characteristics of an individual. It is the quality of being a person.

“A blessed unity will be enjoyed by those who are indeed children of God. They will not, by their words and acts,

lead anyone to doubt in regard to the distinct personality of God.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 186. We stop there and accept. All three each have their own personality—character and characteristics.

It has been revealed that the fullness of the Godhead is manifest in each one of them. “The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight.” —*Evangelism*, p. 614. “The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be ‘the express image of His person.’” —*Ibid.* Jesus is said to be the express image of His Father. “The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour.” —*Ibid*

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” —*Ibid.*, p. 615

We will now read what has been revealed regarding the nature of each of the three living Persons in the heavenly trio.

#### NATURE OF THE FATHER

The nature (inborn, inherent qualities) of the Father is a complete mystery. How can the Father, who has His throne in the temple in heaven, keep the universe run-



ning in order and be able to see a star that is a billion light years away? He manages all the galaxies with their billions of stars, keeping them in order—they never collide. Our human minds cannot fathom those distances and His ability to do so. The omnipresence of God, throughout the entire universe is beyond our contemplation, so we leave that subject alone.

***“The subject of speculation regarding God’s personality we will not venture to express, except in the language of the Word which represents His personality.*** There is to be no discussion over this question lest God would give unmistakable revelation of what He is that would extinguish the one who dares venture on the holy



ground in his speculative theories, as some ventured to do in opening the ark to see what was in it as its power and how God was manifested. The men were slain for their curiosity science.” –*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 222 (emphasis mine)

The word “speculation” means to come to a conclusion, or develop an opinion just by simply contemplating the matter. It is an opinion, but not based on facts. For example, to say how long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden prior to the fall into sin, is mere speculation. Was it one week? One month? One year? We can form our own opinions through speculation; however, there are no solid facts to back up our opinion.

So likewise, we cannot speculate regarding the exact nature and personality of God. We do not know. It has not been revealed to us. So we leave it alone.

“The revelation of Himself that God has given in His word is for our study. This we may seek to understand. But beyond this we are not to penetrate. The highest intellect may tax itself until it is wearied out in conjectures regarding the nature of God; but the effort will be fruitless. This problem has not been given us to solve. No human mind can comprehend God. Let not finite man attempt to interpret Him. Let none indulge in speculation regarding His nature. Here silence is eloquence. The Omniscient One is above discussion.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 279

## HUMANITY OF CHRIST

The humanity of Christ is a deep mystery to our human mind. We cannot perfectly understand the nature of Christ. How did He manifest Himself as fire in the burning bush; as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night in the wilderness with Ancient Israel? And most importantly, how did He reduce Himself to one single cell and implant Himself into the womb of Mary, while not divested of His Divinity? We definitely cannot understand that mystery.



“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16 (emphasis mine).

“There is no one who can explain the mystery of the in-

carnation of Christ. Yet we know that He came to this earth and lived as a man among men.” –*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1129. That is all that is revealed, so we must accept, believe and no need to delve further into what is not revealed. This is the secret of success.

“In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race.” –*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896

“This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness.” –*The Upward Look*, p. 260

## NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead. . . .” –*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 392. This term is used multiple times by Ellen G. White, “Third Person.”

Although the Holy Spirit is said to be the Third Person of the Godhead, the exact nature of the Holy Spirit, our Comforter (John 14:26) is also a mystery, as is the nature of the Father and the Son. We cannot understand how He could manifest Himself in the form of Wind at creation, in the form of Fire on the day of Pentecost, and in the form of a Dove at the baptism of Jesus. That is a mystery, however



we have to accept what is revealed. There has been much controversy and discussion regarding the nature of the Holy Spirit in the Christian world. Some believe that He does not exist as a distinct and separate person—only as the Spirit of God the Father. Others do believe He is a person. There is much secrecy and mystery, but what has

been revealed we must accept.

Let us read what has been revealed:

“The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.” —*Evangelism*, p. 616. “The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God.” —*Ibid.*, p. 617. “We need to realize that the Holy Spirit . . . is as much a person as God is a person.” —*Ibid.*, p. 616

**“It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is.** Christ tells us that the Spirit is the Comforter. . .

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, **silence is golden.**” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 51–52 (emphasis mine)

While we cannot explain the nature of the Holy Spirit, as we cannot that of the Father and the Son, what has been revealed is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8; 14:16–17, 26; 16:7–10). “It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.” —*Ibid.* “The work of the Holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 365

“The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 669. Only Jesus took on humanity. Neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit did. They both were divested of the personality of humanity. “The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, in Christ’s name. He personifies Christ, yet is a distinct personality.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 324

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 28:19. The disciples were told to go and baptize in the name of the three persons of the heavenly Godhead. If the Holy Spirit was only the spirit of God and not a distinct separate person, Jesus would have told them to baptize only in the name of the Father and

the Son.

Is the Godhead so mysterious and secretive that we are not to speak about Them? While we cannot, in our human mind, comprehend their nature, our salvation is very dependent on Their help and sacrifice. We must continually be speaking of Jesus and His great sacrifice. “We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, —and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.” —*Evangelism*, p. 617

What we cannot do is speculate about the unknown—what is not revealed. We only have to accept, by faith, what is written and recorded. All that is necessary for our salvation has been revealed to us. To accept what is revealed and not worry about what has not been revealed is the secret to our success. Let us accept all that has been written for our salvation.

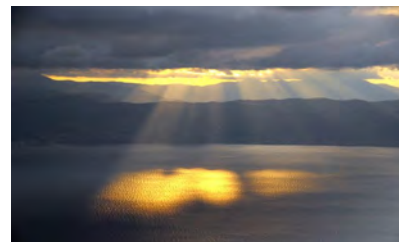
“It is a masterpiece of Satan’s deceptions to keep the minds of men searching and conjecturing in regard to that which God has not made known and which He does not intend that we shall understand. It was thus that Lucifer lost his place in heaven. He became dissatisfied because all the secrets of God’s purposes were not confided to him, and he entirely disregarded that which was revealed concerning his own work in the lofty position assigned him. By arousing the same discontent in the angels under his command, he caused their fall. Now he seeks to imbue the minds of men with the same spirit and to lead them also to disregard the direct commands of God.” —*Maranatha*, p. 135

“Matters of vital importance have been plainly revealed in the Word of God. These subjects are worthy of our deepest thought. But we are not to search into matters on which God has been silent.” —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 173. Let us not delve into mysteries and speculate about what has not been revealed to us, but let us accept fully that which has been revealed.

I ask again, does God have secrets? Yes, He does; and one day, if we accept the revealed word of God, we will understand more of His secrets.

That is the secret of success: accepting the revealed word of God. Trust God on points that He has decided to keep a secret from us at this present time because He has made every provision necessary for our salvation.

**Wendy Eaton**





# *Swallowed Up in Victory*

## Part 1



What is the worst thing on earth that can happen to a person and has happened to every person throughout history? It is death! Death of a loved one is something that makes most people cry without shame. Many elderly people do not always realize how close they are to death. Death, once it comes and takes our close friends or relatives, often causes many to ask “why”. What is the answer to, “why death”? Then they wonder, what is beyond the grave? Shall we ever one day face a world without this enemy of death? Shall death be always there forever?

### **DEATH**

There are so many conflicting beliefs about death and what is beyond the grave that it becomes difficult to know which beliefs are true unless you go to the Bible. In ancient civilizations, there were many different ideas surrounding death that were popular. Today, there are still many different ideas. Babylonians, Egyptians, Romans, Indians, etc. all had different views about death. Therefore they all practiced different rites during funerals. Many thought that immediately after death, life continues in another world. When they buried someone, they would bury the body with his belongings (wife, servants, money, furniture, etc.).

The Babylonian’s religious beliefs began when the tower of Babel was being built just after the flood. They believed that a person was made up of a body and an immortal spirit, and that when they died their spirit would not rest in the grave, but would enter the “Netherworld” or “Underworld”, or, in other words, “Hell”, as a ghost or a spirit. Hell to them was a place of darkness, shadows, horror; a place which was ruled over by the god of fire and destruction and his brutal wife. It was a place where hideous looking demons could torture the living dead all the time.

### **FALSE BELIEFS ABOUT DEATH TODAY**

This false belief that exists today regarding Hell and the immortality of the soul was mostly limited to the pagan

religions for about 2000 years. About 170 years after the birth of Christ, it began to creep into the beliefs of Christianity.

The Catholic Church was instrumental in combining this belief into their Christian doctrines. They taught that Hell was populated with the immortal spirits of the dead.

“The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity. Immediately after death the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer the punishments of hell, ‘eternal fire.’” (see *Catechism of Catholic*, article 12)

This doctrine, which originated about 1700 years ago by the Catholic Church, still exists today. The original purity of the Christian faith had been corrupted with this, as well as other Babylonian doctrines. The purpose of the compromise was to allow the pagans to keep their original beliefs and be able to unite with the Catholic Church in order to avoid persecution. The pagans then were able to remain pagans, while being members of the Roman Catholic Church! With this compromise of faith and resulting apostasy, the membership of the Catholic Church increased substantially.

In February 380 A.D., the Roman emperor Theodosius the Great “issued a decree. . . in favor of the faith of St. Peter and Pope Damasus of Rome. . . to be the true catholic faith.”

This laid the ground work for the rise of Papal Rome in Europe. At this time the belief system of the Pope was declared to be the one and only true faith. The Pope was regarded as the guardian of this faith, and all rivals had to respect and succumb to his authority. After the Papacy obtained nearly complete control over the nations of Europe in 538 A.D., the Catholic belief system became the one and only state approved religion throughout all of Christendom for nearly 1200 years.

The belief that Hell is an underground place where the

immortal spirits of the wicked dead are tortured in fiery agony for ever has been proven to be of pagan origin. Even though millions of sincere Christians (Catholic and Protestant) have been taught that this is true, what exactly does the Bible teach about death? (see Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 23, p. 259, under Theodosius, editor Thoman Spencer Baynes, C. Scribner's Sons Publishers, 1888)

### TRUTH ABOUT DEATH

God has not left His people in ignorance about this important subject. In the Bible, He gave a clear understanding of what happens when someone dies. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16–17. In these sacred pages we can safely find the sure foundation for all doctrine, reproof and correction for our errors and thus obtain the pure knowledge of righteousness. So, what does the Bible teach regarding death?

In the Bible we read that death is like a sleep. In Old Testament times we read that when someone died he "*slept with his fathers*" (1 Kings 2:10, 11:43, 14:20, 31; 15:8, 24). We see the same teaching in The New Testament (see 1 Corinthians 11:30, 15:20; and 1 Thessalonians 4:14). In referring to the death of Lazarus, Jesus stated that: "Our



friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus

unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." John 11:11–14. From these verses we conclude that being dead is like being asleep (Matthew 27:52; 1 Corinthians 15:51; Daniel 12:2).

### STATE OF THE DEAD

The Bible describes the physical state of man at death in this verse. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psalms 146:4. When we die, we no longer have any thoughts or mental processes. In the grave, man has no consciousness. The following verses support this doctrine: "Wilt Thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise Thee? . . . Shall Thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Psalms 88:10–12. "The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 115:17. "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" Psalm 6:5. "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave. . . . I shall behold man no more with the

inhabitants of the world." Isaiah 38:10–11

The Bible does not teach that we go directly to heaven when we die. "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost. . . . His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not..." Job 14:10, 21. Those who have died really do not know anything! "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." Ecclesiastes 9:5

The Bible clearly teaches that being dead is like being asleep. Yet, many Christians today believe that when a person dies the faithful go straight to heaven. Different religious groups sincerely believe that good people who have died in the past can help them today. They pray to them because they have been taught that their dead relatives are in heaven and are watching over them and working in their behalf for their well-being. However, the word of God clearly declares, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Ecclesiastes 9:10

Some believe that they have actually seen, or even talked to, their dead loved ones who continue living in the spirit world after they died. But the word of God is clear: "So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14:12 "...the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:5–6

Since, as the Bible states, "the memory of them is forgotten", it would indicate that the dead have no memory of the events of their life, so it would not be possible for them to help their loved ones. But yet many people claim to actually have seen an apparition of their loved one who has gone to the grave. Others state that they have heard unexplained voices and seen supernatural phenomena. Since the Bible teaches the truth about the state of the dead, then who are these apparitions?

"The fallen angels who do his bidding appear as messengers from the spirit world. While professing to bring the living into communication with the dead, the prince of evil exercises his bewitching influence upon their minds. [Satan] has power to bring before men the appearance of their departed friends. The counterfeit is perfect; the familiar look, the words, the tone, are reproduced with marvelous distinctness. Many are comforted with the assurance that their loved ones are enjoying the bliss of heaven, and without suspicion of danger, they give ear 'to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.'" –*The Great Controversy*, p.



There are spirits today who have appeared to people that may appear as their dead loved one; however, not one of these is actually a dead person that has continued living in the spirit world, or that has come back from the grave. They are only the evil angels who were cast out of heaven and who are capable of impersonating the dead loved ones. The reason that these evil angels impersonate the dead and sometimes even communicate information to the living is to deceive people into believing that the information given them is really the truth. We must always remember that Satan and his angels cannot tell the truth. “He . . . abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44

The Bible clearly states that the dead do not go on living for eternity. They do not go immediately to heaven or to hell, but they rest in the grave. Some Asian religions teach that the dead are reincarnated into some other creature—a continual rebirth, only to die again. But God clearly states that human beings die once—not many times. “. . . it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” Hebrews 9:27

#### **DEATH SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY**

Why do people die? “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou nearest thereof thou shalt surely die. . . . And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. . . . And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Genesis 2:16–17; 3:6, 9, 19

Death entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s commandment to not eat from the tree of Knowledge. “Whosoever committed sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. Disobeying God’s law is sin and “the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23

Before Adam and Eve, sin originally began with Lucifer in heaven. “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created, till iniquity was found in thee.” “He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning. . . .” Ezekiel 28:15; John 8:44

We have the hope that when Jesus returns, “He will swallow up death in victory.” Isaiah 25:8. Sin and sinners will be no more. Death will never separate us from our loved ones

ever again.

The Apostle Paul explains that when Jesus will come “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:52–55, 58

“Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1093

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 678

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:14–18. Amen.

**Victor Shumbusho**  
**D R Congo**

## HEALTH MATTERS:

# The Human Microbiome

*"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works." Psalm 139:14*

Our bodies, created by God, are fascinating in their complexity. As I do research for the many health articles I have written, I am more and more awed by the many trillions of tiny components that make up the human body that continually work in their perfect order to keep us alive, to allow us to perform a variety of tasks such as breathing, eating, moving, and even thinking. An organism this complex could only have been created by a superior being. Even now, science does not understand the whole workings of the human body. Throughout eternity, the redeemed will have the opportunity to learn more about the human body, the crowning glory of creation, created in the image of God.

Recent research has been made into learning more about a significant component of the human body known as the human microbiome. These studies have become possible because of advances in technology that allow scientists to map out the vast number of cells that live in our body that are not actually part of the structure of our body, yet coexist with human cells, and perform important functions. In fact, of all the cells in the human body, 90% are part of the human microbiome. For every human cell in the body, there are ten microbial cells. These cells are made up of more than 3 million genes; whereas human cell genes only number just over 20,000. Bacteria make up the largest part

of the human microbiome, with anywhere from 75 trillion to 200 trillion individual organisms, and are 10–50 times smaller than human cells. The microbes contained in our intestines alone can weigh up to 2 kg (4 ½ pounds). Forty-thousand species of bacteria have been found in the

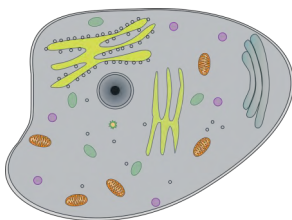
human body. Most bacterial strains are either harmless or beneficial, with less than 100 species that can actually

cause infectious diseases in humans.

Each of our human cells contains a set of instructions, telling it what function it must perform. This is known as the genome of a cell. Genomes are made of DNA. Bacteria also have genomes; therefore they also have a set of instructions telling them how to function. In fact, just the microbes in our gut contain 150 times more genes than are found in the entire human genome. Because of the vast number of microbial cells in the human body, and their impact on the healthy functioning of the body, we are all considered a blend of human and microbial traits.



Already as early as the mid-1880's, discoveries have been made of bacteria inhabiting our bodies. An Austrian pediatrician, Theodor Escherich, discovered the bacteria known as *Escherichia coli* or *E. coli*. He found that the bacteria inhabited not only the intestines of children who had symptoms of an illness that causes diarrhea, but he also found that *E. coli* inhabited the intestines of healthy children, indicating that it may have a functional role in the human body. Most *E. coli* strains, naturally occurring in the intestinal tract of both humans and animals, are harmless; and, in fact, play an important role in the health of the individual. Vitamin K, which assists with blood clotting, preventing uncontrolled bleeding, is synthesized in the intestines by *E. coli* bacteria. These bacteria also are important members of the immune system, preventing harmful bacteria from growing in the intestine and causing illness. However, some *E. coli* strains can cause disease, such as food poisoning, urinary tract infections, traveller's diarrhea, meningitis and pneumonia. You may have heard on many occasions of foods being recalled because of con-

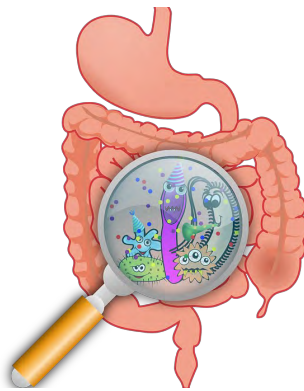




tamination with E. coli.

Since the 1800's, many discoveries have been made regarding these organisms that live within the human body. However, only in the last few decades has research into the human microbiome been able to prove the crucial role that it plays in human health and disease. Current research on the human microbiome has become more sophisticated and more comprehensive, with the ability to identify the DNA and thus the function of the various microbes. This is crucial in determining the interactions between the microbiome and the "host" (the person) and being able to develop new therapies and treatments for disease.

The human microbiome or microbiota is a vast collection of microorganisms which include bacteria, archaea, protozoa, viruses, and fungi, living in and on our bodies. These microorganisms live everywhere including on our skin, inside our mouth, nose, genitalia, urinary tract, lung and the large (colon) and small intestine, coexisting alongside human cells. The biggest population of these microorganisms live in our intestines. They consist of 95% of all the microorganisms in our body. The collection of all these microbes form what is known as the human microbiome. A microbiome is defined as "the microorganisms contained in a particular environment (including the body or a part of the body)". Micro is defined as "small." The word "biome" denotes "community". Therefore, we have an ecological community living inside of us, made up of various small organisms, sharing our body space. It is like a small world contained in our bodies. What is even more fascinating is that our collection of microbial cells is unique to each individual person, as unique as our DNA. Differences in the composition and function of



the human microbiota are related to the location where one lives, age, sex, race, and the diet of the individual. The differences in our microbiome related to where we live and what we eat may explain why we develop diarrhea when we eat food or drink water when we travel to other countries, whereas people native to the country do not have a problem.

We are all born with a microbiome that develops into a diverse ecosystem as we develop and age. Our gut (gastrointestinal system including stomach, intestines) begins to populate with bacteria at birth. The type of bacteria found in infants is influenced by genetics, the health of the par-

ents, the delivery method, and being breast-fed vs bottle-fed. Babies born through the vaginal canal have healthy, beneficial gut microbiota, similar to that found in the mother. However, babies born via C-section have more pathogenic bacteria such as E.coli and Staphylococcus. These babies take longer to develop a healthy, beneficial gut microbiota. Then, as we grow, many factors determine the types of bacteria in the gut. Because many external factors determine the gut microbiome, our specific microbiome can change over time, depending on factors previously mentioned such as stress, where one lives, and especially our diet.



Despite the overwhelming amount of microbes in and on the human body, little was known about their role in health and disease. Many of the organisms had not been identified. In 2005, a largescale research study, known as the Human Microbiome Project (HMP) began. This project was an initiative of the United States NIH (National Institutes of Health) into the gut microbiome and its role in human health, to improve understanding of the microbial flora involved in human health and disease. Prior to that time, studies had mostly been done on the "harmful" bacteria in our gut.

The project is similar to the Human Genome Project which was started in 1999; the goal was to completely map out and understand all the genes which make up the genome of human beings. This project, concluded in 2003, determined that there are about 20,500 human genes, which are responsible for the set of "instructions" that all humans inherit to develop and function as a human being. This research also enabled scientists and doctors to determine the links between certain flaws in genes and their connection to inherited diseases. One of the benefits of the information gained from the Human Genome Project is that it provides a "textbook" for health care professionals to develop ways of treating, preventing, and curing diseases.

Some of the key functions of the human microbiome that have been discovered to this point are as follows: The human microbiota on our skin and in other areas where our body is exposed to the external environment, such as our lungs, urinary tract, and mouth act as a barrier, preventing harmful pathogens (disease-causing organisms) from entering into our body. The synthesis of certain vitamins occurs via organisms in the microbiome (Vitamin K, biotin). Serotonin, a chemical that is related to brain health and mood, is created by microorganisms in the intestines. The microbiome is also involved in the digestion and breakdown of the food we consume; regulating our metabolism and body weight. The microbiome is a vital component of

the development and maturation of the cells of the immune system. In fact, when the balance of the human microbiome is disrupted for any reason (dysbiosis), disease occurs. It has been determined that many human illnesses are connected to an imbalanced microbiome. These illnesses include infections such as bacterial vaginosis and urinary tract infections, liver diseases, inflammatory bowel disease, obesity, heart disease, certain cancers such as stomach and intestinal (colon) cancer, metabolic disorders such as diabetes, respiratory diseases, mental or psychological diseases, and autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Because of the vital role that a healthy functioning microbiome plays in the overall health of a person, it has been suggested that it should be viewed conceptually as a newly discovered organ. We can live without some organs such as our spleen, appendix, gall bladder, and tonsils; however, we would not survive for very long without our body's microbiome. It has also been proven that the more diverse the microbes are in one's body, the lower one's risk of allergies and disease. And, we can enrich our microbiome by various lifestyle choices, which we will learn about next month.

Some of the key findings from the HMP indicate that there is no one ideal "healthy gut". Everybody's gut is different. One third of our gut microbiota is common to most people, while two thirds are specific to each one of us. What is important is that the bacteria contained in the gut are able to function at their best, rather than having specific types and numbers of bacteria. The composition of the gut changes over time, as one's health and diet changes. There are several things that we can do to help our gut microbiome become or remain healthy and balanced. The balance of our gut microbiome can be disrupted by several factors, and this can promote inflammation—a strong risk factor for physical and mental disorders. People with certain diseases often have a very different combination of bacteria in their intestines compared to healthy people. Researchers are working to determine the makeup of gut bacteria in healthy people. Therefore they would also be able to determine the combination of gut bacteria that can point to either a higher risk of disease or the actual presence of certain diseases. The key to gut microbiome health is not the presence or absence of any one particular type of bacteria, but rather the diversity of bacteria that it contains.

Joseph Petrosino, a researcher into the gut microbiome states, "If you have a wide array of bacteria that can break down lots of different food sources, produce lots of different molecules that help mature your immune system, and pro-

duce the molecules that your brain needs to function properly, you can see how that would potentially be a benefit over a less diverse gut microbiome." In 2012, the HMP concluded that much of the diversity of the human microbiome in healthy people remains unexplained. Research continues.

Knowledge into the different species of organisms and their composition in the gut microbiome is increasing. However, still little is known why there is such a large variation across the world. Samples taken from different nations imply that there may exist a limited number of well-balanced gut microbiomes. For now, microbiome studies are still too new for scientists to determine whether certain bacteria might cause disease or whether disease might breed certain bacteria—or whether the relationship is something else altogether. For now, connections between a person's bacterial composition and the presence of certain diseases can be determined. Regardless whether

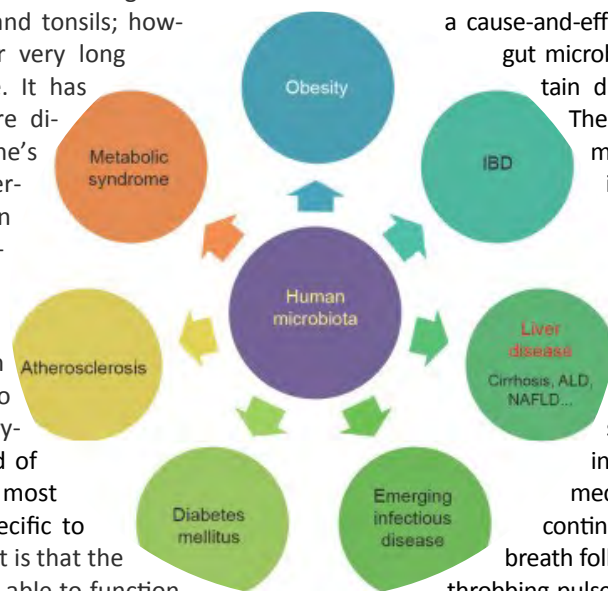
a cause-and-effect relationship exists, looking at the gut microbiome can help doctors diagnose certain diseases earlier and more accurately.

The challenge in mapping out the human microbiome is the vast number of genes it contains. However, it is becoming more evident that there are links between the gut microbiome specifically and virtually every disease known to humankind.

"The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats, and breath follows breath. . . . The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God.

"The Creator of man has arranged the living machinery of our bodies. Every function is wonderfully and wisely made. And God has pledged Himself to keep this human machinery in healthful action if the human agent will obey His laws and cooperate with God. Every law governing the human machinery is to be considered just as truly divine in origin, in character, and in importance as the Word of God. Every careless, inattentive action, any abuse put upon the Lord's wonderful mechanism, by disregarding His specified laws in the human habitation, is a violation of God's law. We may behold and admire the work of God in the natural world, but the human habitation is the most wonderful.

"This living machinery is to be understood. Every part of its wonderful mechanism is to be carefully studied." —*My Life Today*, p. 127



## NEXT MONTH:

## HEALTH AND OUR MICROBIOME



# The LAMB of GOD



In Jerusalem there was a gate, the Sheeppgate it was called,  
Where Hebrews led their sheep and goats, to offer for a sacrifice.  
From near and far they came to gather for a solemn feast—  
The Passover—memorial of deliverance from the bondage sore  
by a heathen nation. Many generations since have past...

.....

On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Nisan\*, at this very gate, a crowd passed through  
Waiting for a dreadful scene, 'twas nothing new, it happened times before,  
But this one was indeed unique—it changed Old Israel's destiny.  
The mob did press, increasing as they came in numbers,  
Shouting, pushing, laughing, mocking, eager to await,  
The brutal, bloody, rough event.  
Roman soldiers were to crucify offenders, sentenced as the judge saw fit.  
Two were thieves, the third an utter different case, but for the priests the worst of heretics,  
worthy to condemn to hell, a man who called himself the Son of God.  
Along the Via Dolorosa one did drag His heavy cross, His bleeding, wounded frame caves in,  
Fainting underneath the weight,  
Some women wept and pitied Him, but most passed coldly by.  
What is that wreath of spiky thorns upon this sacred head?  
Who did this so mean, so cruel, to pierce the forehead of such noble bearing?  
Large drops of blood run down this face, the body marred with open wounds  
Brutal scourging caused to rip His back. What is His iniquity to be treated thus?  
No anger, hatred in the face, no curse upon the lips, who is this,  
to bare serene so merciless a feat?  
Who is He that such interest caught a crowd, the mix of priests and Levites, scribes,  
the common, high and low? They just heard and saw Him teaching, blessing, days ago.  
But shouted now "Away with Him, crucify Him!"  
Strange, perverse the mind of men, give in to the insidious scheme the priests hatched out,  
To plot the ruin of One all innocent!  
Long the hate and jealousy religious leaders held against this certain Jesus,  
A teacher, healer of no ordinary measure.  
The people listened spellbound, crowded round Him, as words of truth and comfort  
like Heaven's dew fell upon the downcast soul, cheered the heart, thus faith and hope were kindled.  
But cutting to the heart His words of warning, stern rebuke addressed the priests, the scribes,  
the Pharisees. How dare this unlearned, simple carpenter confront them openly?  
They will have none of it—He must be quickly silenced!  
They spied on Him to find occasion, to catch Him by some utterings to twist the words,  
Condemn Him as a heretic and danger to the nation.

.....



Three years went by—now enmity had reached its peak, die He must!—  
A way has to be found to justify their policy. Then—Oh! There came the day a traitor,—Judas—  
One of the disciple's band, played Jesus into the leader's hands.

They catch Him in the night—the trial of Jesus now begins. . .

Vicious accusations pounded down on Him, but nothing proved them true. Their frenzy grew,  
As Jesus uttered nothing. Nervous, mad with fury, Caiaphas burst out the question He must answer:  
“Are you the Christ, the Son of God?” To their relief Jesus solemnly declared: “I am.”

(Luke 22:70).

All hell broke loose, for this the worst of blasphemy, the heresy that death must seal.  
The high priest's palace now a den of devils, as the blind, deluded mob did spit on Jesus, smote and  
buffeted, sneered and mocked Him relentlessly.

The goal was reached, the action set to get the death decree  
from Rome's governor for this found guilty heretic.

“I find no fault in Him,” had Pilate said, “I release you Barabbas.” “No,” they cried,  
“Crucify Him, Away with Him.” (Luke 23:4, 18). “Shall I crucify your King?”

“We have no king but Caesar!” (John 19:4, 15). With this they got their victim,  
but did not realize that by condemning Jesus they also sealed their own doom.

How often Jesus longed to reach them with His tender plea: “Come unto Me, I give you life.”

Till at last with tears He had to say: “Your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matthew 24:38).

Their cup was full to overflowing as they sentenced their King, the Son of God!

.....

As through the Sheepgate goats and sheep have been brought in for sacrifice pointing to  
the true one to come, now Jesus went, brought to the slaughter outside the gate, as the Lamb of God,  
slain from the world's foundation. (Revelation 13:8).

On Calvary the place of execution, the soldiers marvelled, stunned to see as Jesus did not fight,  
but willingly stretched out His arms, that His hands and feet might be pierced.

Then erecting, putting down the cross, Oh, what pain! No scream escaped the lips, but woeful sighs

To signify the throbbing aches the weakened body now endures.

The soldiers hear the words: “Father, forgive.” Those brute men are very much amazed.

The hours pass in awful agony, the soul of Jesus wrapped in bitter anguish,

Feels the wrath of God who “smites the Shepherd” (Zechariah 13:7).

The curse of sin, the guilt of man upon Him enshrouds His mind with darkness,

That also enveloped the cross.

Then Satan presses hard to mock—discourage, scorns and tempts with all his cunning might.

Now Jesus is poured out like water, His bones are out of joint, His heart is like wax melted in the midst  
of His bowels. His tongue cleaves to the jaw, His strength dries up. (Psalm 22:14–15).

More bitter still the torment so intense, extreme, surpassing all those sufferings,

Now being from the Father's love cut off—Jesus feels forsaken utterly. . .

The sin of you and me has done this worst of all His woes!

The cry “Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46) tears His soul apart,

Anguish most intense besets the mind of Jesus,

The terror of hell creeps into His heart, shuts out all light,



He feels the punishment for sin crushing down on Him.  
He is tasting death with its forbidding, frightful grip  
As divine judgment demands payment for the law transgressed by man.  
With the last flicker of breath Jesus utters: "Father, into Thine hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46).  
Broken, drained and torn, the Son of God poured out His soul unto death  
As Substitute for man, to bear his guilt.  
Beyond the grave Jesus could not see, the plight of sin had ravaged Him,  
robbed Him of every vestige of calm, Jesus was alone, so very much alone...  
He emptied to the dregs the bitter cup He chose to drink  
To redeem a sinful world from hell.  
Piercing then His side, the Roman centurion saw with others  
Blood and water gushing out—it testifies that the heart of Jesus Christ was broken.

.....

Israel for millennia waited for Messiah, but when He came He was rejected.  
They did not want to have a Saviour to heal the soul from sin, no righteous teacher  
Who turned Sanhedrin's old traditions upside down, rather a king of might and worldly glory.  
Thus the Son of God incarnate walking on this earth, a man of sorrow was,  
acquainted with much grief (Isaiah 53:3),  
For the coldness of the heart of men He came to save.  
The poor and lowly heard Him gladly, Fishermen He chose for service,  
But even those were often slow of understanding.  
Yet Jesus "set His face like a flint" (Isaiah 50:7), to do the Father's will, carry out His mission,  
to face His destiny—the cross—to give for many His life a ransom.  
But Jesus burst the gates of death by resurrection, He ascended into Heaven, to be a merciful High Priest.  
He is the perfect Saviour to wash away any sin confessed with brokenness of heart and spirit,  
and give everlasting life to those who will accept Him.  
And "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11),  
and with exceeding joy shall shout one day: "Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given Me!"  
(Isaiah 8:18).

Consider the cost, dear reader, the price of your salvation,  
through what ordeal and pain our Saviour had to pass  
from Bethlehem to Calvary ...

Amen.

*Edda Tedford, Canada*

Note to \*: On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan the Passover lamb was to be killed. On this very day Jesus was crucified, the true Lamb of God, ending all blood sacrifices offered upon the altar, type had met antitype.





Edward stopped dead in his tracks. Up and down the streets the newsboys were calling out the evening paper's glaring headlines:

"United States Enters the Great War!"

"Country's Call to Arms!"

For two and a half years countries in Europe had been fighting, and Edward had guessed that the day would come when his own nation would join in the struggle. April, 1917, it came, and it made his heart beat quickly.

The young Quaker went his way, thinking seriously. What would he do? He believed that no good could ever come of killing his enemies. He hated the very thought of using a gun or a bayonet. He thought, too, about the times he and his friends had talked it over together. They did not agree with him. If their country called, they would be patriotic and fight.

"The only way to be sure we are safe is to get rid of the enemy," they argued.

"I think you are right," replied Edward. "We need to get rid of our enemies. But killing them isn't the way to get rid of them. That's not *real* victory. When you are so kind and friendly that your enemies begin to love you instead of hating you—that's real victory. Being friendly is the best way to get rid of any enemy."

"Sounds very nice," his friends said, "but just wait until you find yourself at the wrong end of a rifle. Sometimes a fellow must kill or be killed."

Edward had always tried to do what he believed was right. It wasn't easy, even in time of peace. Now war had been declared. The country was calling her boys to fight the enemy. Edward thought of his friends who would be receiving their uniforms and sailing for the battlefields of France. They weren't afraid to go where there was danger. What would they think of him if he stayed home! A shirker! A

coward! That's what they would say.

Edward knew then how a fellow feels when he meets a crisis in his life. Being a Christian meant a decision either for Christ or for himself. Suddenly Edward knew.

"My friends are ready to face death because they think that is the way to conquer the enemy. If I want to conquer the enemy my way I must be ready to face death too. I will serve with friendliness and not with force. I will save life instead of destroying it. I'll find some place where I can serve as a Christian without joining the military even though it may be a very dangerous place."

After Edward had decided what he wanted to do he acted immediately. He had a friend who knew what was happening in many parts of the world. Surely he would know of a place where people were hungry or lonely and needed help. Over the telephone Edward explained what he wanted and the voice of his friend answered:

"Go to northwest Persia. For two years armies have been fighting across the plains, ruining their crops, and leaving thousands of people homeless. Other Americans have already gone to Persia to take food to the starving people. You could go, too, and work for American Relief."

"That sounds like the place for me."

"But Persia isn't a very safe place to be just now. Russians and Turks and Armenians are all trying to get control of the country. Up in the highlands gangs of thieves are running wild. Besides that, smallpox and typhoid are killing hundreds in the cities," Edward's friend warned.

"I don't *want* an easy job. The boys in the army are ready to go to dangerous places. Jesus went to a dangerous place and ended up dying on the cross. I am ready to give my life for Jesus. I want to go where I can save someone's life, physically and spiritually," replied Edward.

Within a month Edward was on his way to Persia. When he arrived at Urumiah, a Persian city close to the Turkish border, he found everything to be true that his friend had said. The dingy clay-built houses and dusty courtyards of Urumiah were filled with people without homes. Filth and flies were everywhere. People were continually quarreling in the narrow, evil-smelling streets and alleyways.

"Yes," thought Edward, "Persia is the place for me."

Other American relief workers were already busy helping the poor people of Urumiah and the peasants in the nearby villages. Edward went to work at once where help was needed most. First he gave food and clothing to the children whose parents were killed when the soldiers came



marching through.

His next job was to help the women whose homes were destroyed during the war. Soon hundreds of homeless women were once again busy spinning wool and weaving cloth.

Next Edward and his gang of workers cleaned every filthy street and alley, every dusty courtyard packed with refugees. Their work seemed endless.

Meanwhile trouble in the city was growing. The Armenian army now had control of Urumiah. Outside the city the Muslims were gathering their armies, and a large Turkish army was on its way to help the Muslims. The Armenians were thrown into a panic and prepared to escape to the south before the Turks arrived.

News of the coming Turks reached Edward who was stationed with several other Americans at a village two miles from the city. The road that passed their house was the very road on which the Turks would be coming. Should they leave the village with the others who were fleeing? They talked it over and decided to stay.

Later that morning the Turkish army came toward the village. Edward watched the red and white flags come closer and closer. Then, to his horror, he saw that the army was being led by the Kurds, cruel tribesmen from the hill country. What this might mean, he dared not think. But the long line of armed men reached the building and began to file past without stopping.

Suddenly shots rang out from the far side of the compound and through a small back gate came a handful of stragglers from the main army. A stampede broke out, with shouting and firing on all sides. Edward rushed indoors to join the other Americans and found only the women with their children and the trembling native servants. The only man with them was an invalid and everyone in the house looked to Edward for help. They all knelt down to pray for protection.

Just then a violent battering was heard at the outer door. As he went to open it, its panels bulged under the heavy blow of rifle butts. Slipping back the bolt, he flung open the door, crying:

*"Bu yurun!"* (Come in!)

Three muzzles pointed at him. Three turbaned Kurds, greed and cruelty written on their dark faces, shouted threateningly at them in Turkish:

*"Pool! Pool!"* (Money! Money!)

"Come," said Edward, and guiding them quickly through the room where his friends were sitting, he led them into the office.

"Look," he said, opening cupboards and drawers for them

to ransack.

Then he pointed to the safe that contained relief money. When he went to open it he found it was locked! The man who had the key was gone from the compound.

"The key! Give up the key!" demanded one of the raiders, covering him with a rifle.

Steadily Edward met his eye along the length of the glinting barrel.

"I do not have it. Neither do I know where it is."

Something in his face satisfied the Kurd, and his gun lowered.

"Look," suggested Edward, taking the arm of the raider and pointing to the lock of the safe. "Shoot into it. The lock will spring."

He did. A deafening noise echoed from the courtyard but the lock remained fast. The angels had kept it from opening. Angrily the three soldiers turned on him. One crashed the butt of his rifle across his shoulder, while another swung a muzzle within six inches of his head.

"You have the key! Give it up, or I will shoot!" shouted the leader.

"In the name of Jesus, I swear that I do not have it," said Edward again. "I only wish I could give it to you."

At the name of Jesus, the man hesitated. Then sullenly they drew back, realizing he spoke the truth. The power of Jesus had gained the victory over the power of the evil spirits in the soldiers.

The Kurds helped themselves to a few pieces of clothing but took little of the silver. Finding no other booty they demanded Edward's shoes. He took them off. In a few moments they left; the raid was over! The ruthless Kurds were leaving, almost like gentlemen.

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7

Prayer gained the real victory for Edward and his friends and it enabled them to be calm and to show kindness and love to their enemies. This victory was better than any use of weapons and force could have gained them. Edward showed more courage than his friends who joined the army carrying weapons. He faced the enemy with no weapon in his hand—only the name of Jesus; the love of Christ, which was the real victory.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." 1 John 4:18

Edward had perfect trust in the Love of Christ to gain the victory in his behalf.

# SEITAN MUSHROOM STEW

This Seitan (Gluten) Mushroom stew is easy and delicious. It is made in just a few minutes. I have used homemade Seitan, made from scratch, using wheat flour, but you can also buy a package of Seitan in the store. You can also make it using Vital Wheat Gluten, another form of the same thing. If you are using homemade Seitan, first you need to boil it with vegetables and natural spices. Once it is ready, cut it into pieces. Now you are ready to make this stew.

This recipe should be easy for anyone to make, even if you have tried to use gluten before and had a hard time with it—especially if you try with the commercially prepared product rather than taking the time to wash the wheat in making gluten. If you would like to know how to make gluten from scratch using flour as I do, click on the link to get the recipe.

## INGREDIENTS:

400 gram piece gluten  
1 cup mushrooms (I use black dry mushrooms)  
1 cup red onion, finely chopped  
1 small green, yellow or red bell pepper, cubed  
1/2 cup boiled chickpeas (optional)  
Baby spinach leaves (optional)  
4 medium fresh tomatoes  
2 Tbsp. tomato paste  
1 tsp. paprika  
1 tsp. ground cumin  
2 Tbsp. oil  
Salt to taste  
(careful, not too much salt)

*Dorcas N.K. Luboya*

For more delicious, easy, and healthy vegan recipes, visit [www.dorcasvegankitchen.com](http://www.dorcasvegankitchen.com). Like my Facebook page. Or contact me through WhatsApp on 00221763755706



## PREPARATION:

Cut gluten in big pieces and set aside. If you are using fresh mushrooms, just wash and slice the mushrooms. If you are using dry ones, soak them first, then wash well and put aside. In a saucepan, add mushrooms and oil, sauté for about 5 minutes. Then stir in sliced bell peppers, onion, boiled chickpeas (optional) and fresh sliced tomatoes. Cook for 5–10 minutes, stirring frequently. Now add in the pieces of gluten, tomato paste and herbs. Mix very well and let it cook for 3–5 minutes. After this, add baby spinach leaves and mix, then switch off the stove. It is ready to serve with brown rice, brown pasta or anything you desire. Enjoy!



# Sweden

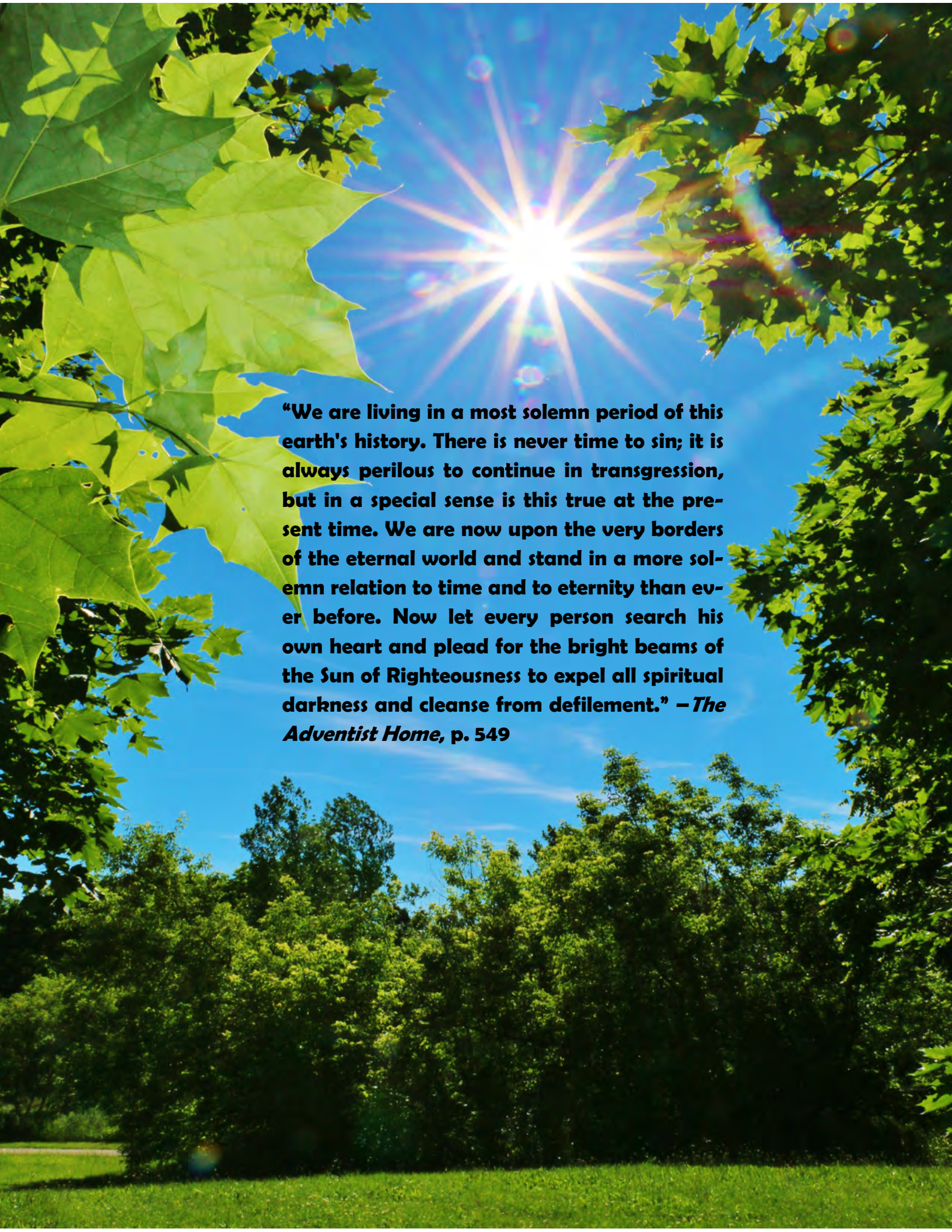


# South Korea



**May 17-19, 2019 Korean Field Conference at Gyeryong, South Korea**



A bright sun shining through green leaves against a blue sky, with a dense forest in the background.

**“We are living in a most solemn period of this earth's history. There is never time to sin; it is always perilous to continue in transgression, but in a special sense is this true at the present time. We are now upon the very borders of the eternal world and stand in a more solemn relation to time and to eternity than ever before. Now let every person search his own heart and plead for the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness to expel all spiritual darkness and cleanse from defilement.” – *The Adventist Home*, p. 549**