



*The Reformation*  
**Messenger**  
VOLUME 29, NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2022

**A Fresh Start**

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**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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ness or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 146

"The Saviour invites us to become patient toilers in a field which calls for self-denying labor; but it is a glorious work, and one that God smiles upon. When one's heart sympathizes with others burdened with grief and discouragement; when his hand clothes the naked, and the stranger is made welcome to a seat at his fireside and at his board, then heaven comes very near." —*The Home Missionary*, July 1, 1891

"True happiness may be found in unselfishly striving to help those who need help. God helps the feeble, and strengthens those who have no strength. In the fields where the trials and the conflicts and poverty are the greatest, God's workmen must have increased protection. To those laboring in the heat of the conflict, God says, 'The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.'

"Our Lord adapts Himself to our special needs. He is a shade on our right hand. He walks close by our side, ready to supply all our necessities. He comes very near to those who are engaged in willing service for Him. He knows every one by name. O what assurances we have of the tender love of Christ." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1153

"The Lord comes very near the workers, and angels go before them. My brethren and sisters, never forget in whose company you are. See by faith an angelic host around you. Believe that the Lord Jesus is by your side, that His glory enfolds you, that He is pouring upon you the refreshing showers of His grace." —*The Indiana Reformer*, July 25, 1903

"May the Lord be your strength, . . . May He be very near to comfort and bless you." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, p. 60

*Ellen G. White*

**"Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?" Jeremiah 23:23**

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 35

"Amid the perplexities that will press upon the soul, there is only One who can help us out of all our difficulties, and relieve all our disquietude. We are to cast all our care upon Jesus, and bear in mind that He is present, and is directing us to commune with Him. We are to keep our minds stayed upon God; and in our weakness, He will be our strength; in our ignorance, He will be our wisdom; in our frailty, He will be our enduring might.

"We may be assured that we need not go into the heavens to bring Jesus down to us, neither into the deep to bring Him up; for He is at our right hand, and His eye is ever upon us. We should ever seek to realize that the Lord is very near us, to be our counselor and guide. This is the only way in which we may have confidence toward God." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 27

"Every temporal blessing would be received with gratitude, and every spiritual blessing become doubly precious because the perception of each member of the household had become sanctified by the Word of truth. The Lord Jesus is very near to those who thus appreciate His gracious gifts, tracing all their good things back to the benevolent, loving care-taking God, and recognizing Him as the great Fountain of all comfort and consolation, the inexhaustible Source of grace." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 105

"You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now pos-



The year is now 2022. Time is running out; the close of this earth's history is coming closer. As we see the hands of time moving fast, our goal should be to make our salvation solid and sure. People have many goals to achieve (as many have done in their New Year's resolutions), but all these are nothing if the end of it all is perdition.

The question is: "How have you started the new year? Are you feeling guilty, left alone, exhausted, anxious and depressed? Do you have feelings of being wretched, with almost little or no hope—worthless? The Bible presents such a situation: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Isaiah 1:4-6

As you look at your environment, your home, do you only see ruins? "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers." (verse 7)

Last year did you try to push on only to see that there seemed to be little or no progress? The word of the Lord to you is: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from

the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." Isaiah 52:1-3

With these words of encouragement there is no need for despondency. The word of God gives us faith, which in turn gives us strength to grasp His promises and hold on to them. To have a strong faith, we need to read the word of God daily (Romans 10:17).

God promises to heal, and rebuild your life. When He puts His robe or righteousness around you, it is as if you had never sinned. You have been completely forgiven.

Considering the verse quoted above in Isaiah 52:1; it says "awake, awake, [start off] put on thy beautiful garments." (garments represent righteousness, in this case, beautiful garments apply to "the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jeremiah 23:6). Make this verse personal. It is yours. It continues by saying that from now on, no one shall enter into you uncircumcised (not set apart) or unclean. While the literal meaning referred to Jerusalem being free from the heathen (the defiled), spiritually speaking it is being freed from the very things that have entangled you at this time which will no longer enter in you if you make the decision to commit yourself to God. For "why should ye be stricken any more?" Isaiah 1:5. All freedom starts with this decision.

Sometimes, you may feel that since you have already failed countless times, your hope is gone, and you just need to accept defeat. Yet, there is no excuse. God has an answer to all that. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and

speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? ... He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Isaiah 40:27-29

The parable of Jesus to Simon provides a good explanation. The one who is forgiven more, loves his master more than the one forgiven less. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." Luke 7:40-42

"Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow. Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour Me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen." Isaiah 43:16-20

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art My servant: I have formed thee; thou art My servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:21-22

Perhaps you have understood the above but are asking yourself, "how can I approach God in the state in which I am?" What am I going to say? I have exhausted all words that I have been using; there is nothing that I have not said. The truth is that the Lord is more than eager to save you. He says: "Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy." Hosea 14:2-3. What does God require in

order to set you free? He asks for humility, confession and a hatred for sin.

The Lord's answer to this prayer is "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him." Hosea 14:4. "I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him." Isaiah 57:18-19

Repentance and confession sets us free from our sin (justification). Then the rebuilding process (sanctification) begins immediately. Every sin that is overcome, brings joy to the believer. "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem." Isaiah 52:9. It would be strange to see a person who has been forgiven by God to look gloomy.

When you have found the peace of Jesus, be diligent to watch and pray lest the same things that brought you down creep back into your life. Eliminate and close all sources of temptation. Work for total purity. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." Isaiah 52:11

Sometimes you may not be feeling at a low level in your spiritual life. You may be feeling that you are a good person and advancing well spiritually. You are enjoying the joy of heaven, walking confidently in the path to perfection. If this is the case, remember, you have not reached the destination yet. It is important to still be careful lest pride or self-righteousness creep in.

Everyone must individually set their hearts to obey the Holy Law, The Ten Commandments. It is God that works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). Meditate on the gift of the Law. The change that results in your character is great and noticeable from far—a beautiful character like that of our Lord Jesus, full of heavenly blessings. When Christ becomes the centre of the heart, His presence is quickly noticed. "And again He entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that He was in the house." Mark 2:1

"Through faith in Christ, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed." —*Education*, p. 257

Read and meditate on the law day and night. Day after



day, read it aloud in your chambers. Keep it fresh all the time. Listen to the audio Bible while on the move, along with the testimonies of the Spirit of Prophecy. Be keen to correct every defect of character just at the moment it is revealed to you. Every time you read the Bible or listen to it, it produces a deeper revelation on your mind and gives you a vivifying power. Do not neglect any duty. Hold on to a spirit of godly fear, which will keep you from acting in a light and trifling manner. As recklessness is overcome you become spiritually well-structured with a sweet smelling savour, always spiritually charged with holy zeal.

During the three months when Obed-edom kept the ark that contained the Holy Law at his home, the blessings he and his family received were so abundant that it was noised abroad. The news even reached King David. "And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obed-edom, and all his household. And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness." 2 Samuel 6:11-12

How wonderful to know that one can become a spiritual magnet when the Lord dwells in him. "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee." Isaiah 55:5

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hosea 14:4-9

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the

LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." Zechariah 8:20-23

"And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the LORD's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Isaiah 44:4-5

May God help us to fight faithfully in this battle of life. With a life full of blessings in this life, and eternity in the next, it is worth putting all your effort into it. God is good. Let us follow Him at all times. Amen.

*Joel Msiska, Malawi*

## DO YOU WANT TO BE A BLESSING FOR YOUR FELLOW BELIEVERS AROUND THE WORLD?



**Please feel free to submit any articles, poems, personal testimonies, or photos, as the Holy Spirit inspires you and we will gladly publish them. Send to: [imsmessenger@yahoo.com](mailto:imsmessenger@yahoo.com)**



# Leave Me Alone

People often like to be left alone. Why? Sometimes people like solitude and to have time alone to commune with God. But I will not talk about “alone time”, rather I will address times when you speak to people and they simply say, “leave me alone.”

Sometimes when you talk to people and point out some deficiency that you see needs correcting, you may get a response like, “Leave me alone.” These people enjoy the vice they are participating in, whether it is lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. Often they know it is wrong, or not the best for them, (ie. eating unhealthy foods), but they simply wish to continue, and do not want to be told that they are doing anything wrong. Their conscience may be bothering them a little, and then when told it is wrong, their conscience pricks them a little more and they feel uncomfortable and thus they wish to be left alone so their conscience does not trouble them.

Some are defiant and just refuse to listen to any counsel. They clearly know what they are doing is wrong, but they adamantly demand to be left alone. They close their eyes and ears from any reproof or direction. They feel they have all they need and choose to do what they want. They do not want to be told by anyone that they need to change.

Then there are those who politely do not want to hear. They want to be left alone because they are fully aware of the fact that increased knowledge means increased accountability and responsibility. “For this they willingly are ignorant.” 2 Peter 3:5. They would rather not know—rather remain in ignorance, so they ask to be left alone. The reality is, you are saved or lost, not by what you know, but what you would have known had you used the opportunities provided for you to know.

If you have a good friend, you enjoy their company and you like to spend time with them, and wish to help them when you see them falter, but if your friend does not appreciate your help and tells you to leave them alone, how would you feel? You would naturally feel very hurt and disappointed. You would hope they would change their minds and remain as your friend, but if they do continue to spurn you, one day you give up on the friendship.

That is how it is with Jesus. Many have told Him, “Leave me alone,” when He wants to help them, and it has never proven to be profitable for them.

King Joash killed Zechariah (the son of the priest who raised him) because he told him of his sin and the king did not want to hear it. “And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, He hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.” 2 Chronicles 24:20–22. In the end his own servants conspired against him and killed him.

King Ahab, a wicked king, hated God’s prophet because he always spoke evil of him. “And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.” 1 Kings 22:8. King Ahab did

not like the message brought by Micaiah and thus he put the prophet into prison. By not heeding the words of the prophet, King Ahab died in the next battle.

King Asa was a good king at the beginning of his reign. "And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD." 2 Chronicles 15:8. However, towards the end of his life, he made a mistake and when he was reprov'd by another prophet of God, he got angry. "Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time." 2 Chronicles 16:10. There was an element of pride that he could not give up, and thus he imprisoned the prophet so that he could no longer hear the words of the Lord. He did not have a nice ending to his life. "And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers." 2 Chronicles 16:12-13

Felix felt pricked in his heart when he heard the words of truth from the apostle Paul, "Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Acts 24:25. "He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God." -*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427. Felix ended up losing his job in disgrace.

Then there was the French Revolution. The leaders of France clearly stated they did not want to have anything to do with God in the country as a whole. (See, *The Great Controversy*, chapter 12). The results were disastrous. Finally, they had to admit that a society without God is a society set out to be ruined, and they reversed their decision.

It started with Lucifer in heaven. He was kindly told that what he was doing was not correct. He quietly listened as the Lord spoke to him, but in his heart there was defiance. He may not have verbalized it in the presence of the Lord, but he clearly had this attitude in his heart and the Lord

could read his heart. "The Son of God presented before him the greatness, the goodness, and the justice of the Creator,

and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law. God Himself had established the order of heaven; and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and *bring ruin upon himself*. But the warning, given in infinite love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to prevail, and became the more determined." -*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35. "Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels." -*Ibid.*, p. 38. The key point here is that he "brought ruin up on himself." He could not blame God, or anyone else. He is the one who left his place in the "immediate presence of the Father."

Adam and Eve, after they sinned, ran away from God. They told Him to leave them alone as they were naked. "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." Genesis 3:8. Thankfully, unlike many others mentioned, they changed their minds and returned to worship the Lord.

However, their son, Cain, was more defiant. God clearly warned him of his sin. "And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Genesis 4:6-7. He went ahead defiantly, wishing to be left alone, and thus it led to murder. Being unrepentant, "Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." Genesis 4:16. He left the presence of God. Wishing to be left alone by God only brings ruin to one's soul.

Try doing missionary work in this day and age. How many people we meet, hoping to share the gospel with them, respond with, "leave me alone." They do not want to hear anything about God, and righteous living. They wish to be left alone to "enjoy" life on this earth and bear the fruits of their own living in pleasure. They live for the pleasures of today, not wanting to think about tomorrow. They keep walking further and further away from the Lord, and one day they have walked so far, they cannot hear His voice any longer. Not only do they walk away from the Lord's voice, they walk away also from His protective care. "Thy reward shall return upon thine own head." Obadiah 1:15

Sometimes people may not directly tell the Lord to leave them alone, but when they reject His church, His people and His chosen leaders, they are saying the same thing. You may even be in the church of God, but if you reject the voice of reproof from a fellow believer or leader, you are choosing not to hear the voice of the Lord.

"There will be, among the remnant of these last days, as





there were with ancient Israel, those who wish to move independently, who are not willing to submit to the teachings of the Spirit of God, and who will not listen to advice or counsel. Let such ever bear in mind that God has a church upon the earth, to which He has delegated power. Men will want to follow their own independent judgment, despising counsel and reproof; but just as surely as they do this they will depart from the faith, and disaster and ruin of souls will follow." –*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 23. Just because you are a church member does not mean you are free from human pride. Many, like Judas Iscariot, who was very close to Jesus, lose their way due to their human pride that they will not give up.

"But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would none of Me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust." Psalm 81:11–12. This verse speaks to "My people", the nation of Israel. *Patriarchs and Prophets* (page 441) quotes this verse in reference to the prophet Balaam (a prophet of God). (See Numbers 22–24). He was told by the Lord not to go curse Israel, but he lusted the wealth that King Balak offered. He kept asking and asking, and finally the Lord, knowing the desires of his heart, gave him permission to go. Balaam was essentially wanting the Lord to leave him alone and not bother his conscience. And so, the Lord would not hold him back if he really wanted to go. But he still could speak only the words the Lord put in his mouth. Balaam did not enjoy the fruits of his evil doing for very long. "And they slew the kings of Midian, . . . Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword." Numbers 31:8

"There are thousands at the present day who are pursuing a similar course. They would have no difficulty in understanding their duty if it were in harmony with their inclinations. It is plainly set before them in the Bible or is clearly indicated by circumstances and reason. But because these evidences are contrary to their desires and inclinations they frequently set them aside and presume to go to God to learn their duty. With great apparent conscientiousness they pray long and earnestly for light. But God will not be trifled with. He often permits such persons to follow their own desires and to suffer the result." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 440–441

Many people do not want to listen to the voice of the Lord. They want to be left alone to decide their own course of action. They put on a good front, that they are following the Lord, when they are actually walking contrary to His will. "They had light and in the very reason of things should have understood their duty; but a few pleasing inducements balance their minds in the wrong direction, and they urge these before the Lord and press their case, and the Lord allows them to have their own way. *They have so strong an inclination to follow their own course that He permits*

*them to do so and to suffer the results. These imagine that they have a wonderful experience.*" –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 73–74. These people are deceived. Only disaster can result.

In the days of Noah, the people did not want to hear the voice of God. They wanted to be left alone. God's spirit does not always strive with men (Genesis 6:3). *When men persist in rebellion and hardness of heart, God lets them have their own way and suffer the results of their choosing.* God's government is a government of free moral choice. God does not coerce the will. He warns man that disobedience brings ruin, but does not prevent man's contrary choice. "Men cannot with impunity reject the warning which God in mercy sends them. A message was sent from heaven to the world in Noah's day, and their salvation depended upon the manner in which they treated that message. Because they rejected the warning, the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the sinful race, and they perished in the waters of the Flood." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 431

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections." Romans 1:24, 26. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." Romans 1:28. Christ declares that He will leave them to follow their own course of action. He will not force compliance to His commandments. When people wilfully turn away from God and shut Him out of their minds and hearts, God leaves them to walk in their own ways of self-destruction. "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Acts 14:16. If men insist on following their own evil way, God will allow them to do so for a time without withdrawing His gracious aid and restraint. But there is a limit. They are left to reap the results of their rebellion in ever deeper enslavement to the power of sin. They wish to be left alone. Their rejection of God is not unconscious. They refused to recognize Him. Instead of increasing their knowledge of God they suppressed the truth and thus found themselves separate from God. God gives everyone freedom to choose and leaves them alone in their choice, if they made the wrong choice. Although He sends His Spirit to try to win one back who has started down the wrong pathway, He will never force. And one day, if they continue down the wrong pathway, ignoring all pleas to return, the Holy Spirit will follow no further, but will turn away.

How do you treat the messages sent from heaven? Every Sabbath, during the divine service, a message is sent to you from heaven. Do you listen, take notes, and review the message during the week? Or do you forget it and by the end of the Sabbath you do not recall much of what was



said? Do you criticize the speaker because his language and mannerisms were not perfect according to your standards? Or do you strive to best understand the message that the Lord has sent for you? Do you sleep through the service, and get frustrated when it goes beyond 12:00 P.M.? If reproved for your sleeping do you wish to be left alone? Only you can answer these questions.

The Prodigal Son walked away from the protection of his father. He wished to be left alone. He did not like the rules and expectations of home life. He felt as though his freedom was restricted and he did not want to hear his father's voice of counsel and reproof any longer, so he took his inheritance and left.

"What a picture here of the sinner's state! Although surrounded with the blessings of His love, there is nothing that the sinner, bent on self-indulgence and sinful pleasure, desires so much as separation from God. Like the ungrateful son, he claims the good things of God as his by right. He takes them as a matter of course, and makes no return of gratitude, renders no service of love. As Cain went out from the presence of the Lord to seek his home; as the prodigal wandered into the 'far country,' so do sinners seek happiness in forgetfulness of God." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 200

The father went nowhere; it was the son who walked away into the world to "enjoy" the pleasures of sin.

"Whatever the appearance may be, every life centered in self is squandered. Whoever attempts to live apart from God is wasting his substance. He is squandering the precious years, squandering the powers of mind and heart and soul, and working to make himself bankrupt for eternity. The man who separates from God that he may serve himself, is the slave of mammon. The mind that God created for the companionship of angels has become degraded to the service of that which is earthly and bestial. This is the end to which self-serving tends." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 200–201. Many false Christians are living a life of self-serving.

The devil led the Prodigal Son into the world, but when his money ran out, the devil did not rescue him. The devil left him in a pigsty. It was Jesus who came and rescued the man from the pigsty when he came to himself and realized the folly of his actions.

"The love of God still yearns over the one who has chosen to separate from Him, and He sets in operation influences to bring him back to the Father's house. The prodigal son in his wretchedness 'came to himself.' The deceptive power that Satan had exercised over him was broken. He saw that his suffering was the result of his own folly, and he said, 'How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise

and go to my father.' Miserable as he was, the prodigal found hope in the conviction of his father's love. It was that love which was drawing him toward home. So it is the assurance of God's love that constrains the sinner to return to God. 'The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.' Romans 2:4. A golden chain, the mercy and compassion of divine love, is passed around every imperiled soul. The Lord declares, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' Jeremiah 31:3." —*Ibid.*, p. 201–202

When the son arrived back to his father, the father was waiting with open arms. "While he is yet 'a great way off' the father discerns his form. Love is of quick sight. Not even the degradation of the years of sin can conceal the son from the father's eyes. He 'had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck' in a long, clinging, tender embrace." —*Ibid.*, p. 203. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15:7. Imagine yourself in a long clinging tender embrace with Jesus.

The Lord does not leave people alone. They leave Him. If they do not want to serve Him, He quietly steps back and leaves them to the buffeting of the enemy—the leader they have chosen.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18. Have you told the Lord to leave you alone? If you love sin, He may try to bring you correction through a fellow believer; but, if you choose not to listen, you may be left to go your own way. "We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1085. The key phrase is "the sinner brings punishment upon himself." You cannot blame anyone for the results of your actions if they are not according to God's will. It is the result of your own choice. The Prodigal Son recognized that his suffering was a result of his own folly.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galatians 6:7–8. Those who treat lightly the counsel that God sends must suffer the consequences of so doing. As in the natural world, a seed planted grows its own specific kind of fruit; a seed can only reproduce of its own kind. It is an inflexible law. Thus, a man who sows wild oats cannot expect an abundant wheat harvest.



“The Spirit of God keeps evil under the control of conscience. When man exalts himself above the influence of the Spirit, he reaps a harvest of iniquity. Over such a man the Spirit has less and less influence to restrain him from sowing seeds of disobedience. Warnings have less and less power over him. He gradually loses his fear of God. He sows to the flesh; he will reap corruption. The harvest of the seed that he himself has sown, is ripening. He has a contempt for God’s holy commandments. His heart of flesh becomes a heart of stone. Resistance to truth confirms him in iniquity. It is because men sowed seeds of evil, that lawlessness, crime, and violence prevailed in the antediluvian world.

“All should be intelligent in regard to the agency by which the soul is destroyed. It is not because of any decree that God has sent out against man. He does not make man spiritually blind. God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable man to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force man to receive truth. He leaves him free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If man resists evidence that is sufficient to guide his judgment in the right direction, and chooses evil once, he will do this more readily the second time. The third time he will still more eagerly withdraw himself from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course he will continue until he is confirmed in evil, and believes the lie he has cherished as truth. His resistance has produced its harvest.” *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1112

God’s power and love is limitless and He cannot stop loving you. No matter how evilly you have treated Him. No matter how much you have rejected Him in the past—He still loves you. He even loves those who have wandered so far away that they no longer hear His voice.

“But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings.” Jeremiah 21:14. God cannot do any work without love being an integral part of every action. Even in the destruction of the wicked, it is mercy and kindness and love to the wicked. They would not be happy continuing in their current lifestyle. When He finally sends a fire to devour the wicked, does He still love them? Yes, by all means. He created all these beings, including Lucifer himself. This is a strange act. An act of love. Just think what kind of evil and vice would continue if He permitted these beings to continue living. His heart aches for them.

“Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.” Isaiah 59:1–2. The Lord is willing to save everyone. He is able to save everyone who comes to Him in true humility and repentance. It is you that may have left the Lord’s presence. If you do not hear the voice of the Lord,

perhaps you should search your own heart.

We may claim not to have told the Lord to us alone leave, but read on: “One cherished sin will, little by little, debase the character, bringing all its nobler powers into subjection to the evil desire.” *—Conflict and Courage*, p. 114. “If one sin is cherished in the soul, or one wrong practice retained in the life, the whole being is contaminated. The man becomes an instrument of unrighteousness.” *—The Desire of Ages*, p. 313. “Every habit or practice that leads into sin and brings dishonor upon Christ must be put away, whatever the sacrifice.” *—The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 312

“Already the Spirit of God, insulted, refused, abused, is being withdrawn from the earth. Just as fast as God’s Spirit is taken away, Satan’s cruel work will be done upon land and sea.” *—Last Day Events*, p. 242. This is a strong quote. People are not appreciating what God is doing for them. They *insult*, they *refuse* and they *abuse* Him. Are you perfect? If not, then the Lord has a message for you. Will you listen to the voice of the Lord? Or will you insult Him and refuse to listen and tell Him to go away?

“Wonderful truth! This is a two-edged sword which cuts both ways. This life and death question is before the whole human race. The choice we make in this life will be our choice through all eternity. We shall receive either eternal life or eternal death. There is no middle ground, no second probation. We are called upon to overcome in this life as Christ overcame. Heaven has provided us with abundant opportunities and privileges, so that we may overcome as Christ overcame, and sit down with Him on His throne. But in order to be overcomers, there must be in our lives no petting of fleshly inclinations. All selfishness must be cut out by the roots.” *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1112

The Lord is calling you today. He has a message for you. He wants to help you overcome every sin and defect in your character in preparation for life in the heavenly Canaan. Will you listen to His message and work with Him? Or will you say to Him “Leave me alone?” Maybe you are thinking like Felix, that another day is better. However, a better day may never come. “To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” Hebrews 3:15. Jesus is calling you today in love. Amen.

Wendy Eaton







Dear Fellow Believers,

**2022!** What will it bring? Will it usher in certain laws? Will we be able to live through whatever betides? Does slipping into another year give any security? Will it bring the Church to do her final work?

Last year was a tough year—an unforgettable year! Many things that we had never seen, heard, or experienced in our lifetime occurred, not to mention the countless loss of jobs, the unprecedented deaths! Yes, the challenges and trials, no doubt have been severe. Our faith was relentlessly tried, and still there is no end in sight. Humanity seems at a loss to comprehend the gravity of what is facing us. Heads of Government do not have the answer, science could not be wholly depended on. Newscaster's reports perhaps were often skewed. The Churches at large seemed powerless to console their members as the flock were scattered, with the doors being closed for the fear of close human contact, while "men's heart's failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:26

The whole world is looking for help; they are crying out. The existing situation caused many to react in abnormal ways, manifesting different behaviours.

A statistic done in USA has shown the impact of the present crisis on its people. Below is a summary of an article in the Forbes Magazine, showing some overwhelming realities, it stated:

"The economy is now a significant source of stress for 70% of Americans. More than one-third of Americans

have displayed clinical signs of anxiety, depression, or both since the coronavirus pandemic began. (Census Bureau): Nearly one in five Americans... have had a physical reaction when thinking about the outbreak. In a survey, 18% said they had experienced nervousness or anxiety most or all of the time... Text messages to a federal disaster distress hotline increased more than 1000% ... with a reported 20,000 texts... compared to 1,790 in April of 2019; with mental health the poorest among those unemployed for six months or more (Gallup). Pandemic stress is significantly higher in young people."—*Naz Beheshti*, Forbes Magazine contributor.

It cuts across the grain of all impacted nations. Here is another instance of humanity losing their normal behaviour. In India, the News broadcast showed a most surreal sight. It showed a bulldozing machine, pushing from the streets, hundreds of idols that were strewn about by many who could no longer trust in what they once felt and believed was their god!

What a dilemma! A quagmire, as it were, a predicament that the entire world is facing. "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Joel 1:12

Truly, who will help? No doubt, the fallout does indeed require some type of intervention. The medical systems are trying their best. Doctors, Nurses, Personal Support Workers and other important support personnel are working tirelessly—but is it the total panacea for all ills? Could it be that God has put in place additional means?

Who can we trust today? Conventional systems and laws are no longer set in stone. Things change from one minute to the next, tossing us about in this present turbulent sea of life. The economic situation is dire as it continues to downturn. The climate has never been more unstable with global warming; the culprit, colliding with the Pandemic. In some regions especially it seems unbearable. In short, we seem to be careening down the highway to destruction. A sad reality that this worldly system cannot be large-scale in its ability to combat the crisis. Heads of Government convene to seek to intercept the inevitable, but will they be able to? Scientists now sit as councillors, and Government tells us to trust the science and other human interventions. Let me be clear, to be sure, science has its place, which has, in the past, wonderfully brought about many interventions, the LORD having gifted men and women with His wisdom to aid humanity. It is when they begin to go on a course, that it takes on a life of its own, it loses the true essence, undermining God's true science. It is when there is a call for men to trust the science. In point and in fact although it is a dilemma, there is another dimension to this—the fulfilment of Bible prophecy, pointing to Christ's second coming. This, however, is not our point of study.

Again, undeniably, Government has its place, but what is truly missing in this equation? A directive to trust the true and living God! A clarion call to turn to Him who alone can give peace during chaos. The question is, who is to answer that call? Is it not those who are fitted to bring the last message of mercy, a people who profess to be the Israel of God? A Commandment-keeping people? Ambassadors! Remembering that in times of old it was His people that He communicated His will through, His answers. But a further question is, where are we ourselves in this? Are we one with the world in fear, in distractions? Are we prepared to pick up this slack? Must not that people now step up to the podium, giving the trumpet that certain sound? Moving from mediocrity! But wait yet, is the Church, God's instrumentality in a true spiritual position to do that, to make the clear call to trust in God, where it will have effect? It is late, should we not now make 2022 the year when God sees the full character of Christ in us and will, at that time, imbue us with His Holy Spirit where we will then "rise and shine" as professed Revelation 18 messengers? Will it be this year when truly the glory of the LORD is seen upon men, upon women, upon the youth? (Revelation 18:1 implied). When the Latter Rain will so imbue its receivers that they will, under the unction of the Holy Spirit,

do God's bidding, where the fulfilment of these words will take effect: "Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, **the sick will be healed**, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 612

A sublime statement and merits ponder. For it to be a reality, to believe it is possible, should we not now hunger for it; earnestly seeking to be transformed? For this to come to pass, if God so will this year, we need to go to Him with a sense of our own true condition. To repent and be converted in His appointed way. To the Prophet, God declared: "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

He, through Joel, gave this solemn call, a call that is still resounding: "Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?" Joel 1:13–16

To obtain lasting peace, an implicit trust in God is the only way. Says Isaiah: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Isaiah 26:3–4. This goes hand in hand with the health message, which has been entrusted to us. We become all things to all people. We give them a "NEW START". That being, Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, and here it is, **Trust in God**. . . we continue, Air, Rest and Temperance. We become, as it were, medical missionaries. Unfortunately, many seem to overlook this vital aspect of the health message when promoting this as an immune system support.

This is the burden of this article. To ensure that it is rightly understood let us look at the dictionary meaning



for trust. It is to believe, to have confidence in; to rely on. Putting it together—trusting God is to have confidence in His promises. It is to believe that what He says He will do. It is to have faith in Him no matter what the outcome is.

Ironically, many are of the mistaken idea that trust means freedom from trials. By no means: When we trust in the LORD, we leave things in His hands, whose immeasurable ways are past finding out. Hence this line of scripture in Proverbs tells us: “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” Proverbs 3:5–6

Says the Spirit of Prophecy: “The Lord in His providence had brought ... trial upon Abraham to teach him lessons of submission, patience, and faith— lessons that were to be placed on record for the benefit of all who should afterward be called to endure affliction. God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him. He permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. He allowed the beloved John to be exiled to lonely Patmos, but the Son of God met him there, and his vision was filled with scenes of immortal glory. God permits trials to assail His people, that by their constancy and obedience they themselves may be spiritually enriched, and that their example may be a source of strength to others. ‘I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil.’ Jeremiah 29:11. The very trials that task our faith most severely and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are to lead us closer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at His feet and experience the peace which He will give us in exchange.” *—Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 129

Continues the Spirit of Prophecy: “God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test; He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal, that it may reflect the radiance of His love. It is by close, testing trials that God disciplines His servants. He sees that some have powers which may be used in the advancement of His work, and He puts these persons upon trial; in His providence He brings them into positions that test their character and reveal defects and weaknesses that have been hidden from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service. He shows them their own weakness and teaches them to lean up-

on Him, for He is their only help and safeguard. Thus, His object is attained. They are educated, trained, and disciplined, prepared to fulfill the grand purpose for which their powers were given them. When God calls them to action, they are ready, and heavenly angels can unite with them in the work to be accomplished on the earth.” *—Ibid.*, p. 129

God has marked out a path for all. That path, however, may be fraught with trials and from our human understanding it may not seem to make sense; but we have a living God whose unsearchable ways are past finding out. Said Job, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” Job 13:15. Says Timothy, “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe.” 1 Timothy 4:10

As Advent believers, do we not preach much about the events of the last days and how greatly affected are all who are commandment-keepers, and that thus we must trust God? “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustest, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?” Jeremiah 12:5

Declares the Pen of Inspiration: “As God has shown me the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding... The dear saints have many trials to pass through. But our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” *—Early Writings*, p. 13

In retrospect, 2021 may not have been all that it could have been. We cannot look back now. To look back at our lack of trust, at our failures, at our losses, at the distractions is of no use. For this, prayer for forgiveness is our only recourse and must be sent beforehand to judgment. To waver in our faith is to lose sight of God’s inestimable wisdom. God is calling us to make a NEW START! “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless, I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12. To be sure, He wants us to trust Him, no matter the circumstance, He wants us to stop looking so intently at this dark world and look higher. He wants us to remember that we, today, are the Israel of God, and we have a true leader in this wilderness-like journey.

Instead of worrying, He wants us to be like Jehoshaphat and his army, notwithstanding they did not see any way out, but to trust in the living God.

“And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah, they came to seek the LORD. And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee? Art not Thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before Thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham Thy friend forever? . . . If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in Thy presence, (for Thy name is in this house,) and cry unto Thee in our affliction, then Thou wilt hear and help. . . . O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee.” 2 Chronicles 20:4–7, 9, 12

To trust God is also to see His character of love. It is to see how He has dealt with His people. It is to see that He sends His mercy to us, underserving though we be. “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for

your consolation and salvation” 2 Corinthians 1:3–6

In closing, for those who threw out their idols, they need to be told to trust in the living God. They cannot live in a vacuum. They need to hear and see a people worshipping the true and living God through His Ambassadors—a clarion call for missionaries. They need to see victory in the life and will be drawn to believe and trust in the only true and living God. As for the sick, be it mentally or physically, the NEW START health message must go out, not only through the media, but, as told, set up institutions so that health, including a trust in God, can be realized. Surely the ministry of healing has been entrusted to us and we are to commit to God that we will do no harm, but do all we can to aid the sick and suffering.

In conclusion: Have you made any resolutions? “What advancement have we made in the knowledge of Christ during the past year? Are we prepared to show, more decidedly than ever before, that we are on the Lord’s side? At this time, when the nations of the world are wavering between infidelity and idolatry, are we prepared to stand as faithful ambassadors for Christ? Shall we not, at the beginning of this new year, give ourselves and all we have to God? Shall we not listen to His voice, which calls us to a renewed contest, to a more thorough consecration of ourselves and our intrusted capabilities to His service?” –*The Signs of the Times*, January 2, 1901

God has given us tremendous evidence of His trustworthiness, and is in the shadows, waiting to have His people draw out their souls to Him in utter trust, like as a child to a father. Christ trusted His Father. As adopted children of God, we should as well. May this year 2022 find us in so doing. Amen.

*Rose Powell*







# God's Spirit

or

# Satan's Spirit

If our eyes could be opened to see the invisible things around us, we could see angels of God protecting us, guiding our footsteps, trying to save us. Also, we would see evil spirits of Satan and his angels trying to tempt us to sin, and to lead us away from God into the world.

If we could see the terrible smile on the face of Satan as the professed Christian men and women turn to the world, when Christian boys and girls turn to sin, we would shudder from fear to see it.

"We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks we have, in our own strength, no method of defense. If permitted, they can distract our minds, disorder and torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is in misery and destruction. Fearful is the condition of those who resist the divine claims and yield to Satan's temptations, until God gives them up to the control of evil spirits." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 517

An evil person can steal our money, our possessions; but evil spirits can steal our salvation, our eternal life, our happiness, our peace, and destroy our health and property as well. As in the case of Job, Satan and his angels destroyed all that he had.

Yet, people permit those evil angels into their homes, into their lives, and into their hearts. And often they are not aware of it. "And sent messengers before His face:

and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritan, to make ready for Him. And they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village." Luke 9:52–56

This was a strange spirit, completely alien to the spirit of Christ. The disciples did not realize that the evil spirits had made them hate these Samaritans and wish evil towards them.

How many professed Christians today are like the Jews? Jesus called them children of the devil (John 8:44). They followed the outward ceremonies strictly, but hated Jesus and His disciples.

Angry, impatient words are inspired by Satan's spirit. They break friendships, they destroy the happy life of families, and also the peace in the person's own mind. A dissatisfied, unhappy person is under Satan's control. Depression and misery are indications that Satan's spirits are holding a person victim.

"And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it

was night." John 13:27, 30. Satan's spirit entered into Judas to betray Jesus. This made him so unhappy and miserable that on this same night He took his own life.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 1 Corinthians 6:14–17

These two companies do not fit together; some are temples of the Holy Spirit, and others are the habitation of devils—evil spirits.

What makes a soul a habitation of evil spirits? "Sensual indulgence weakens the mind and debases the soul. The moral and intellectual powers are benumbed and paralyzed by the gratification of the animal propensities; and it is impossible for the slave of passion to realize the sacred obligation of the law of God, to appreciate the atonement, or to place a right value upon the soul. Goodness, purity, and truth, reverence for God, and love for sacred things—all those holy affections and noble desires that link men with the heavenly world—are consumed in the fires of lust. The soul becomes a blackened and desolate waste, the habitation of the evil spirits, and the 'cage of every unclean and hateful bird.' Beings formed in the image of God are dragged down to a level with the brutes." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 458

Persons in this condition are not free, they are prisoners of Satan, only to continue in sin. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." Matthew 12:43–45

Evil spirits may have been driven out of a person when he is converted, and the Holy Spirit enters in. However, there still is danger that a person can grieve the Holy Spirit and drive Him out thus allowing more evil spirits to enter in.

"Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

"Self-righteousness is a curse, a human embellishment, which Satan uses for his glory. Those who garnish the soul with self-praise and flattery prepare the way for the seven other spirits more wicked than the first. In their very reception of the truth these souls deceive themselves. They are building upon a foundation of self-righteousness." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1093

These self-righteous Christians feel good about themselves. They are lukewarm and are in a Laodicean condition. Many professing Christians think they are happy. Satan deceives them into thinking that the way they are living is happy, but they are not finding the real and lasting happiness and the peace that Jesus offers. They are miserable in their hearts. They envy those who are happy and are bubbling with joy. They have no power to overcome sin. Their missionary work is very little. There is no happy song on their lips as they go their way. This is not true religion and does not benefit anyone. There is no salvation in it, no happiness.

In the four Gospels we read constantly about how Jesus drove out evil spirits from people. Many who were possessed by demons were set free.

Can these evil spirits be driven out today? He that commits sin is of the devil. Yes, the devil must be driven out. There is a way to fight against demons. "Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the great conflict.

"To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?" —*The Great Controversy*, p. 593–594

Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free." John 8:32. When He was tempted by Satan, Jesus responded by saying, "It is written," thus defeating the enemy. By



reading the Bible, the word of God, and meditating on it, the sinner finds his way to Jesus, and gains much power to overcome. The demoniacs tremble at the word of God. "By the word of faith and prayer a soul can be set free." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 429

"And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 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. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:18–21. Then we must pray without ceasing and fast.

Sister White's little boy was possessed by a demon and they gathered around his bed and prayed until the evil spirit left him. This also happened to Mary Magdalene. Mary had fallen into sin and had given herself to the power of Satan. She was a helpless victim, controlled by seven evil spirits. One by one Jesus drove them out, praying with a loud voice to God, calling each one of them to depart. Now Mary was free—free indeed. She purchased some precious ointment to pour on the feet of Jesus.

After His resurrection, to whom did Jesus first appear? "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils." Mark 16:9

We also have other helpers. "The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power. The Lord says, 'Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? . . . Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.' Isaiah 49:24–25." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 259

We cannot cast out even one demon by our own power. They are stronger than we are. By willfully sinning we invite them in, and they take over. We are not free after that. But the mighty angels from heaven can defeat the power of Satan, and break the chains of sin.

The mightiest helper is Jesus Himself. "And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. Who had

his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains. . . . For He said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And He asked him, What is thy name? and he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. . . . And when He was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed Him that he might be with Him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel." Mark 5:2–3, 8–9, 18–20

The next day he was a preacher of the gospel in Decapolis. Jesus looked for a missionary for that country and found one.

How many of us would think that an insane person filled with a legion of demons could be a missionary for Jesus the next day. What made him a capable missionary? It was his conversion, the Holy Spirit within him.

There is another thing that we can do to keep evil spirits away. "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." 1 Samuel 16:23. At the sound of heavenly music, the evil spirit departed. There are spiritual songs and music which lift the soul to God, which dispels gloom and sadness. When we sing happy songs of praise to God, angels join with us. Evil spirits cannot stand the songs of praise that come from the heart.

A great part of the Bible is songs of praise and adoration. "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name." Psalm 100:1–4

"Praise ye Him, all His angels; praise ye Him, all His hosts, Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise Him, all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for He commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree which shall not pass." Psalm 148:2–6

“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

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is love, there is peace, and all is calm. There is joy, fullness of joy, and there is patience and kindness.

Why would anyone choose to remain in a miserable condition, when fullness of joy is offered by Jesus? Many are deceived by Satan into thinking that his way is the happy way, and the way of Jesus is a life of self-denial and sadness. This is how Satan deceived Eve in Eden. “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 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.” Genesis 3:4–6. However, their sin did not bring them happiness, as promised by Satan. The opposite was true. Much sadness and misery resulted on this earth from their sin. The truth is that only Jesus’ Spirit will make our hearts sing for joy. Peace that passes understanding fills our hearts. We will have the faith to move mountains.

This is Christ’s righteousness message. We are to let Jesus take away the filthy garments of misery and

wretchedness, and we are to put on the garments of joy and peace that Jesus is offering us. Bolt the doors of your mind that Satan cannot enter in. Throw out idols from your home. Satan has free entrance into your home as long as his belongings are there, including his books, literature, and vanity. Be more afraid of Satan than an evil man entering your home.

Invite Jesus into your home as the two disciples did on the way to Emmaus and your heart will burn within you. Invite His Spirit into your heart to cast out every evil spirit, making room for the Holy Spirit of God to dwell within. Invite the angels into your company and you will never feel lonely. In their company your happiness will be as being in heaven. Amen.

*Timo Martin*



**“We will not have a murmuring thought because we have trials. God's dear children always had them, and every trial well endured here, will only make us rich in glory. I crave the suffering part. I would not go to heaven without suffering if I could, and see Jesus who suffered so much for us to purchase for us so rich an inheritance; and to see the martyrs who laid down their lives for the truth, and the sake of Jesus. No, no. Let me be perfected through sufferings. I long to be a partaker with Christ of His sufferings, for if I am, I know I shall be a partaker with Him of His glory. Jesus is our pattern. Let us study to have our lives as near like Christ's as possible.**

**“My soul cries out after the living God. My very being longs after Him. Oh, for to reflect His lovely image perfectly! Oh, for to be wholly consecrated to Him! Oh, how hard it is for dear self to die. We can rejoice in a whole Saviour; one who saves us from all sin. We can be shut in with God where we can daily say, ‘I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me’ ‘to will and to do of His good pleasure.’ Glory be to God. I know that my life is hid with Christ in God.” –Reflecting Christ, p. 350**





# One Expensive Mistake

“God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.” Ecclesiastes 7:29. Imagine a superhuman being, immortal, super intelligent, and wiser than Solomon; this was the will of God for humanity. The first humans were truly intelligent. They were created a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8:5). Everything was beautiful. Genesis gives an in-depth description of the infinite masterpiece, the first paradise, and God’s creation. But, because of disobedience after the fall of man, humankind has declined miserably. When I think about our planet earth before sin, nature must have been fascinating to behold, with everything acting in complete harmony. We have the assurance and comfort in knowing that one day this earth will be restored into its Edenic beauty and harmony.

God did not create the race in its present feeble condition. This state of things is not the work of Providence, but the work of man; it has been brought about by wrong habits and abuses, by violating the laws that God has made to govern man’s existence. “God endowed man with so great vital force that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits and has continued for six thousand years. This fact of itself is enough to evidence to us the strength and electrical energy that God gave to man at his creation.... If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 194

Today everyone can feel the impact and consequences of sin. In the time of the antediluvian world, life expectancy was approximately 900 years, and today the world in which we live is very polluted, with a life span of lower than eighty years. This should arouse our conscience and lead us to repentance. Woefully people are becoming

more evil, and exceedingly wicked.

This selfish attitude originated with Satan. The Bible states that Satan was perfect in his ways from the day he was created (Ezekiel 28:15). But, iniquity was found in him—self-exaltation, elevating himself and his status, thirsting for power, and planning to overthrow God. He did not succeed in heaven, and thus through much subtlety was able to deceive Adam and Eve into making a very expensive mistake. When they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge this one mistake opened the floodgates of woe on this earth.

Egocentrism is a problem. When we allow our ego to dominate, we become carnal. We stop thinking about others and always think about ourselves. An egocentric person believes that all eyes are on them and that every move or decision they make is noticed by others. This can create much pressure for that person, causing anxiety around their decision-making and social interactions.

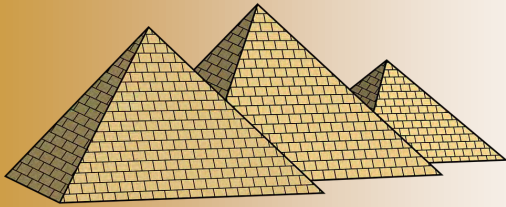
Many people from different racial and ethnic groups discriminate against each other, while claiming to be Christians. We need to overcome self, wrong habits, behaviours, traditions, and worldly cultures and then conform to the character and conduct of Christ. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

Our lives are in jeopardy if we take into account all of the factors affecting our health. Despite the growth of scientific knowledge and technology, the reality is that things are getting worse. In considering the aging process, the human body goes through many changes as it ages, such as gray hair and wrinkles, not to mention the many chronic illnesses that plague humanity. People age at different rates because of various factors such as heredity, lifestyle, and environment. A person may eat well, exercise, and have a good lifestyle but have a hereditary tendency to having diabetes or a heart condition. However, their chances of living longer increase if they keep themselves healthy.

A person may live in a healthy environment but eat foods that are not conducive to good health. Thus they introduce toxins such as free radicals into their body, which cause a lot of damage. Or then they may eat healthy and exercise regularly, but work every day in a factory that has toxins in the environment that they are breathing eve-







# MOSES



## The Story of the Exodus 1-15 in Four Parts

### Part I

#### From Prince to Fugitive to Shepherd

How did this get known, right up to Pharaoh's throne?  
Moses was alarmed, though he was unharmed,  
But he must get away without delay!  
Killing an Egyptian prompted a bad signal  
of great danger to the safety of Egypt and anger to the leaders of the land.  
There could be a revolution right at hand,  
Once Moses would be on the throne,  
For he was Pharaoh's adopted grandson.  
With a woolen cloak and staff disguised Moses was not recognized,  
As he left the palace and his home,  
For many days in the wilderness to roam.  
Where he would go he did not know, but Moses was keen  
Not to be seen, so he went to the desert towards east,  
By military outposts to be missed.  
The brilliant, much-admired Prince and general –  
Now a fugitive – what a fall from the height of fame –  
To be now a man without a name...

.....

Behind was the bustling life of towns and markets, people's talking  
Children's laughing, and noise of dogs barking  
Grew softer, as Moses hastened on to flee away from Egypt,  
Never more to be the Pharaoh's daughter's beloved son,  
As now an unknown future has begun.  
Where will his journey end – he must find a new land,  
His life has taken a sharp turn, another language, culture he must learn...  
Exposed to heat by day and cold by night, consider how to travel best  
On this conquest, then walk in the cooler hours so to beat  
Extreme exposure for good measure.  
Vast and open land lay now before him,  
Rugged rocks, and here and there at first a little stream,  
There Moses refreshed and filled the water pouch.  
Scanty got the lush and fertile scene, and stillness was around him.  
Some birds soared in the air, at times a jackal in the distance he could hear.  
Moses had a strong constitution,  
His well-trained body in superb condition,  
This made him push forward with good speed,  
But then must take heed once the barren desert comes in view.  
And he knew, greatest care to take to spare his energy,  
For water found there would be scanty.  
Some days no palm trees were in sight for shelter,  
Or dates for food and shadows from the bright, relentless burning sunlight.  
Then he must dig for water with his hands in the sand,

It is crucial to survive and to preserve his life.  
Sometimes he saw mountains, rocky steep terrain,  
Moses looked there for a cave to remain,  
And rest till moonlight led his way through the night.

.....

In all his travel Moses never felt forsaken or alone,  
For his faith and trust lay in the One  
Whom as a little boy his mother made him know,  
Ere he came to the daughter of the Pharaoh.  
Amidst the riches and his fame, Moses in his heart  
Remained the same, his faith he would not sell  
As a Hebrew stayed true to the God of Israel.

By God's mysterious providential ways  
He received the highest education, training in those days.

God had great plans for Amram's son,  
That by Moses' skill and knowledge would lead on  
To deliver Israel from the bondage so cruelly laid upon.

But killing one Egyptian to show his people  
Being on their side, was a miscalculation on his side.

War and bloodshed were not God's intention,  
Nor force or any human based invention,  
God Himself will be the Actor, His divine power be the factor,  
Not alone Israel to free from slavery,  
but display His might and glory, to a nation who did know Him not,  
that they also may acknowledge Him as the true and living God.

Moses' rashness needed be corrected,  
Therefore God had thus selected,  
A method of seclusion from all might and human illusion.  
To lower Moses' confidence, God sent him by His providence,  
forty years into a distant land,  
Every moment guided by His protecting, loving hand.

End of Part I

*Edda Tedford*





# A New Family for José



José was a very happy young boy growing up in a village high in the Andes Mountains of Chile. The people who lived there were very poor. Most of them made their living growing a few crops and caring for goats. José's father was the witch doctor of the village; he was very proud of José and the two of them got along very well. His father had high hopes that José would one day be the village witch doctor in his place, so he was training José in that direction. José also had a very loving mother, who he enjoyed spending the evenings with. She cooked well and always had interesting stories to tell at the fireside.

Most of the villagers worshipped the spirits whom they feared to offend. They offered sacrifices and held feasts to make the spirits happy. Whenever José felt afraid of the spirits he would go sit by his mother's side and she would tell him stories of spirits who were loving and not evil. His mother loved to talk about the loving and comforting spirits that existed, and she encouraged José to pray to them. There were the spirits of the flowers, the butterflies, and the sunshine. They all made José feel a bit better. It was hard though, to ignore the frightening spirits as most villagers were constantly talking about them and emphasizing the need to make great sacrifices to keep them happy. Whenever something bad happened, it was the result of the evil spirits not being satisfied and requesting more sacrifices. Mother did not believe in all those evil spirits and always spoke of the loving spirits. She refused to give any sacrifices to the evil and angry spirits, and she had stopped attending their feasts. This did not always make her friends and neighbours happy. They wanted her to stop being different and to live according to the customs and tradi-

tions of the villagers. They tried to turn José away from his mother's beliefs, but José loved to be with his mother and would not listen to the neighbours.

As time went on, José's father got angry with his wife for teaching his son about love and not fear. He threatened her and began to speak angrily with José, hoping to turn him against his mother. "Fear is what keeps a person faithful in their sacrifices" is what he always said. Fear is stronger than love. But no, José's mother always spoke of the spirits of love. His anger got so evil that one day he left José and his mother to be on their own.

It was not easy for José and his mother, but they loved each other, and this love kept them going. She was now free to speak more of the spirits of love and the great spirit in the sky who took care of them and was protecting them. José wanted to know more about this spirit in the sky, and he began to share his mother's belief about the spirits of love. Although they were poor, they always seemed to have just enough food to eat, and had a warm place to live. And they were always happy. They did not live in fear.

One day José was woken up before daylight. "José! José! Wake up!" his mother was calling. "José, wake up and come." José was awake now and went to his mother's bed. He had not been sleeping well because he knew that his mother had been very sick. Now at her bedside, he was wide awake.

"José," she gasped, "you must go for Grandma! I'm very sick. Go get Grandma to help." José was only a boy, but he knew the path to Grandma's house, although it seemed awfully long in the middle of the night. He hur-

ried along the shorter path by the riverside because he knew that they must get back quickly to his mother. Mother was all José had after his father had left. He had no brothers or sisters. Yes, Grandma must come quickly and help mother get better.

He arrived at Grandma's little hut and called, "Grandma! Wake up! Wake up and come now, because Mother is sick!" Grandma got up and soon they were both hurrying along the path back to the hut where Mother was. Grandma did all she could to help, but, sadly, it was too late. Nothing could help now. Early that morning José stood unbelieving as Grandma told him that his dear mother was dead. Her last words to José the night before were to encourage him, no matter what happened, to remember the spirits of love and the big spirit in the sky who had taken such good care of them for years. This spirit would take care of him.

How could this happen? Who would take care of him now? Would he have to live alone? Where were the loving spirits his mother spoke about? Where was the great spirit in the sky? Maybe his mother was wrong. The neighbours were not very kind to José. They said she had made all the spirits angry by her talk of love and her refusal to take part in the feasts and so the spirits took her life.

Was that true? José was very sad and in disbelief. Grandma took José home to her little hut, but even Grandma could not ease the ache in the small boy's heart. He felt forsaken. There was no one who loved him like his mother.

Sad to say, José did not know about Jesus who loves little children. He had never heard that God is a loving Father to those who trust in the Lord Jesus. He had never read or even seen God's precious Word, the Bible, that tells us that the Lord Jesus "took them [children] up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Mark 10:16. No one had ever told José these things, and his heart was sad and lonely. All he knew was what his mother had told him about the spirits of love. And how he wanted to have them with him now. But, were they real? Were the villagers correct? Did the evil spirits kill his mother?

Some time later, José's father came back. It was not a happy meeting. Because he had been gone so long, he seemed more like a stranger. He told Grandma, "I want José to come with me. I have married again, and I need José to work in the fields. He's coming with me." There was no use for José to fight against it. What could a small boy do?

So, José left with his father to go to a new home, but it did not seem like *his* home. His new stepmother was not very nice and thought he should work hard. Sometimes he had to work with his father in the fields, and sometimes he had to care for his stepbrothers and stepsisters. His father kept talking to him about the angry spirits, trying to undo the "damage" his mother had done to him.

José was perplexed, and it was not long before more trouble came into the life of poor José. Papa was still working as a witch doctor. Sometimes he was able to cure sick people, and he demanded to be paid in strong drink.

It was a very sad life for José. Through the years he had to work hard, and his heart was sad and lonely. His mother's belief in the spirits of love kept him going. He could not get himself to believe in the angry spirits as he could see how evil his father had become. He kept his mother's words in his heart and longed to know more about this big spirit in the sky. He felt all alone and did not know where to turn. He patiently, day by day, went about his duties as best he could. But God was tenderly watching José from heaven and planned one day to reveal to him who this big spirit in the sky was, and to show him how great and how tender God's love is for poor lost sinners. However, that day was still a long way off. Before José was to learn of the greatness of God's love, he had another very sad day.

His father was having more success in being a witch doctor. But since his pay was strong drink, he was often drunk. Finally, one day he had a very hard time contacting the evil spirits so that he drank more and more. Poor father had found out that the devil was a hard master, and he died that day from too much drink. José was determined to never worship those angry, evil spirits. He saw the peaceful way his mother died and the angry way his father died. What a difference! He wanted to have the peace his mother had.

Now with both parents gone, José was a real orphan, and his life began to be more difficult. He was the oldest child, and he had to help his stepmother with all the hard work that his father used to do. His stepmother did not love him, and she often beat him.

José endured many long, hard days until finally he could stand it no longer. He had to do something. He would run away! He would find his way back to Grandma's house. Life would not be so bad there.

José watched for an opportunity to escape, and he left.



He headed for the village to where Grandma lived. He knew he must get away fast before anyone came to look for him. He went quickly over the dusty trails. Sometimes he walked and sometimes he ran.

Suddenly, José heard the sound of a horse coming from behind him. They were coming for him! Where could he hide? There was no place to hide! The horse was coming closer, so José ran, anywhere, as fast as he could! Suddenly the horse was beside him, and strong arms swept him up into the saddle. His stepmother had sent the neighbour on a horse to find him. He could not get to Grandma's. He was taken back against his will for more beatings and more long days of hard work.

José now felt very forsaken. No one loved him and there was no one for him to love. Yet, it was the thought of his mother and her belief in the loving spirits that kept him going.

But God had a special and loving plan for him. God had not forsaken him in the mountains of Chile. God is a loving Father and desires to have children of His own. He chooses poor lost sinners to be cleansed from their sins and adopted into His family. God sent His only Son, the Lord Jesus, into this world, to save sinners. The Lord Jesus shed His precious blood for sinners so that we might be welcomed into God's own family. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12

José still did not know about God's wonderful plan. He lived with his stepmother for several more years and waited until he was older and stronger to run away again. This time he got away and felt that he could manage by himself now. José found work in a mining town. Even though the work was hard, José was happy. He was free to believe what he wanted.

He got to know some of his co-workers and there were a few who were always happy and singing nice melodious

songs as they worked. José wanted to know the secret of their happiness, so, one day he approached one of them and during their conversation he spoke of his own life. He shared his mother's belief in the spirits of love and the great loving spirit in the sky. This co-worker happened to be a Christian and invited José to some Bible meetings.

For the first time he heard more about the big spirit in the sky who his mother believed in and spoke often about. He learned the good news, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 Timothy 1:15. He heard that God loved *him*, a poor orphan, and that the Lord Jesus had died for his sins. José's lonely heart easily accepted God's loving offer, and he was baptized one day. Now he knew he had found a family! And what a family. There were not just a few, but many hundreds of believers who told him that they were all his brothers and sisters in Christ. "We have the same loving God as our Father," they explained to him. José had joy in his heart that he never thought was possible.

If you were to visit José today, he would tell you that God had done wonderful things for him that he had never dreamed of when he was a poor orphan boy. He knows he has a wonderful home prepared for him in heaven, and he looks forward to the day he will meet his mother again in heaven.

God also loves you very much and wants to be a Father to you, just as He is for José. He has a wonderful plan for your life, and it all begins with the same good news that brought joy to José. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. Have you received God's gift? He is waiting to take you into His family. Trust in the goodness of God and receive His Son, the Lord Jesus by faith today. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1

**"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philipians 4:13.**

**"What does God require? Perfection; nothing less than perfection. But if we would be perfect, we must put no confidence in self. Daily we must know and understand that self is not to be trusted. We need to grasp God's promises with firm faith. We need to ask for the Holy Spirit with a full realization of our own helplessness. Then when the Holy Spirit works, we shall not give self the glory. The Holy Spirit will graciously take the heart into His keeping, bringing to it all the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We shall be kept by the power of God through faith." –*The Upward Look*, p. 353**

# VEGAN COOKING



Are you struggling to make simple, easy, delicious and healthy Vegan dishes?

If so, go and view Dorcas's web site at: [www.dorcasvegankitchen.com](http://www.dorcasvegankitchen.com)

Brown rice is healthier than white rice but many do not like its taste.

"I had the same feeling too years ago. But then when I became more health conscious I realized that it is not about taste but my health. Why would I continue to eat something that I am convinced will harm my health?

"With healthy foods if you do not educate yourself to love it, you never will.

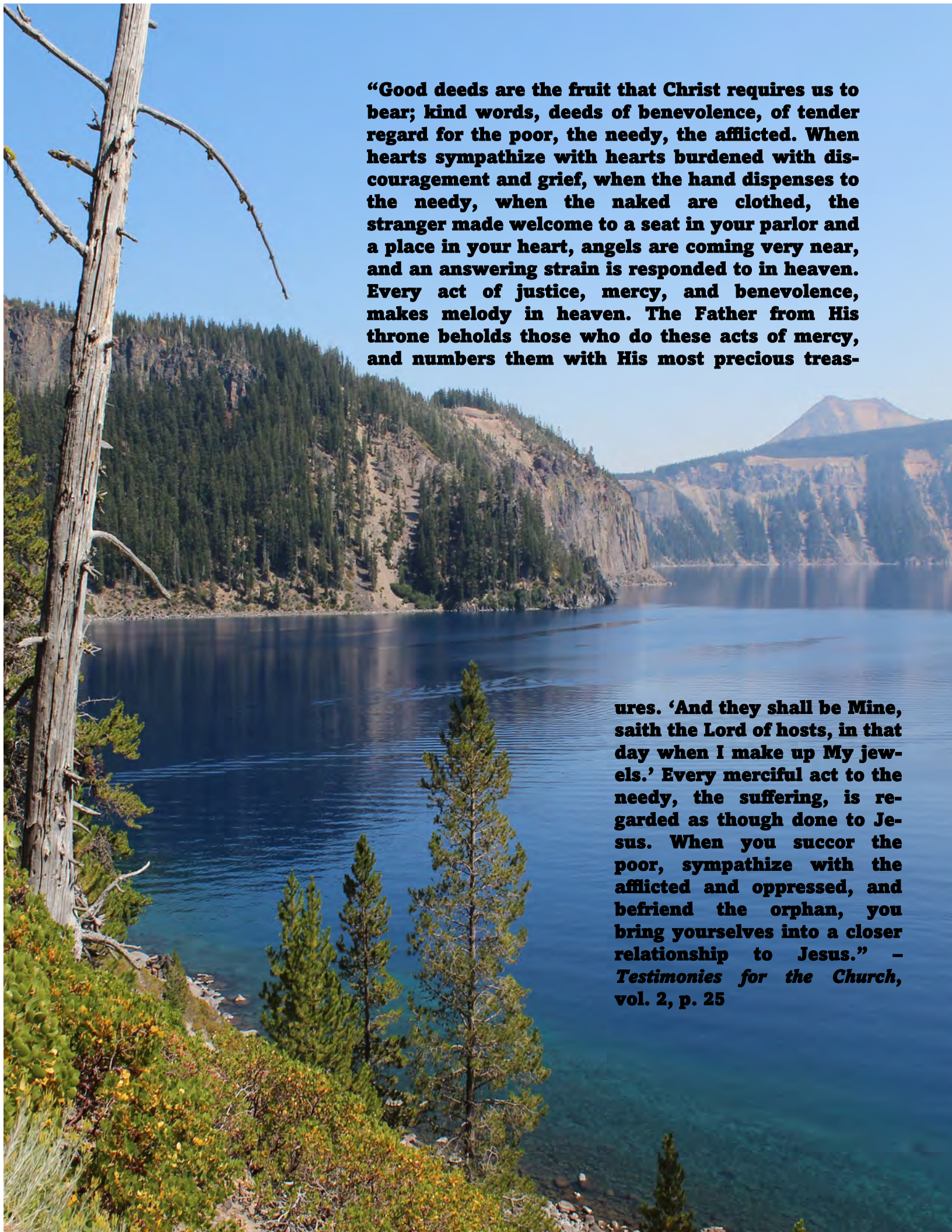
Taste and appetite can be educated and be controlled by reason, but you need to cook it well in order to enjoy it. The reason why many people do not enjoy brown rice is because they just boil it. But there are other ways to cook your brown rice and enjoy it. Please see my website for some delicious ways to prepare, not only brown rice, but many other delicious vegan foods as well. Remember, whether you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do it to the glory of God." *Dorcas Luboya*

# COLOMBIA



**Youth Conference, November 2021**





**“Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear; kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence, makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treas-**

**ures. ‘And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.’ Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.” – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 25**