



The Reformation
Messenger

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The Truth About the Name: "God"

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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How Are the Mighty Fallen?

“The Christian is likened to the cedar of Lebanon. I have read that this tree does more than send down a few short roots into the yielding loam. It sends strong roots deep down into the earth, and strikes down farther and still farther in search of a still stronger hold. And in the fierce blast of the tempest, it stands firm, held by its network of cables beneath.

“So the Christian strikes root deep into Christ. He has faith in his Redeemer. He knows in whom he believes. He is fully persuaded that Jesus is the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners. . . . The roots of faith strike deep down. Genuine Christians, like the cedar of Lebanon, do not grow in the soft surface soil, but are rooted in God, riveted in the clefts of the mountain rocks.

“If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule. He must stand upright like the palm tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth.

“As the palm tree, drawing nourishment from fountains of living water, is green and flourishing in the midst of the desert, so the Christian may draw rich supplies of grace from the fountain of God's love, and may guide weary souls, that are full of unrest and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to those waters of which they may drink, and live. The Christian is ever pointing his fellow men to Jesus, who invites, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.’ John 7:37. This fountain never fails us; we may draw, and draw again.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 331

The following section is the history of one who was not like the evergreen. One whose roots did not strike deep down.

“The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan [were] lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, [thou wast] slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!”

2 Samuel 1: 19, 22–23, 25–27

“Twice David had had Saul in his power; but when urged to slay him, he had refused to lift his hand against him who had been consecrated by the command of God to rule over Israel.

“David's grief at the death of Saul was sincere and deep, evincing the generosity of a noble nature. He did not exult in the fall of his enemy. The obstacle that had barred his access to the throne of Israel was removed, but at this he did not rejoice. Death had obliterated the remembrance of Saul's distrust and cruelty, and now nothing in his history was thought of but that which was noble and kingly. The name of Saul was linked with that of Jonathan, whose friendship had been so true and so unselfish.

“Jonathan, by birth heir to the throne, yet knowing himself set aside by the divine decree; to his rival the most tender and faithful of friends, shielding David's life at the peril of his own; steadfast at his father's side through the dark days of his declining power, and at his side falling at the last--the name of Jonathan is treasured in heaven, and it stands on earth a witness to the existence and the power of unselfish love.

“The song in which David gave utterance to the feelings of his heart became a treasure to his nation, and to the people of God in all subsequent ages.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 175

May God help us to strike our roots deep so that we will not fall when the storm arrives.

*Quotes from Ellen G. White
Commentary from the Publishers.*



A Sinless Life, Is it Possible?

Many Christians and churches believe that a sinless life is not possible, but the Bible is clear that the ability to overcome all sin is possible, and it is necessary for our salvation. Jesus said to the man whom He had healed, "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." John 5:14. Jesus did not say, start sinning less than before; no, He said, "sin no more."

"We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for His fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us—the perfection of His character? When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, 'It is finished.'" —*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1902

"(John 14:15) Reaching the Condition of Sinlessness. —Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1118

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not com-

mit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." 1 John 3:8–10

Now we understand why so few are saved. In the time of Noah, from the millions of people on this earth, only eight were saved. From over 600,000 men of the people of Israel who left Egypt, only two entered into Canaan's land. Uzzah touched the ark and died that moment. Nadab and Abihu brought strange fire to the temple and they died for this sin. Ananias and Sapphira spoke a lie and died immediately. None of these were given time to repent and confess their sins. Their sins were with knowledge, and they were not forgiven; they were sins against the Holy Spirit.

Millions of Christians have continued in a lifestyle of sin knowing that it is wrong; they trusted that God would continue to forgive them, but they may be lost forever. If they do not change their ways, there is no more salvation for them. The Bible is clear that if they continue in a lifestyle of sin with knowledge, eventually there will be no more forgiveness. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Hebrews 10:26

After we are born again and converted, mistakes may be done. Moses hit the rock when God had spoken to him to speak to the rock, but his sin was forgiven. David knew the law of God, but he committed sin with Bathsheba. This was a sin of weakness and it was for-

given.

“Cannot sin. Or, ‘is not able to go on sinning,’ or ‘is not able to go on habitually sinning.’ This does not mean that the Christian is incapable of committing a wrong act. If he were unable to sin, there would be no virtue in his being without sin, and there would be no true development of character. John has already implied that he will make occasional mistakes (see on ch. 2:1). The passage means that, having been born of God, and having God’s life-giving power dwelling in him, he cannot continue his old patterns of habitual sin. He now follows the sinless ideals that have been implanted in his soul by the new birth.” *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 652–653*

In order to overcome sin we must put out a great effort to overcome. God will help by providing His power. Then a victory over sin is gained. “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Hebrews 12:4

“Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Luke 13:24

We must learn to hate sin so much that we will put out a supreme effort to overcome, realizing our inability and helplessness in overcoming and calling upon God for help. Then it is possible to overcome all sin. Idle time is dangerous for us. We must spend our free time wisely by doing God’s work—missionary work, Bible reading and prayer. Then Satan has no opportunity to tempt us into sin. Jesus said, “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” John 9:4

We sing in our gospel hymn, “Work, for the night is coming; work through the morning hours; work while the dew is sparkling; work mid springing flowers. Work while the day grows brighter, under the glowing sun; work for the night is coming, when man’s work is done.”

The Bible says that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah had much free time; their slaves and servants did all the work, and this free time led them into a sinful life.

God said, “Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.” Exodus 20:9. To occupy our time in labour is a blessing to us; it keeps us from sin and vanity.

The common thing is to spend free time watching television or the Internet, also going to movie theaters and dance halls. The Bible tells us that in beholding we change to the image of what we are watching. Eve was

beholding the forbidden tree, and this beholding made her eat of it. When we are beholding forbidden things, Satan is beside us to tempt us to do the things that we are watching, and also change our thoughts to sinful things.

We find people in the Bible who were overcomers. Job was one. “And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?” Job 1:8. Yet Job said of himself, “Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42:6.

The parents of John the Baptist were faithful and blameless before God. “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” Luke 1:5–6

It is written that, “Everyone who by faith obeys God’s commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression.” *—In Heavenly Places, p. 146.* Yet, no true follower of Christ will claim to be sinless. “Why is it that so many claim to be holy and sinless? It is because they are so far from Christ.” *—Selected Messages, bk. 3, p. 354.* “Those who are truly seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. The more their minds dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to his divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own weakness and defects.” *—The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, p. 302*

Only in Christ is it possible overcome. Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13. Jesus said, “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 17:20

The greatest joy and happiness is with those who have overcome all sin. They have been promised eternal life and a home prepared for them in the New Jerusalem. May the Lord help us to overcome every sin; then we will meet each other in heaven. Amen.

Timo Martin



The Ten-Minute Storm

A few weeks ago on Sabbath night, after I closed Sabbath with my father at his house, I was driving home. On a clear day, I would see a nice sunset in the west as I drove home. This time, I only saw heavy dark clouds and a lot of lightning in the clouds. When I was nearly home—about 2 km out—a few raindrops began to fall on my windshield. I stopped for a red light and I saw the wind picking up, there was sand flying through the air, and pieces of cardboard flying around. The wind was unusually strong suddenly. After the light turned green, I was about 1 minute from home; the rain began to fall harder. Now I was about 30 seconds from home when conditions are good, but the rain started to come down so heavily, I could not see the road in front of me. I slowed down to a very slow pace and kept myself on the road by looking at the yellow line in the middle of the road, just ahead of the left corner of my car. That is all I could see. There was not a proper shoulder to pull off on. There were cars behind me. I could see car headlights only on the occasional oncoming vehicle. I felt like I was driving nearly blind as I inched along. Then how was I to recognize my driveway? It was on the left, but I could not even see the left-hand side of the road. I could see the street lights and I knew that my driveway was adjacent to the second street light. As I approached the second light, I carefully turned the car left and found myself pulling into the driveway. I was very much relieved when I finally pulled into the garage and closed the door to the outside.

It had been a very hot and humid day with temperatures above 35C. The rain brought much relief from the heat and humidity.

After I entered the house—within 10 minutes the storm had abated and the wind died down and the rain had slowed down to a gentle shower.

But those 10 minutes caused quite a bit of damage to

some trees in my backyard—as you can see from the photos in the title section of this article. Those trees were damaged in that 10 minutes.

Upon entering the house, I saw a group of young people from the church (along with my son and daughter), playing a Bible game in the living room.

I told them about the harrowing experience. They could still hear the storm. My daughter gave a bit of a sheepish smile.

You see, my daughter was born with a congenital muscle condition. Her muscles are overactive at times and when it is hot and humid she suffers a lot. She is very prone to heat stroke and at times in her childhood (before we knew of her condition), after spending time in the outside on very warm days she would get sick, sometimes to the point of fever and severe vomiting. Just from the heat. When we are uncomfortable in the heat, she is suffering immensely.

It had been a very hot and humid week, and although I have air conditioning in my house, it is an old house and the air conditioning often does not reach the top floor of the house where our bedrooms are. For a few nights she slept poorly due to the heat. The previous night she had been up half the night, taking cold showers and putting cold packs on her neck and head. The following day, Sabbath, she still managed to go to church, even though feeling very poorly. She came home early to sleep. Sunday she was expected to go in to work. She was thinking of calling in sick, and sent a text message to her boss. That did not go over well, since she had already asked for the Sunday of the conference off on August 4th. She knew she had to work then on this Sunday, so, she prayed.

Her description of the event following her prayer can be found on page 19.

A storm came. The storm lasted ten minutes. The storm was over. The air was cool. The damage was done. Sharon slept well that night and had a good day at work the following day.

Coincidental? Or an answer to prayer? Only God knows, but Sharon was blessed the next day.

Why do I relate this experience?

Many worldly people do not take God seriously. They ridicule Christians for their weakness in their belief system. However, who can contend with the power of our God? "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Zephaniah 3:17. "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: He is mighty in strength and wisdom." Job 36:15. "Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto Thee!" Psalm 71:19

Yes, He is very powerful. He created the world in six days. He stopped the mouths of lions, and walked in the midst of fire. He destroyed mighty armies, stilled the storm, divided the Red Sea, fed over a million people in the desert for 40 years, and much more.

He also has answered prayers in a remarkable manner many times in the past. Joshua prayed for the sun to stand still so that it would not set before he could win the battle against the Canaanites, and it did. (Joshua 10:12–13). He answered the prayer of Hezekiah for healing before Isaiah had walked out of the palace (2 Kings 20:4–5), and then He turned the sun back ten degrees as a sign for Hezekiah (v. 10–11). Before Daniel finished his prayer, the angel Gabriel was at his side to answer his prayer (Daniel 9:21–22).



Interestingly enough, during that ten-minute storm, although some mighty branches fell, branches that were full of leaves, that looked healthy and alive, not one petal fell off my small delicate flowers.

We can learn many interesting lessons from storms. Although, this particular storm came as a blessing for Sharon, storms have

been known to cause damage, as this one did also. I was thinking that in the midst of a spiritual storm, many Christians who look good and healthy are secretly proud and arrogant, and in a time of spiritual crisis

(storm), they may fall as they are rotten on the inside; but the humble flowers will be kept in the hand of One who is mightier than the storm.

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. . . 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

Although He is mighty and powerful, our God has a different side to Him. He is very gentle and loving. Jesus has a soft and loving heart. He loves and pities His children in their suffering and is gracious to them and helps them for what others may think are the smallest of matters in the scheme of eternity and the universe, but He hears their prayers. To Elijah, the Lord answered his prayer on Mount Carmel with fire, but shortly afterwards the Lord spoke to him, not in fire, wind or earthquake, but with a still small voice. (2 Kings 18–19). Sometimes the Lord speaks in a mighty manner, sometimes very quiet.

His gentle nature is well portrayed in the following Bible verse: "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth." Isaiah 42:3. Isaiah wrote this verse and Jesus quoted it. "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory." Matthew 12:20

Jesus changed the final word from "truth" to "victory."

Apparently, victory is synonymous with truth. "Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition." –*The Acts of the Apostles* p. 113. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Acts 8:32

How tenderly He deals with His erring children. How careful He is not to break that bruised reed, or quench that smoking flax. How gently He seeks to bring them back to the fold. How patient He is with our weaknesses. How He cares for us in our trials and difficulties in life. When He sees one spark of hope—He will not quench that spark, but will nurture it in the hopes that it will grow.

Jesus is the loving Shepherd, who is gently leading His sheep. "Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows us all by name. He knows the very house in which we live, the name of each occupant. He has at times given directions to His

servants to go to a certain street in a certain city, to such a house, to find one of His sheep. . . .

“Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, ‘Follow Me,’ and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him. Many refuse to be drawn. Jesus knows who they are. He also knows who gladly hear His call, and are ready to come under His pastoral care. He says, ‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.’ He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 479–480

“The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.” Psalm 145:8

“The great mass of the world will reject God’s mercy, and will be overwhelmed in swift and irretrievable ruin. But those who heed the warning shall dwell ‘in the secret place of the Most High,’ and ‘abide under the shadow of the Almighty.’ His truth shall be their shield and buckler. For them is the promise, ‘With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation.’ Psalm 91:1, 4, 16.” –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 167

VICTORY IN THE STORM

I saw the following quote on Facebook and it appears on many web sites—I do not know who posted it, but it made me think.

“The Devil whispered in my ear, ‘you’re not strong enough to withstand the storm.’ Today I whispered in the devil’s ear, ‘I am a child of God, A woman of Faith, A warrior for Christ. I am the storm.’”

If you google this quote, you will find multiple web sites that sell t-shirts with this quote on it with various pictures of men or women bearing armour, or an evil depiction of the forces of darkness. Sometimes with the word “woman,” and sometimes with the word “man”. So it can be addressed to either men or women.

But the truth we glean from this is that we can withstand any storm in life, if we are children of God, people of faith, warriors for Christ. We may be *in* the storm, but are we *the* storm?

We all belong to the Christian army and must be wearing the armour of God (Ephesians 6:13–17). We are warriors for Christ and do not fear any storms. The fiery darts of the enemy will not touch us if we are wearing the armour of God. We are to be courageous and go for-

ward, never giving up. Daily we are fighting battles and the storms that the enemy brings and, in Christ, we can come off victorious. He has gained the victory for us already. Remember, “the battle is the LORD’s.” 1 Samuel 17:47

In order to be able to conquer the enemy, we must be stronger than the enemy, but that is not the case in the Christian warfare. Our enemy is much stronger than we are. We need the strength of the One who has defeated our enemy on the cross and can withstand any storm that our enemy throws at us.

When Jesus was with His disciples in the boat on the Sea of Galilee, a storm arose. The boat was about to sink in a violent storm, so they thought. Jesus was peacefully sleeping in the boat, not fearing the storm at all.

“And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was asleep.” Matthew 8:24. So, what did the disciples do? “And His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish” (v. 25). And what did Jesus answer? “And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm” (v. 26). The reaction of the disciples? “But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of Man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!” (v. 27)

Jesus’ disciples could not withstand the storm that night. They tried and failed to the point that they could no longer try any more. Their only course of action was to ask Jesus to intervene. They cried out to Jesus in fear. What were they to do when their ship sank? They had spent all their energy and strength and seemed doomed to perish.

Jesus, woke from His sleep and rebukes them, stating they had no faith. Then He spoke to the storm as to a friend. He told it to be still, and it was.

Satan did not have to whisper in their ear, “You aren’t strong enough to withstand the storm,” because they were aware of that fact after struggling for hours.

There has not been a true Christian that could withstand the storms of life in their own strength and they recognize that. Jesus did not call His disciples into service because of their ability to withstand the storms sent by the enemy. He never asked them to withstand the storm. He only asked them to have faith. It is faith in Christ that can overcome the world. Our resilience and courage comes, not from our own internal resources, but from our connection to Christ. Jesus has already conquered

sin and death. Satan's fate has already been sealed, and we have all been enlisted into the army of Christ.

We are not only to withstand the storm, but to rise above it as does the eagle. We are to draw our strength from above, being in constant connection with Jesus, through prayer. We will then be able to look any challenging circumstances in the eye, confident that they do not control us.

"The eagle of the Alps is sometimes beaten down by the tempest into the narrow defiles of the mountains. Storm clouds shut in this mighty bird of the forest, their dark masses separating her from the sunny heights where she has made her home. Her efforts to escape seem fruitless. She dashes to and fro, beating the air with her strong wings, and waking the mountain echoes with her cries. At length, with a note of triumph, she darts upward, and, piercing the clouds, is once more in the clear sunlight, with the darkness and tempest far beneath. So we may be surrounded with difficulties, discouragement, and darkness. Falsehood, calamity, injustice, shut us in. There are clouds that we cannot dispel. We battle with circumstances in vain. There is one, and but one, way of escape. The mists and fogs cling to the earth; beyond the clouds God's light is shining. Into the sunlight of His presence we may rise on the wings of faith." —*Education*, p. 118–119

TAKE THE WORLD BY STORM

Here is one more lesson we can learn from storms. There is a saying in English, "to take the world by storm." What does this mean? It means to be suddenly and extremely successful, or popular, sometimes unexpectedly. To win or gain huge widespread success or popularity very rapidly. In a military sense, to conquer or lay siege with a sudden fury. Alexander the Great, in ancient Greece is said to have taken the world by storm. He conquered the world in about 12 years. It was quick, sudden and violent. Just like the prayer of Sharon, the storm comes suddenly and violently, sometimes unexpectedly.

John the Baptist took the world by storm. He suddenly appeared and became very popular—everyone knew about his preaching, it seemed. News spread far and wide quickly. John proclaimed the Messiah who then followed John and even further took the world by storm. His fame went throughout the world without modern media to spread the news—all by word of mouth.

The Apostle Paul, when he was converted, took the world by storm. His unexpected, sudden, change of course in his life mystified his former colleagues and his

fame went far and wide as he travelled and preached the Messiah, whom he had previously persecuted.

When storms come, some go and hide away, but we do not need to hide. We are to face the storm with courage. The Lord will see us through any and all storms, and soon enough there will be sunshine again. "Will you not from this very day try to represent Christ to the world? You will have a refuge. You will be sunny Christians. We have been gloomy long enough. Had we not better come out of the cave and stand with God? Then we will have Christ with us so that we can talk of redemption as did the disciples when they had been with Jesus and learned of Him. Carry the light of Jesus. Carry it to your neighbors." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 62

The end of all things is at hand. We are to come out of the cave and take the world by storm with the message of salvation, but be gentle as a shepherd taking care of sheep, or a gardener tending delicate flowers.

We face many spiritual storms in life, sent by the enemy, and we cannot withstand the devil unless we take on the full armour of God and let Him fight our battles. Remember, the battle is not yours, it is the Lord's. The storms of life may come up on us suddenly, but they cannot defeat us if we are connected with Christ.

Our God is an awesome God. We could talk endlessly of His marvels. Do you believe He has the power to change your heart? Can He enable you to overcome every sinful desire? Can He calm the storm in your heart? The storm in your life? Yes, He can. He is able. It is your faith that is faltering if you do not believe so. Let us pray as did the disciples, "Lord increase our faith." Luke 17:5. We can move mountains if we have faith as a mustard seed.

A very severe storm will soon come upon this earth when the angels let loose the four winds that they are holding (Revelation 7:1–3). May God help us to trust in Jesus to see us through this storm and bring us to safety in the eternal kingdom when He comes to redeem His own. He will hear and answer all your prayers in some manner as soon as you pray. Sometimes the answer will be in a storm, but other times it may be in a still small voice.

The promise is that He will hear, and answer every sincere prayer. Have faith.

Wendy Eaton



The Truth About The Name: “GOD”

Many times, debates have arisen as to how many “Gods” there are. Is Jesus Christ God? Some say there are three, yet they are all just *one* being. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mere titles or offices held by the same Person. Given a chance to visit heaven, they say we would only find Jesus Christ there as God, and no one else. These and similar arguments continue to confuse people. What is the truth about this matter?

In order to understand the truth about a certain point, we need first to look at the beginning—Genesis. All Biblical doctrine begins in the book of Genesis and is continually unfolded all throughout the Bible until the book of Revelation. This means we cannot just read one or two texts (“For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.” Isaiah 28:10). If we read any text in isolation, ignoring the beginning (foundation) of that doctrine, then we are likely to arrive at a wrong conclusion and believe error. This could result in our losing our salvation and being eternally lost.

This article will consider the matter using the Bible alone as the foundation and source of all points raised and the conclusions arrived at. (all emphases have been supplied).

THE ISSUE AT HAND

In the beginning God said: “Let *Us* make man in *Our*

own image, after *Our* likeness.” Genesis 1:26. It is clear that God was not speaking to Himself here. Again we read, “Go to, let *Us* go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.” Genesis 11:7. And again, it is clear God is not speaking to Himself.

The plurality clearly would indicate that God had One, a Companion, whom He could council together with. The following verses rule out the fact that it could be an angel or any other created being. “For by Him [Jesus], were all things created that are in heaven, visible or invisible.” Colossians 1:16. “All things were made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made.” John 1:3. The word “Him” refers to the “Word”—Christ according to John 1:1.

Christ alone has been said to be the one *By Whom* all things were created. It would be incorrect to conclude that God was speaking to Himself or with a created being in the verses quoted from Genesis above.

There is an abundance of evidence in the Bible. We just need to read it. The truth is that God has a form because man was created in His image. People say we do not know what the form of God is, because John writes that God is Spirit, (“God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24.) Even though it is true that

God is Spirit, He has the form or structure of the man that He created in His image.

RATIFIED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

There is evidence that the New Testament writers had a clear understanding of the verse, "let *Us make*." in Genesis 1:26. The disciples John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was *with* God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning *with* God." John 1:1-2. John's words here agree with the words of Moses in Genesis.

IS CHRIST INDEPENDENT FROM HIS FATHER AND LIVING AS A SEPARATE BEING?

Although a little light has been shed in the book of Genesis, there is an abundance of evidence in the remainder of the Bible to support this teaching. During Jesus' earthly ministry, many events happened that supports the truth that they are separate beings.

"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." Mathew 3:16-17

"While He thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son: hear Him. *And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone.*" Luke 9:34-36 (first part). "Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." John 12:28

These are just a few verses that show that Christ was on earth as a separate Being, while God the Father was in Heaven. At Jesus' baptism His voice was heard from there. Even though "God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth," John 4:24, as mentioned earlier, at the baptism, The Holy Spirit was manifested in form of a dove. The voice, however, did not come from the Spirit, but from God out of heaven.

IS CHRIST ALONE IN HEAVEN AS GOD? OR IS HE WITH HIS FATHER, AS A SEPARATE BEING?

The truth is that the Father is separate from the Son. They talk to each other and work together for the salvation of men, and seek to bring happiness to the created beings. From the Prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation, there are passages that can be confirmed with quotes from the apostolic letters regarding this.

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire." Daniel 7:9. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, *and came to the Ancient of days,* and they brought Him *near* before Him." Daniel 7:13. Christ is speaking of Himself here. Many times He used the expression, "Son of man." For Example: "For the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men." Luke 24:7. "The Son of man came to save that which was lost." Matthew 18:11. "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." Mark 13:26. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the thrown of His glory." Matthew 25:31

Daniel was not referring to Ezekiel, whom the Lord at one point referred to with the same expression, "son of man." (Ezekiel 2:1). The events in the above verse are happening in heaven, and nowhere do we have evidence that Ezekiel was ever taken to heaven and brought near the Ancient of days. As to who the Ancient of days is. Please read Psalms 90:1-11. It is clear that it is God the Father. So Christ was brought near the Father by a cloud (or retinue) of holy angels.

Revelation 4:2; says "And immediately I was in the Spirit: and behold a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne." In chapter 5:1-8, we read that the One sitting on the throne [a throne described similarly to that of Daniel 7:9] had a book in His hands. This Person, without a doubt, the Ancient of days. A proclamation was made by a strong angel, calling upon anyone to come and open the book for the One on the throne. We read that no one was worthy to do so which made John weep, until one of the elders comforted him with the words that there was One, "The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" (v. 5) who was worthy to receive the book and

open it. The Lamb, as it had been slain—took the book (vs. 7–8). This clearly shows us Christ is not alone in heaven.

Quoting from the Apostles: Stephen, when he was stoned, just before he died, he stated. “And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man *standing on the right hand* of God.” Acts 7:56. The apostle Paul wrote: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down *at the right hand* of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

THE INSTRUCTION OF CHRIST TO BAPTIZE IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Just prior to His ascension after spending 33 ½ on this earth, Jesus said: “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.” He then gave the instruction, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. . . and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” Mathew 28:18 (last part) 19–20. Some argue that, as they read about the apostles conducting baptisms after Christ’s accession, none baptized using the three names that they were instructed to use. They come to their own conclusion that this is evidence that Christ alone is all God and Holy Spirit, and that this was revealed to the apostles. This is very much an erroneous view! As we have seen, in fact, most of those verses proving that Christ and God are separate beings were written by the apostles.

The apostle John being one of those that was baptizing, writes the following at the beginning of the book of Revelation, “*the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him.*” Revelation 1:1. Some time before this, it is recorded that Peter, James, and John met Paul the Apostle and greeted him and divided the labour among themselves. This shows that the apostles were fully united (Galatians 1:18–19; 2:9). Peter himself, after speaking of the need of repentance and conversion, says that such an experience will be followed by “the times of refreshing. . . from the presence of the *Lord*; and *He shall send Jesus Christ.*” Acts 3:19–20. Also, “Ye men of Israel, hear

these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.” Acts 2:22, 24. Did Jesus raise Himself from the dead? *No*. Not according to this verse.

Why is it then supposed that they did not baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, especially after we have seen from their teaching that they all unitedly believed Jesus was separate from the Father? *It is because of the burden of their message.* At that time, the central pillar of the message that one had to accept was that Jesus is the Saviour, the Son of God. We can see this as we read the message of Peter at Pentecost, Stephen before being stoned, Phillip to the Ethiopian Eunuch, and so on.

HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER

“If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake.” John 14:7–11

These words of Christ have led some to think that Christ and the Father are not separate *bodily* as He is in His Father, and the Father in Him (v. 10) but such an understanding wrong. In the next chapter Jesus said, “abide in Me, and I in you.” John 15:4. In John 6:56 He says: “He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in Him.” Did He mean that the person who believes in Him will physically go and dwell inside Christ and become one physical person? *No, of course not.*

Then why is it that, as the disciples saw Christ, they

were said to have seen the Father? Christ is speaking of His Father, and He says: "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me." Hebrews 10:5. This is why in John 1:14, we read that the Word [Jesus] became flesh as a human being and dwelt among us. He came to reveal God His Father, His love and His character to the world. "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Colossians 2:9. Put differently, He was God seen as a human being. What about His appearance, character and disposition? He is "the express image of His person" Hebrews 1:3 [that is of the Father]. After saying, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," (John 14:9) He said in verse 12, "I go unto My Father!" It would not mean going inside Himself!

THE ONENESS OF GOD THE FATHER AND JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR

With all this evidence (which has not been exhaustive), we can briefly look at the oneness of Christ and His Father and the Spirit. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." 1 John 5:7. In John 17, Christ in His prayer simplifies our understanding of the oneness spoken of here. Is it physical oneness? Clearly, *No*, it is not. The Bible, as we have seen so far, has said *No*.

Let us then consider this: "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one:" John 17:22. Here is the oneness of the disciples. Were they to become one body and cease to be individual persons, all in one? No. If yes, who among them was to be central that others must enter into him to become one? What a huge person that would be! Clearly it is not that. Further, in marriage, the husband and wife are said to be one (Genesis 2:24), yet we see them separate to their graves. There is One God. True. But, what kind of oneness? The Bible here talks of oneness in *nature*, *character*, and *purpose* existing between God and Christ. This is what Christ prays from His father, that His followers must have.

CHRIST AS GOD

The Father calls His Son, God. "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, *O God*, is for ever and ever: a sceptre

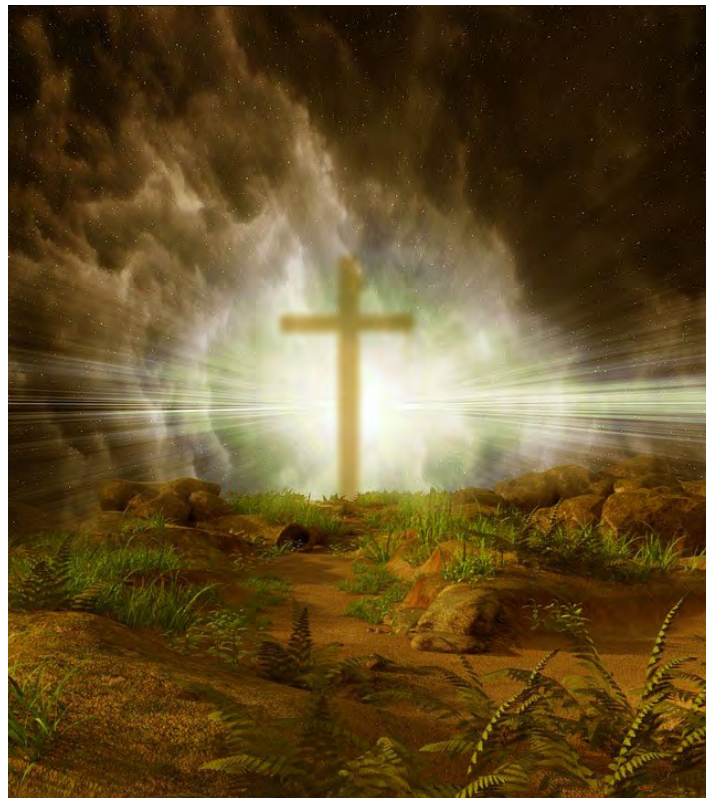
of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom." Hebrews 1:8. If the Father calls His Son Jesus, God, we can safely call Jesus, God, with joy, knowing that we are following the order and example set by our Father which is in Heaven.

CONCLUSION

God has in His word given us clear evidence that there is One God and His Son Jesus Christ. They are two different individuals. They have the same character, the same goal and do always agree and have the same purpose. In that sense they act like one.

Many are guilty of urging false theories about who God is. Following false teachings, many are led to believe in a false god. Others have acted with partial or no knowledge. Before the coming of the light, they are not condemned because there was no light to reject. But after the light has come, if they choose not to follow, they will receive their condemnation. To those who have the light, a theoretical knowledge alone of who God is, is not enough. "The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Timothy 2:19. Amen.

Joel Msiska, Malawi





The theme for the 2019 Canadian Field Conference, from August 2–4, was “Christ, the Sure Foundation” based on the following Bible Verse: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:11

We were blessed to have many visiting ministers from Europe, USA and Jamaica. As we near the close of time, many winds of doctrine are blowing in the land. While it is important to have a correct understanding of Biblical Doctrine, without Christ as the foundation of each and every teaching, our religion has no value. Christ

must be the foundation of our faith and our cornerstone. This is the only way we will stand firm against all the trials and difficulties we will meet in life.

The various speakers developed this theme and we left with a strong resolve to make sure our faith has Christ as the foundation.

Brother John Bescec, president of the Canadian Field, opened the conference by introducing the theme. The focus of the conference would be to develop the fact that Jesus is the only sure foundation. Daily, people are



building on many different foundations that are not solid so they end up crumbling. Or some build on foundations that others have laid so that their faith is on the word of others, not on their own experience. People think they are smarter than their Creator and thus build on defective foundations. Soon there will be a shaking and those who have not built a solid foundation for their faith, in Christ, will be shaken out. Our foundation must be strong and sure.

Brother Nicholas Anca from Canada spoke on the subject of Christ, the Rock of Ages. In the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, Jesus is spoken of as the Rock. The subject was developed using the following words of the apostle Paul, “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” 1 Corinthians 10:1–4. The nation of Israel was under the cloud, the protection of God. They were baptized in the sea. They ate spiritual food (symbolic of the Lord’s Supper today), and they were blessed by the abiding presence of Jesus—the Rock of Ages. All people go through trials, and many trust in their money, power, or fame, or false gods such as Mohammed or Buddha; however, they cannot provide a firm foundation. You will never be destroyed if you build your founda-

tion on Jesus. We will be able to withstand anything that the enemy may throw at us. Ask yourself, what are you building your foundation on?

Brother Elder Hernandez, also from Canada, developed the theme further. It is important that we build on Jesus, the Rock of Ages, but when we put up the building, the Cornerstone of the building is also symbolized by Jesus. This was the subject of his service—Jesus, the chief Cornerstone. When we construct a building with bricks, the cornerstone is the first stone set in the foundation. It determines the structure of the entire building. In Ancient Israel, when they were building large structures, they had a ceremony when the cornerstone was placed. They offered offerings of grain, wine and oil. It is the cornerstone that gives strength and stability to the building. The Christian is likened to a living stone in the church of God. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5. The small stones in any building must hold together well in order for the structure to be firm. So also, Christians in the church, as lively stones, are to hold together and be united in order for the church to be strong. There must be unity and togetherness. A brick that is alone is useless, but if it is built into the fabric of the church, it is a lively stone. When Christ is the Chief Cornerstone, true Christians are the bricks—we are called a holy priesthood. The duties of the priest are to have access to God through prayer and to bring others to Jesus. May



we all be faithful priests in the church of God.

We were very much blessed to have Brother Caputo, the President of the European Division, in our midst and he brought the message during the divine service on Sabbath, entitled, Christ the Sure Foundation. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2. Life is beautiful and worthy to be lived, but we cannot live without sacrifice. No victory is gained without sacrifice. Sacrifices are not a curse, but a blessing, an instrument that allows one to gain victory.

The gift of eyesight is one of the most beautiful gifts given to us. There are two possibilities we have with our eyesight—we can contemplate the Kingdom of God, or the kingdoms of this world. You become what you behold. King David was watching a beautiful woman and fell into sin. To have a sure foundation we must have our eyes on Jesus. Jesus looks at you with much love, and you should look at Him in the same manner. To be the children of God, we must be washed with pure water (Matthew 3:13–15; Baptism), we must be dressed with white linen (Righteousness of Christ), and we must be anointed with the oil of joy. While in the valley of this world, many voices are trying to speak to us. Eve listened to the wrong voice—the voice of Satan. We must be careful only to listen to the voice of God.

Brother La Corte, from Italy, gave a brief history of the work of the Good Samaritan department in the world. It was originally formed in 1991. The name was inspired by the parable of the Good Samaritan. It is run by volunteers and depends on donations for its finances. They have been instrumental in helping many disadvantaged people worldwide. Let us do our part in supporting their work.

The newest Ordained Minister in Canada is Brother Bashir Kheder, who recently immigrated to Canada from Iraq. He spoke about "Foundation—the Test of Time." Although in 1 Corinthians 3:11, Paul states that Jesus is the foundation, in Ephesians 2:20 he mentions that, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." The Apostles and Prophets received their commission from God and, as leaders in the church, are to help to build a strong foundation. All of the members are needed in the building itself. To build successfully one needs inner purity in addition to outer purity. The Pharisees in the days of Christ had outward beauty but

were corrupt inside.

This foundation has borne the test of time. It was proven to be sure in the Old Testament, and the New Testament scriptures quote the Old in many instances. The Seventh-day Adventist Church started with much prayer and searching of Scriptures to discover the key prophecies for the end of time, until the Second Coming of Jesus. These doctrines are important, but they must be founded on Jesus in order to have a solid building. Knowing the time in which we live, we must all make earnest efforts to proclaim the gospel, distributing literature, pointing others to the true foundation. During the latter rain these seeds of truth we have planted will begin to bear fruit.

The only sure foundation is in Christ and Brother Pablo Hunger, the North American Division leader shared his thoughts on this subject. He had recently been in Haiti, where they had an earthquake a few years ago. Some of the buildings still bear the cracks and scars from that earthquake. They did not have a good foundation. Likewise, without a good foundation the Christian life will have cracks. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Psalm 11:3. The world is trying to destroy you. Everything may be going well; however, change can come suddenly, as with an earthquake, and without a good foundation, you will not stand. The world may take your earthly foundations, but if you have your foundation in Christ, it cannot be moved. A sure foundation is not found on this earth. "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Jeremiah 17:5–8. We may lose this life, but that is okay if our foundation is on Jesus, because we will gain eternal life. If we have been building a weak foundation, it is not too late to change our priorities in life, and begin building a strong foundation in Christ. Heaven is our true home. We all know what we must do so we are encouraged to build the correct foundation now.

On Sunday morning, we witnessed the highlight of the conference. Four dear souls decided to turn their backs on the world and follow Jesus. They made their cove-

nant to serve Him and their old lives were buried in baptism in the watery grave of Lake Ontario. The music in heaven must have been playing, as there was joy in heaven, as we saw four more souls leaving the ranks of the evil one and becoming a part of the family of God—having their names written in the Book of Life. It was a time for each of us to reflect on our own spiritual walk, and to make sure we are building a firm foundation.

The conference continued with Brother George Gowie, from Jamaica, sharing the subject of “Foundation of Hope.” Many people face tragedies in life. They lose their jobs, their education, their health, their investments. Their marriage may break up. Unless the foundation is on Jesus, they lose hope. Hope gives the expectation that tomorrow will be better than today. Darkness may be all around, but light can be seen. We all have the hope of eternal life, beyond this world. We cannot trust our souls to any man as they will fail us. Although we are to respect our pastors and leaders, our hope is not in them either. The greatest problem we have is sin, but that does not mean we do not have hope. Brother Gowie mentioned some examples from the Bible where some were sinners and deemed hopeless by the world, but Jesus brought them hope. There was the woman at the well, the woman caught in adultery, the woman with the issue of blood. They all found hope in Jesus. Jesus tells us to go forward. If we fall down, ask for help and get up. Go forward. Hold on and remain on the Rock of Ages.

Brother La Corte spoke again, this time about the theme of the Conference. He also mentioned hope. Although things are not going well, with hope you live for the good that is coming. Fear is suffering before something bad happens. On the other hand, hope is recovering, and having joy before the good arrives. We do not have to fear the future, or any trials if Jesus is our foundation. Good is coming. We can have joy today knowing that our hope of eternal life will be realized in the not too far distant future.

For the conference closing, Brother Caputo wrapped it all up. “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Matthew 24:13. Some start, but do not make it to the end. Jesus never told us we would have an easy life. We are to endure—to persevere. Jesus loves His own until the end; not just during their beautiful moments, but at all times. No one will suffer as much as Jesus did, but He endured and promised to help us endure. We are to persevere, first in Grace. We must recognize that there is noth-

ing good in us. Every good gift and talent we have is from God. Secondly, we must persevere in Faith. Hold on to the promises that God has given. Do not get discouraged when you see your sinful state. He still loves you. Jesus owns the world. Go to Him as did the importunate woman (Luke 18:1–8). Thirdly we are to persevere in Prayer. Prayer will help us endure all trials in this life. True Christians will be hated. They will have problems in this world and only those who persevere will be saved. The fourth point in which Brother Caputo mentioned we should persevere is in missionary work. Souls are brought to Christ through personal ministry. We are to bear two kinds of fruit. One is our character development—the fruit of the spirit. The second one is the souls we have shared the gospel message with.

What we are not to persevere in is our sins. To sin is a personal choice. Daniel’s three friends made a conscious choice to be faithful and not to sin and were sent to the fiery furnace.

Jesus is knocking at the door of every heart. Salvation is personal. You are to individually build a strong Christian character that is founded on Jesus Christ. We are also to build the foundation of the church on Jesus Christ and continue building the walls by being closely united and bringing new faithful souls into the building.

During the conference, much Christian fellowship and unity was shared. Truly the spirit of the Lord was in our midst. We all left renewed in spirit, to go back to our own local churches and help to build them up. To have a strong building in Christ, the individual members must be firmly founded on Christ. May God help each of you readers also to build your foundation on Jesus Christ. Every other foundation will fall one day.





Charles Fitch

Charles Fitch was born in 1805 in Hampton, Connecticut. After graduating from Brown University, he was ordained as a minister in the Congregational church and served in Abington Connecticut, Warren Massachusetts, and Hartford Connecticut. He was a strong opponent to slavery as revealed by a pamphlet he produced entitled, *Slaveholding Weighed in the Balance of Truth, and Its Comparative Guilt Illustrated*.

In 1828, at the age of 23, he was married. Little is mentioned of his family life.

In March of 1838 Fitch wrote William Miller stating that he had read Miller's Lectures and did not doubt the correctness of his views. However, for approximately three and a half years, he held back from preaching the Millerite message.

Eventually, because he preached the doctrine of "holiness" and was exhorted by his church not to do so, Fitch felt it necessary to separate from the established church. This separation caused him to be less influenced by the fear of man regarding the Millerite understanding of the advent.

It was Josiah Litch, who had known of Fitch's experience, that went to visit him and encourage him. Litch left him more literature to study and requested he correspond as to the result of his study. This study led to his accepting the advent doctrine. From then on he was one of the most fearless, aggressive, and successful Millerite leaders.

On December 5, 1843, Fitch lost his son. He wrote: "This day I have laid in the grave my dear Willie, a little boy that would have been seven years of age the 15th of the present month. I need not tell you that my heart aches, and I cannot tell you how much. Some ten months ago, he took an inflammatory rheumatism, which left him with an organic disease of the heart. He was comforta-

ble through the summer, and went east with us. He kept about until the last of October. While I was absent at that time, he was prostrated. On my return the physicians said there was no hope of his recovery. Oh, how my heart was pained at the prospects of seeing his life wrung out of him with anguish, of then following him away to the cold grave. . . It has been painful, painful; but the Lord sustains us. But we have hope in his death." *—The Midnight Cry, Vol. 5, Nos. 20, 21, Dec. 21, 1843. Letter to Brother Himevangelizing.* In August 1844, Samuel S. Snow reinvigorated the Millerite movement by predicting that Jesus would come on October 22, 1844. Charles Fitch continued to preach es

In early 1842, the Spirit of God had moved upon Charles Fitch to devise the prophetic chart, which was generally regarded by Adventists as a fulfillment of the command given by the prophet Habakkuk, 'to write the vision and make it plain upon tables.'" *—The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, p. 241.* Fitch, assisted by Apollos Hale, designed the widely used "1843" prophetic chart, painted on cloth, which he presented to the Boston General Conference of May 1842. After some discussion regarding the chart at the General Conference, it was voted unanimously to have three hundred similar to this reproduced, which was soon accomplished.

After the first initial disappointment that occurred when Jesus did not come by the spring of 1844, Fitch traveled east to continue and baptize, even into the colder autumn months. In early October after baptizing three groups of believers in a brisk wind and the cold waters of Lake Erie, he contracted a high fever and died on Monday October 14, 1844, just eight days before he expected Jesus to come. He was 39 years old. He died in full faith that he should awake in a few days in the likeness of his Redeemer.

Will Charles Fitch be in heaven? In her first vision Ellen G. White travelled to heaven. "We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!' and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring." *—Early Writings, p. 17.*

Why did the Lord lay Charles Fitch to death just before

The Great Disappointment? As Ellen White stated, "God had laid in the grave to save them." Would he have apostatized after 1844? Josiah Litch did and Josiah was instrumental in bringing Charles to the Adventist faith. Only God knows and when tragedies as such happen, we have to trust God that it was for the best. May God help us to be faithful until the end so we can meet Charles Fitch in heaven one day.

Prophetic chart devised by Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale in 1842



Testimony from Sister Sharon Eaton, that was referred to on page 7, regarding God's answer to her prayer:

"We had some youth over to my house on Sabbath and to close Sabbath we had a prayer round at worship where all six of us who were present said two sentences each. Mine were 'God thank you for saving me from heat stroke today, and please help me to not have heat stroke tomorrow and help me to be a blessing.' Two minutes later it went from dead calm to a wildly insane storm. I said 'guys look, God is answering my prayer already!' I kept saying to my dad, 'Dad there is something about this storm, it is different, it is stronger than normal' And it was true, rain was sheeting sideways, and the wind was wilder than I thought I had ever seen before. The house got noticeably cooler within a few short minutes. I'm sure God sent this storm in direct response to my prayer.

"The important part that made God hear my prayer? When we got to Emma's turn during the prayer round, she paused for a second and said she was still thinking of which request to make, so I said, 'perfect because I have just one more.' I was remembering how, if you come to the altar to pray and your brother has something against you, you should apologize to him first, so I cut in quickly to add this to my two sentences. 'and God please forgive me for being crazy earlier today when I had heat stroke and please forgive me for being mean to Emma during that time.' Emma gave me a big grin and said in a cheerful voice. 'That's OK!' and took her turn and we ended our prayer. God heard the prayer I had about the weather because I asked for forgiveness of my sins and sought to make peace with my fellow man."



As we learned last month, the connection between our gastrointestinal (gut) microbiome and our health is a very new area of scientific research. In the past, scientists were able to identify the totality of the human genome—the set of instructions that each cell in our body contains, to allow us to live and function. Like the human genome, the microbiome has been subject to intensive research to unravel all of its genetic information, i.e. the genes that are attached to all cells, bacteria etc. The challenge with identifying and classifying the gut microbiota is that it contains over 3 million genes, making it 150 times more genetically varied than the human body. What science does know is that there is a link between the bacteria in our intestines and virtually every disease that ails us.

Due to the sheer numbers of gut microbiomes, there was an assumption that they must have an impact on our health. Why else would they exist in such large numbers in our body? However, until recently, scientists did not know much more than that. Of all the microbes, bacteria are the most abundant type in our intestines. Therefore, this has been the focus of most scientific studies—looking at the DNA of the bacteria in our intestines. Researchers are trying to determine whether specific bacteria cause particular diseases, and if there is a way to change the type of bacteria in our intestines to prevent disease.

A healthy gut is one that contains lots of different and diverse types of bacteria. When this occurs, the gut is in a better position to fight off and resist pathogens. For example, if one strain of bacteria is unable to do its job for whatever reason, then another similar type can step in and keep things running smoothly. What is still unknown is how to ensure or even to measure all the components of a healthy gut microbiome. For now the health of the gut is best measured by how well it is performing the totality of its very important jobs, rather than being able to determine the specific breakdown of all the types and amounts of bacteria in the gut.

There are certain lifestyle behaviours that have been identified that promote a healthy gut. These include eating a healthy diet, having adequate exercise and sleep, and reducing exposure to stress. Thus, each of our lifestyle choices influences and determines the content of our gut microbiome. We also live our day-to-day lives in different environments; we each have a different combination of habits and surroundings. Because of this, each of us has a gut microbiome that looks at least slightly different to that of even our parents and siblings, even between twins, and even more so to people that live



far from us, especially in different countries and continents.

In fact, the microbiome that each of us have is so unique from anyone else's that it can be called our bacterial fingerprint. For this reason also, it is difficult to say exactly what makes up a healthy gut microbiome. Because of the diversity of the gut microbiome from person to person, it is reasonable to conclude that there is no one healthy gut microbiome.

Even if science cannot yet identify the specifics of a healthy microbiome, a healthy microbiome is assumed if the following takes place: a healthy gut has a barrier that is effective at keeping the contents of the gut, such as its own microbiota, undigested food particles, and toxins, from escaping into the bloodstream. This barrier helps to fight off infections, while it is in the process of performing all of its usual digestive and regulatory functions, absorbing and synthesizing nutrients that are essential to keeping your body running at its best.

Last month we learned of the Human Microbiome Project. They were able to provide the initial characterization of the normal microbiota of healthy adults in a Western population. The goal of the project is to define all the microbial species that affect human and their relationship to health, thus providing large, publicly available databases from their genetic studies. Each individual hosts thousands of bacterial types, with different sites in the body having their own distinct communities. Because most of the microorganisms living in humans are located in the gastrointestinal system, this is where most new discoveries are being made.

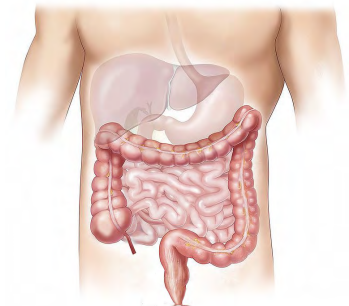
In June 2012, five years after the start of the Project, researchers announced that more than 10,000 microbial species occupy the human "ecosystem" and they have identified between 81-99% of the genes contained in the microbiome. Because of the recognition of the close connection between our health and the microbes that live within us, the gut microbiome is becoming a cornerstone of preventive medicine. If we can develop a healthy gut, we can prevent diseases from developing.

Identifying variations in microbiomes between people can lead to an understanding of microbiome-based diseases by studying the differences in the mi-

crobiomes of healthy and unhealthy people. The Project developed ways to insert a new strain of organism into an existing microbiome without affecting the overall balance and function of the microbiome. This manipulation of bacterial colonies could potentially lead to treating disease by adding organisms to the microbiome that target specific health problems. It also opens up the potential for probiotic treatments and new methods of analyzing the makeup of the gut microbiota. Recent research has been done in knowing how potential germs/pathogens from outside the body invade the human body, and how this relates to the gut microbiota and its ability to function as a barrier. This will help to identify ways to limit the invasion of potentially harmful microbes and their disease-causing effects.

It has been determined that if the numbers of microbes grow beyond their typical ranges it compromises our immune system. Also, poor hygiene and injury can cause microbes to populate areas of the body where they normally do not colonize and contribute to illnesses such as urinary tract infections. Or, if microbes are introduced into areas of the body that are considered sterile, such as the blood, the lower respiratory tract, or the abdominal cavity, disease can result, such as bacteremia/sepsis of the blood, pneumonia, and peritonitis (infection of the abdominal cavity). Candida, which is the cause of yeast infections, occurs when certain microorganisms overcolonize (grow in number beyond what is considered normal).

"The indigenous microflora stimulates the host immune system to respond more quickly to pathogen challenge and, through bacterial antagonism, inhibits colonization of the GI tract by overt exogenous pathogens." In other words, our gut microbiome stimulates our immune system to respond more quickly to the invasion of disease-causing microorganisms, and prevents these micro-organisms from taking up residence in our intestines and causing disease.



The human microbiome has an influence on the fol-

lowing four broad areas of importance to health: Nutrition, Immunity, Behaviour, and Disease. We will learn about the first three in this month's article. Next month we will learn more about the influence of our microbiome on specific diseases.

NUTRITION

When considering the relationship between nutrition and the human microbiome, without a healthy gut microbiome, we would not be able to absorb nutrients and we would die. It helps us break down the complex molecules contained in proteins and vegetables, which our stomach and small intestine are not able to digest. However, *what* we eat also impacts the health of the gut microbiome. The capacity of diet to modify the gastrointestinal microbiome of humans and other mammals has been extensively studied. Results indicate that the composition of the diet, habitual dietary intake, and acute dietary changes all impact the microbial communities within the gut

A diet that is deficient in key ingredients, including fibre and prebiotics, can negatively impact the composition and the function of the gut microbiome. This in turn affects its ability to absorb nutrients. Therefore, it is crucial to the health of the microbiome and to the

health of the entire human body to eat foods that our microbiome and our body need to function at its optimum level. Studies of human populations across the globe show that greater dietary fibre and whole grain intake is associated with a more diverse gut microbiome. Low-fibre diets cause depletion in the diversity of the human gut microbiome, and subsequent increases in chronic diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and colon cancer. For example, significant changes in bacterial diversity in the gut can occur in as little as 24 hours when



someone switches between a meat-based diet that is lacking fibre, to a plant diet high in fibre (more than 30 g/day). Next month we will discuss fibre and prebiotics in more detail.

A healthy gut microbiome reduces food cravings and promotes feelings of being full, thus helping to prevent overeating. The more diverse one's diet is, the more diverse the microbiota. Adults trying out a wide variety of foods display a more varied gut microbiota than adults who follow a set dietary pattern. As we have learned, good health is directly connected to the diversity of the gut microbiota.

IMMUNITY

Humans acquire their first microbes from the entrance of their mother's cervix on their arrival into the world. Without this early introduction of microbes from the mother, adaptive immunity would not exist. Adaptive immunity refers to a vital defensive mechanism that our body uses when it encounters disease-causing organisms for the first time. Our immune system learns how to "adapt" to these organisms. With repeated exposures it allows for a quicker and more effective immune response to disease-causing organisms, preventing them from causing illness. Testing done in mice that are completely lacking gut microorganisms shows an underdeveloped immune system. Autoimmune conditions and allergies are more likely to develop when exposure to maternal microbes is disturbed early on in life, such as in infants born via Caesarean section.

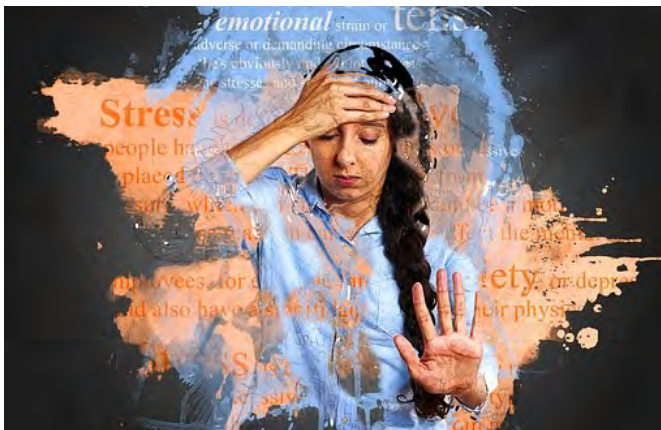
A significant proportion of our immune system is in our gastro-intestinal system (gut). More than 70% of all the white blood cells in the body live in the gut. White blood cells consist of all the germ-fighting cells in the body. Immune system bacteria in the gut line the walls of the inside surface of the intestine, preventing harmful bacteria from entering into the body. Bacteria also line the outside walls of the intestine. The total bacterial composition of the human gut plays a role in the healthy functioning of the immune system. The gut is also the second largest site of exposure of the body to the outside world after the skin, which is a largely impermeable barrier. In most people, a delicate homeostasis (balance) develops, with the immune system ignoring commensal (normal) bacteria and food proteins, but actively eliminating pathogens which cause disease. When an

imbalance develops, it can lead to inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. These imbalances can play a role in illnesses throughout the body as well.

Research has shown that there is significant interaction between the body's immune system and the bacteria in the gut. However, the implications of this interaction are not yet fully understood. How exactly the immune system interacts with gut bacteria and how that relationship functions in the prevention of disease is unknown. Most recently, research is looking into the way the composition of the gut changes in the presence of different diseases. Scientists are only beginning to understand the microbiome, and they don't necessarily know what a "healthy" bacterial composition might be yet.

BEHAVIOUR

The composition of our gut microbiome affects the brain. And, in fact, the gut microbiome is often referred to as a "second brain". It influences neural (nerve cell) development, brain chemistry, and a wide range of behaviours, including emotional behaviour, pain perception and how the stress system



responds. Links have been identified between the gut microbiome and psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

As with nutrition, not only does the gut microbiome influence various brain functions, the brain can also exert a powerful influence on gut bacteria. Even mild stress can affect the microbial balance in the gut, making the person more vulnerable to infectious disease and triggering a cascade of reactions that feed back to the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord).

Part of the nervous system is located in your gut, and is considered a part of the total nervous system in our body which comprises our brain, spinal cord, and the nerves that go from the spinal cord to all the parts of the body. The nervous system in our gut is able to perform some tasks on its own, independent of the brain, such as coordinating reflexes and secreting certain enzymes, one of which is serotonin. Even though serotonin is known as a brain chemical, 95% of serotonin is made in the intestines. Altered levels of gut serotonin can cause irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), which affects 20% of North Americans. IBS symptoms occur when food moves through our intestines either too fast or too slow; low levels of serotonin causes constipation whereas high levels causes diarrhea. Flare-ups of IBS can also be caused by stress or anxiety, which come from the brain. Nerve pathways connect your gut nervous system and your brain, and each affects the other—think of butterflies in your stomach when you are nervous, or having to use the bathroom when you are anxious. Some gut nerve receptors are responsible for sending messages to your brain that signal nausea, bloating, and pain. Others change your sensitivity to or intensity of how distended or full your intestines feel.

DYSBIOSIS

Dysbiosis is a state that occurs when the gut microbiome becomes imbalanced or disrupted. Some causes that have been identified include stress, illness, being overweight, overuse of antibiotics, or eating a poor quality diet. Continuous activation of the immune system because of lifestyle choices and the inflammation that goes along with these choices puts us at risk for a range of diseases and can compromise both our physical and mental health. Next month we will learn more about the diseases that are linked to an imbalanced gut microbiome.

"Over many graves might be written. . . . Died of an abused stomach." —*Child Guidance*, p. 374

"Never cheat the stomach out of that which health demands, and never abuse it by placing upon it a load which it should not bear." —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 58

NEXT MONTH: DISEASES RELATED TO AN UNHEALTHY MICROBIOME AND HOW TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY MICROBIOME



Not long after this, Ernest Swalm was court-martialed and sentenced to two years of hard labour for refusing military service during World War I.

He, with other conscientious objectors from many different denominations was taken to the Lincoln County Jail. The boys were to stay at this jail until the provincial sheriff came to take them to the federal prison in Kingston.

“Ernest Swalm?” asked the Major as Ernie entered the room.

“Yes, sir.”

“You refuse to put on your uniform?”

“Yes, sir. I am a Christian. I cannot kill my enemies, for the Scriptures say, ‘Love your enemies.’ Nor can I wear the uniform of an organization whose business it is to kill.”

“You conscientious objectors used to be excused when the other boys were drafted,” the Major said. “Now our Canadian Parliament has passed a bill that says you must serve as noncombatants. We will give you a job where you won’t need to kill anyone. You can be a stretch bearer and help the wounded soldiers. You would really be doing good then.”

“Thank you, sir, but I cannot serve in the army, no matter what the job is. I’d still be part of the army, and its purpose is to kill. I would gladly take care of wounded people, but not as a member of the army.”

“And I suppose you have some Scripture for that too?” scoffed the Major.

“Yes,” Ernie replied. “Saul of Tarsus was a noncombatant. He only *held* the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. The Bible doesn’t say he threw any stones, yet he was just as guilty of the crime as those who really killed him. He consented to Stephen’s death. That is why I can’t take any of the jobs in the army. They are all part of a plan to kill men. And, as a Christian, I cannot kill.”

They were searched when they arrived. Everything was taken from them except their Bibles. Then they were given jail uniforms and sent to their cells. Ernie’s cell was number twenty-three.

Ernie slept soundly that night. Next morning he did not awaken until the sun was high in the sky. He lay there, staring at the narrow cell of white-washed brick. It was a little room, with not even one nail on which to hang his coat—only the grim iron gates in front.

“I could be out with the rest of the boys if I’d only serve in the army,” Ernie thought. “I wonder if I’m being foolish. . .?”

Just then, the lines of an old hymn came to him:

But prisons would palaces prove
If Jesus would dwell with me there.

During the four weeks that followed, Ernie discovered the truth of these words. Christ became real to him in a new way. He had so much time; he could spend hours in Bible study and prayer.

The name of the jailor was Garley Clinch, a man nearly seventy years old. He hated conscientious objectors and did all he could to make them miserable. He became angry when the men prayed and sang hymns, and sometimes ordered them to stop. Ernie decided to pray for him every day.

Several days later another conscientious objector was brought to jail from camp, and Garley turned him in.

“Here, boys,” he said, “I brought one of your pals. I

think since I'm good enough to do that you ought to sing a hymn for me."

The men were surprised to hear this from one who had been so bitter, but before long corridor two echoed with:

How good is God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable friend,
His love is as great as His power
And knows neither measure nor end.

The boys stopped after one stanza, but Garley said, "Please sing another." By the time they finished, tears were trickling down his face.

"Thank you, boys," he said. The big iron gates clanged shut behind him.

The men could see that Garley's heart was softening. Early each morning they gathered together in one of the cells to pray for him. They knew that even a man seventy years old could be saved.

From that time on Garley was a real friend. Instead of persecuting the boys, he granted them many kind favours.

One Monday morning four weeks after Ernie's arrival at the jail, Garley came to his cell and said, "You're wanted in the office." Leading the way to the dressing room he added, "Your release came through this morning."

Then the boys learned that the Canadian government was again excusing Christian conscientious objectors from army service. They would not need to fight. They could go home! Garley told them the good news.

"Thank you for your kindness during these hard weeks," Ernie said as he gave a good-bye to the old jailor.

"Don't thank me. I'm ashamed of the way I treated you when you first came. I've never had a set of prisoners like you boys before."

"When the letter came saying I had to go to camp, I was very unhappy," Ernie said, "but now I'm glad I was sent to jail. Right here on corridor two I learned to love Jesus better than ever before. I had plenty of time to talk to Him. I'll be praying for you, Garley."

Fifteen years passed. Ernest Swalm was holding meetings in Elgin County, Ontario. Just as he was ready to close, he noticed two men coming into the tent. One of

them was Allen Morrison, his cell mate of number twenty-three. After the service, Ernest rushed out to greet his old friend. He hadn't seen Allen since the day they said good-bye on corridor two of the Lincoln County Jail.

"And did you hear that old Garley Clinch became a Christian before I left the jail?" continued Allen as they recalled their experiences of the past years.

"Yes, I heard," Ernest replied. "Tell me more about it."

"One day after the other boys had gone home, Garley asked me to pray with him," Allen explained. "I had the happy privilege of leading him to Christ. That fall, during a Spanish influenza epidemic, Garley took sick and died. He was anxious to go to his Lord. His last words were, 'I'm so glad I met the conscientious objectors. They meant so much to me.'"

"But I must tell you one more thing," Allen went on. "Shortly before he took sick, he brought me an old Bible and said, 'Allen, I want to give you the Clinch family Bible. It's been in our family for a hundred years. You've meant more to me than any of my relatives, so I want you to have it.'"

"You can imagine how happy I was for that, Ernest. And whenever I look at it I remember how learning to love Christ changed Garley."

"But godliness with contentment is great gain." 1 Timothy 6:6

We need to learn to be happy wherever we are. God may place us in difficult places because he wants us to witness for him.

Daniel was a prisoner of war in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar so that he could witness to the heathen king. Joseph was in prison to witness to the Butler and the Baker and all the other prisoners. He was a slave to witness to Potiphar. Job was sick and lost everything to be a witness to his friends and to all the universe. John was on the island of Patmos as a prisoner so that he could write the book of Revelation. Paul and Silas were in prison and they were singing, and the jailer was converted after.

Be happy wherever you are and be a witness for the Lord. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Baptism at Canadian Field Conference



From Left to Right. Brother Morris Lowe, Herson Garcia, Narin Garcia, Melissa Avila, Sharon Eaton, Brother Neptali Acevedo

Children at Canadian Field Conference



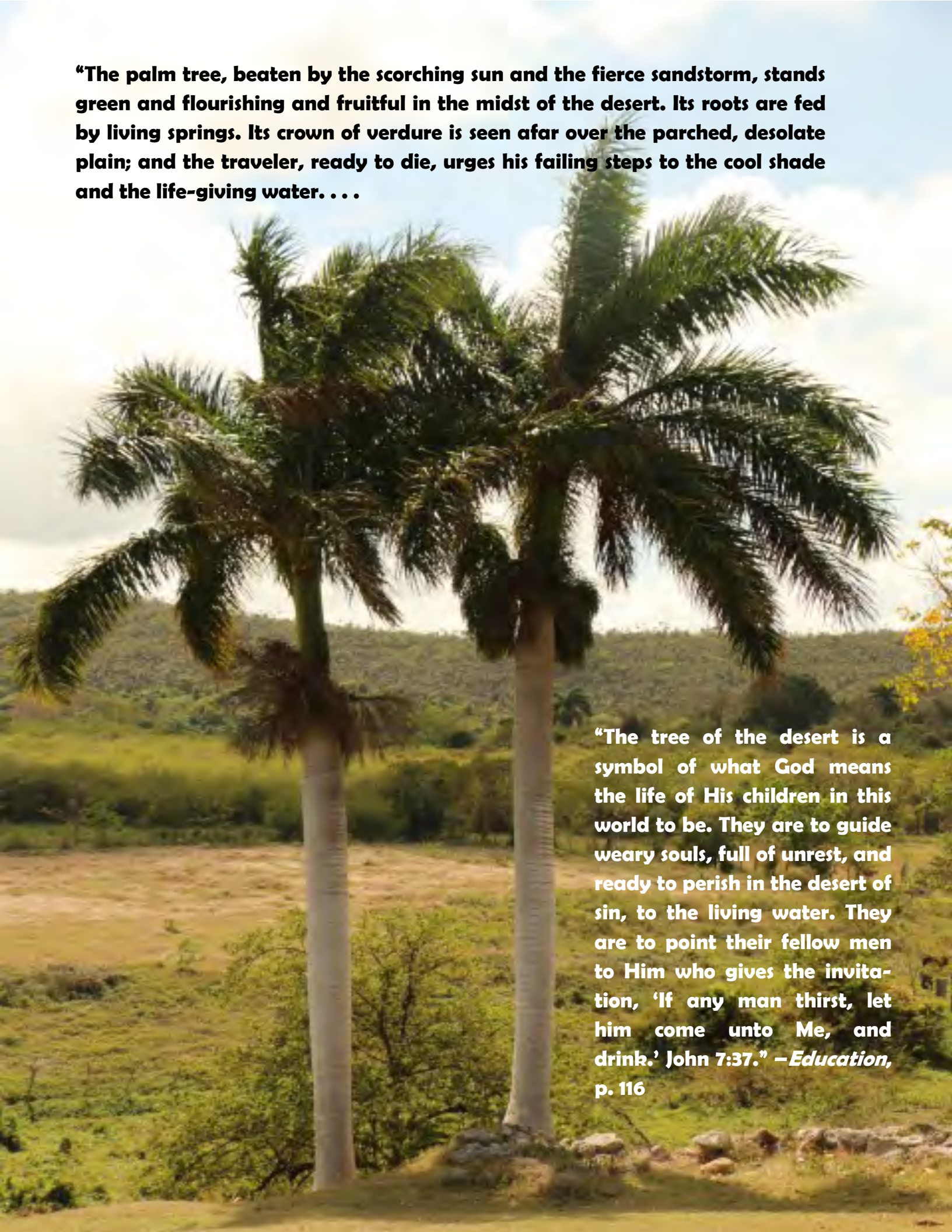
St. Marc, Haiti



Primary School Graduation in Benin



“The palm tree, beaten by the scorching sun and the fierce sandstorm, stands green and flourishing and fruitful in the midst of the desert. Its roots are fed by living springs. Its crown of verdure is seen afar over the parched, desolate plain; and the traveler, ready to die, urges his failing steps to the cool shade and the life-giving water. . . .

A photograph of two tall palm trees standing in a lush, green landscape. The trees are the central focus, with their trunks extending from the bottom of the frame towards the top. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees, suggesting a tropical or subtropical environment. The sky is bright and slightly hazy. The overall scene is vibrant and life-giving, contrasting with the desert imagery mentioned in the text.

“The tree of the desert is a symbol of what God means the life of His children in this world to be. They are to guide weary souls, full of unrest, and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to the living water. They are to point their fellow men to Him who gives the invitation, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.’ John 7:37.” –*Education*, p. 116