



The Reformation
Messenger
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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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"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there." Psalm 139:8

"We are never alone. Whether we choose Him or not, we have a companion. Remember that wherever you are, whatever you do, God is there." *—The Ministry of Healing*, p. 490

"Keep cheerful. Do not forget that you have a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which Christ has appointed. You are never alone. If you will listen to the voice that now speaks to you, if you will respond without delay to the knocking at the door of your heart, 'Come in, Lord Jesus, that I may sup with Thee, and Thee with me,' the heavenly Guest will enter. When this element, which is all divine, abides with you, there is peace and rest." *—The Adventist Home*, p. 350

"The workers should keep the soul constantly uplifted to God in prayer. They are never alone. If they have faith in God, if they realize that to them is committed the work of giving to the people light on Bible subjects, they constantly enjoy the companionship of Christ." *—Colporteur Ministry*, p. 81

"Will the Saviour ever turn away to leave you to struggle alone? No, never. But He never told His disciples that they should have no trials, no self-denial to endure, no sacrifices to make. The Master was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.' We thank God that in your poverty you can call God your Father." *—Evangelism*, p. 240

"Poverty is coming upon this world, and there will be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. There will be wars and rumours of wars, and the faces of men will gather paleness. You may have to suffer; but God will not forsake you in your need. He will test your faith. We are not to live to please our-

selves. We are here to manifest Christ to the world, to represent Him and His power to mankind." *—The Bible Echo*, October 8, 1894

"Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, Fear not; I am with you. 'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore' (Revelation 1:18)." *—God's Amazing Grace*, p. 77

"In one sense you must stand alone, fighting your own battles. Yet not alone, for you have Jesus and the angels of God to help you. But few reach what they might in excellence of character, because they do not make their aim high. Prosperity and happiness will never grow of their own accord. They are the acquisition of labor, the fruit of long cultivation." *—This Day With God*, p. 190

"The Holy Spirit is to be continually present with the believer. We have need more carefully to consider the fact that the Comforter is to abide with us. If we individually comprehended this truth, we should never feel alone. When assailed by the enemy, when overwhelmed by temptation, we are to repose our faith in God; for we have His pledged word that we are never to be left to battle alone. Every soul, pardoned of sin, is precious in His sight—more precious than the whole world. It has been purchased at infinite cost, and Christ will never abandon the soul for whom He has died." *—The Faith I Live By*, p. 57

"God is your friend. You are never alone. The Bible is your counselor. It is a light to them who are in darkness. Be steadfast in the hour of trial, for you will have new trials to meet. But cling to Jesus, and make Him your strength." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 507

"Thank God we are not left alone. This is our safety. Satan can never touch with eternal disaster one whom Christ has prepared for temptation by His previous intercession; for grace is provided in Christ for every soul, and a way of escape has been made, so that no one need fall under the power of the enemy." *—Our High Calling*, p. 311

"You may never be lonesome, never feel that you are alone, if you will take Jesus as your Companion and your Everlasting Friend." *—Mind, Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 632

Ellen G. White

Weak and Strong Christians



There are two kinds of Christians—weak and strong. The strong Christians have become such because they gained their strength in Christ. The weak Christians have lost their hold on Christ, either momentarily, or habitually, but can become strong again if they turn to Jesus. We all have knowledge of the standard of Christ and have a desire to reach that standard. Many may claim to be Christians but are not willing to lay hold on Christ and fulfil the Bible requirements. The strong are faithful in doing missionary work, reading the Bible every day, praying to God constantly, and he enjoys it all; he is happy in doing God's will. The habitually weak, while claiming to be Christians, have not let go of the world. They love to gratify appetite, they watch much television, they have no interest in helping others and give Bible studies; they are unhappy and complaining, and, in the end, they lose their salvation. They can become strong but they have no desire to do so.

Some are weak for a moment, having lost sight of Christ briefly, and make grave mistakes. Peter was weak for a moment and he denied his Lord. Adam and Eve were weak for a moment; they fell into temptation. Joseph was strong; he remained faithful to God in the land of Egypt, under temptations. Daniel was strong; he refused the king's food. Now, what makes the difference between weak and strong Christians? Jesus said, "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5

"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Matthew 17:20. When nothing shall be impossible to you, then you can overcome every sin by faith, and become a strong Christians. "God is my

strength and power: and He maketh my way perfect." 2 Samuel 22:33

"But 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

"But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." Micah 3:8

"And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him." Luke 22:43

"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke 22:32. We also can strengthen our brethren.

"Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city." Ecclesiastes 7:19

"Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

"I saw that the strength of the children of God is in their humility. When they are little in their own eyes, Jesus will be to them their strength and their righteousness, and God will prosper their labors." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 307

"Love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated." *—Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 135

When you decide to put all these requirements into practice, recognizing your weakness, you will receive the mighty power of God and nothing is impossible to you.

Now then, there is one more to add to this list. Paul said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Corinthians 12:10

How is this possible, to have strength in weakness? Jacob was strong. All night he was fighting, and in the morning he finally gained the victory. Now limping, he was tired from fighting all night, but now he was not afraid to meet his brother, Esau.

When we realize our weakness, and our helpless condition, then we become strong in the Lord. Then God will give us His power and His Holy Spirit.

The greatness of John the Baptist was his meekness, his humility. When he said, "I must decrease", it was the sign of his greatness. Very few people, while in the prime of their manhood, can say this with meaning, "I must be smaller, less noticed, and less appreciated."

Often a strong, talented man relies on his own wisdom and strength, so God cannot use him because in his self-reliance he is weak.

"And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12:9

Often God has to bring in sickness, poverty, and rejection, that a man would come down from his pedestal, and understand his helpless condition, and cast human glory to the dust.

Do we know who is weak and who is strong? Was Jesus weak or was He strong, when He was nailed to the cross? "For though He was crucified through weakness, ye He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you." 2 Corinthians 13:4

Jesus was crucified in what appeared as weakness, yet He was strong. He was able to suffer pain, shame, mocking, without complaining. This became His glory; this was His greatest victory. Now He could say that all power in heaven and earth is given Me. This "weakness" of Christ gave power to the millions of believers that they also would become strong in their weakness.

Whom did God choose to do His work on the earth? Did He choose the weak or the strong ones? "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the

wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence." 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

Weakness is a source of strength—when recognize we are weak, then we can become strong in Christ.

One more source for strength that I would like to mention. Normally we go to the rich for money, to the strong for strength, and to the wise for knowledge. But there is a source of strength that we do not always understand. "When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest, and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 136

In the time of apostasy, when many fall, when many give up their faith, and the company of travelers is small, at that time we must gather warmth from their coldness, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason.

We are living in a time as it was in the days of Noah; also our time is similar to the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. Everywhere we see selfishness, love of pleasure, hatred, jealousy, covetousness, betrayals, rebellion, treason, and from their coldness we must gather warmth, from their cowardice we gather courage, and from their treason loyalty.

Paul writes of his experiences: "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." 2 Corinthians 11:25-28

Among all these experiences, what does he say? "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

How many have lost their faith in perilous times, when hunger and weariness have been their lot, and how many

will say after all their trials, I have kept the faith.

What was the secret of Paul, that he did not lose his faith? Paul writes about the secret of his faithfulness. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." Ephesians 3:17

The secret of his faithfulness was Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart, and also his love towards Jesus.

Sister White writes of her vision. "As we heard the sounds of mirth and revelry that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war song and the dance song. We heard instrumental music, and loud laughter, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway. . . . We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change, some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end." *-Life Sketches*, p. 191

This is what we will experience in the time of the end.

When the Israelite people left Egypt, there were about 600,000 men, besides women and children. They all expected to go to the Promised Land, but during the 40 years of travel, many lost their faith and their lives. For example: the feast with the Moabites resulted in 24,000 losing their lives in the plague that followed. Finally, only two men, Joshua and Caleb, made it to the Promised Land, along with children and women. These two men gathered loyalty from the treason of others. When we lose our faith, we become confused, and the truth is not clear to us, and we may separate from the brethren.

But, even in the end, there will be strong faithful Christians who hold fast to the truth. "But that which ye have

already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." Revelation 2:25-26

Let us hold fast to the truth, and we will be strong, and then we will meet each other in heaven. Amen.

Timo Martin

"Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe." *-The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1153

"To your every word or deed you have a witness--the holy, sin-hating God. Before you speak or act, always think of this. As a Christian, you are a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. Say no word, do no act, that shall bring dishonor upon 'that worthy name by the which ye are called.' James 2:7." *-The Ministry of Healing*, p. 490-491

"We can never find a solitude where God is not. The ever watchful eye of Omniscience is upon all our works." *-The Signs of the Times*, July 14, 1881

"Study carefully the divine-human character, and constantly inquire, 'What would Jesus do were He in my place?' This should be the measurement of our duty. Do not place yourselves needlessly in the society of those who by their arts would weaken your purpose to do right, or bring a stain upon your conscience. Do nothing among strangers, in the street, on the cars, in the home, that would have the least appearance of evil. Do something every day to improve, beautify, and ennoble the life that Christ has purchased with His own blood." *-The Ministry of Healing*, p. 491

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As a Man Thinketh in His Heart . . .

The year 2021 has ended, and we are in the beginning of 2022 and it is a great joy for me to share this message with you. This last year brought some interesting events showing that the coming of Christ is near. Many have become stronger, more prayerful, but not all. What about you? What do you think about the future?

Are you aware that the thoughts of your heart are so powerful that they can determine your future destiny? In Proverbs we read, for as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7. The main purpose of this article is to help you understand the power of your mind, how you contribute to your own achievements and failures, how you are masters of your own destiny by the choices you make. You will learn the secret of living peacefully in this troubled world, the impact of positive and negative thoughts on actions, character, and destiny and the source of true happiness on our pilgrim journey to heaven.

Having a positive attitude is a result of a mind filled with the Spirit of God and thus one will be led to make the best choice possible.

The saying, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," not only embraces your internal personal being, but also reaches into the external circumstance of your life. According to this verse, you could say that your character is the complete sum of all your thoughts. As the plant grows from a seed, so every one of your acts begins from the hidden seeds of your thoughts. This applies to "spontaneous" acts as well as to those you deliberately choose to do. Actions are the blossom of thought, and joy and suffering are its fruit. Ask yourself if you gather in the sweet or bitter fruits of your own inward thoughts. However, let us not forget what Jesus said to

John in Revelation, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17. Our thought processes must be consecrated to Christ, or we may think we are good and we are saved, when we are actually lost.

You become what you become because of the law of cause and effect. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7. The law of cause and effect is true not only in the visible and material world, but also in the realm of your thoughts. Although, thought and spirit appear to be hidden they can easily be discerned by the eyes of God. You can develop a godly character through long-cherished association and communion with God in your daily thoughts, since there is a connection between what you think and what you do.

The power of the mind is undeniable. The thoughts we think have tremendous power in directing the course of our lives. There is a saying that states: "Where the mind goes, the man follows." Our thoughts can determine our moods and attitudes, and thus our moods and attitudes affect each area of our lives on a daily basis. People who focus on their problems, what they do not have, or the difficulties they are facing, will live very negative lives.

"On the borders of Canaan the spies, returned from searching the country, made their report. The beauty and fruitfulness of the land were lost sight of through fear of the difficulties in the way of its occupation. The cities walled up to heaven, the giant warriors, the iron chariots, daunted their faith. Leaving God out of the

question, the multitude echoed the decision of the unbelieving spies, 'We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.' Numbers 13:31. Their words proved true. They were not able to go up, and they wore out their lives in the desert." -*Education*, p. 149

Here we see that their thoughts had become a reality. Exactly as they thought (we are not able to go up against the people), it came to pass. They all died in the wilderness. They did not enter Canaan. They could not rise above their thoughts.

Among the twelve spies, ten said, we cannot go up against the people of Canaan since they are giants. They dwelt on this thought and did not turn to the Lord and thus it became a reality. They did not go into Canaan.

On the other hand, Joshua and Caleb had positive thoughts. They remembered the power that Jehovah displayed in Egypt, and how He manifested His glory at the Red Sea. How He protected them in the wilderness and therefore they testified that they *will* be able to gain the victory over the Canaanites. "Two, however, of the twelve who had viewed the land, reasoned otherwise. 'We are well able to overcome it' (Numbers 13:30), they urged, counting God's promise superior to giants, walled cities, or chariots of iron. For them their word was true." -*Ibid.*, p. 149

Their thoughts became a reality. "Though they shared with their brethren the forty years' wandering, Caleb and Joshua entered the Land of Promise. As courageous of heart as when with the hosts of the Lord he set out from Egypt, Caleb asked for and received as his portion the stronghold of the giants. In God's strength he drove out the Canaanites. The vineyards and olive groves where his feet had trodden became his possession. Though the cowards and rebels perished in the wilderness, the men of faith ate of the grapes of Eschol.

"No truth does the Bible set forth in clearer light than the peril of even one departure from the right—peril both to the wrongdoer and to all whom his influence shall reach." *Ibid.*, p. 149–150

How many today say "the Sabbath is hard to be kept according to the law," or "I cannot stop eating meat." "If heaven forbids this or that, then let it be for others but not for me." Take heed of what you think. Unless you yield your negative thoughts to Christ, you will say and you will do accordingly and it may determine your

eternal destiny.

Job, with all his trials, could confidently say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13:15. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Job 19:25–27

"According to his faith, so was it unto Job. 'When He hath tried me,' he said, 'I shall come forth as gold.' Job 23:10. So it came to pass. By his patient endurance he vindicated his own character, and thus the character of Him whose representative he was. And 'the Lord turned the captivity of Job: . . . also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. . . . So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.' Job 42:10–12." -*Ibid.*, p. 156

"You may only succeed if you desire succeeding; you may only fail if you do not mind failing." said *Philippos*.

A famous trapeze artist was instructing his students how to perform on the high trapeze bar. Finally, having given full explanations in this skill, he told them to demonstrate their ability. One student,

looking up at the insecure perch upon which he must perform, was suddenly filled with fear. He froze completely. He had a terrifying vision of himself falling to the ground. He could not move a muscle, due to his fright. "I can't do it!" he gasped. The instructor put his arm around the boy's shoulder and said, "Son, you can do it, and I will tell you how: Throw your heart over the bar and your body will follow."

What did he mean by this statement? Determine in your heart where you want to go and what you want to be. Then turn to God for help to follow through if it is according to His will. Do not take no for an answer. If it is the will of God, as fearful as the task may appear, then He will help you to follow through. You need the spiritual faith in God to go over a bar that your human mind sees as an impossibility. With His help you can leap and your body will follow on to victory. Expect the best, not the worst, and by the grace of God you will attain your heart's desire if it is God's will.

Whenever you have a bar or a barrier in front of you, stop, close your eyes, pray, and then leap forward by faith and the Lord will meet you on the other side of the bar. God is faithful. However, do not confuse presump-

**"When fear knocks on your door, send faith to answer it."
(Joyce Meyer)**

tion and faith. "All the varied capabilities that men possess--of mind and soul and body--are given them by God, to be so employed as to reach the highest possible degree of excellence." *—Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 595

From the experience of the twelve spies we can conclude that a strong man cannot help a weaker man unless the weaker man is *willing* to be helped; and even then the weak man must become strong in Christ in order to succeed. He must, by the help of God, develop this strength. "... The thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 310

A man can only rise, conquer, and achieve by lifting up his thoughts to God. "A Christian life will be revealed by Christian thoughts, Christian words, and Christian deportment. In Christ there is a divine completeness of character." *—Our High Calling*, p. 184

"We should learn wherein we fail, and then guard ourselves upon that point. We must have perfect control over our own spirit. 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.'" *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 307

"You can never secure a good character by merely wishing for it. It can be gained only by labor. Your desires in this direction must be expressed in earnest, honest endeavor and patient toil. By taking advance steps each day up the ladder of progress, you will find at last at the top,—a conqueror, yes, more than a conqueror, through Him who has loved you." *—Messages to Young People*, p. 348

"Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in conduct be made by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. . . . The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown." *—The Ministry of Healing*, p. 452

"God gives us strength, reasoning power, time, in order that we may build characters on which He can place His stamp of approval." *—God's Amazing Grace*, p. 224

"Yes I can with the help of God and yes I will" should be our motto daily. We are to have strong faith. Positive thinking is a mental and emotional state that focuses on the blessings we have been given by God in this life. Positive thinking, with a closer walk with God, brings inner peace, spiritual success, improved relationships, better health, happiness and satisfaction. It means approaching life's challenges with a positive outlook. It does not necessarily mean avoiding or ignoring the bad

things; instead, it involves asking God to help us through potentially bad situations, trying to see the best in other people, and giving God the glory for the gifts and talents He has given to you to use.

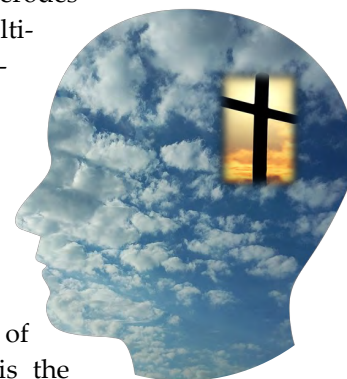
Thinking often starts with self-talk. Self-talk is the unspoken thoughts that go through your head. These automatic thoughts can be positive or negative. They can be Christ-centred or self-centred. Your self-talk may arise from logic and reason or from misconceptions that you create due to lack of information. We have around 60,000 thoughts a day, many of which come and go so quickly that we are not aware of them. On average, 80% of a person's thoughts are about the past. Then they forget to live in the present while worrying about the future. On average a person spent 15% of the time thinking too much about the future. Barely 5% of our thoughts are about the present. We need to increase this 5% and live 100% for Christ in the present moment.

Problems occur when our self-talk takes on a negative tone. It is so powerful that it erodes our self-confidence and can ultimately lead to anxiety and depression. It also affects our self-esteem and ability to learn. This is what took place with the ten spies who were sent out to search the land of Canaan.

Keeping Christ at the centre of our thoughts every moment is the best and the most effective way to put away the negative. It reprograms our thinking about ourselves, our abilities, and our situation, thus giving us a positive focus in life.

How we think we feel also has an effect on how we actually feel physically. If your mind tells you that you are tired, the body mechanism, the nerves and the muscles accept that fact. If your mind is intensely interested, you can keep on at an activity indefinitely.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2. If Christ is at the centre of your thoughts, your attitudes and faith can increase energy. You have ample support and resources of power to accomplish what is asked of you. "Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character. If you come to this decision, you will certainly fail of obtaining everlasting life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you will not, then you cannot overcome. The real difficulty arises from the corruption of an



unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God.” –*Messages to Young People*, p. 99

Standing firm, deciding to have good Christ-centred thoughts, actions, and words must begin right now. “God has given us intellectual and moral power; but to a great extent every one is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure more nearly approaches completion. . . . Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers that God has given them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter. . . . The precious hours of probation are granted that you may remove every defect from your character, and this you should seek to do, not only that you may obtain the future life, but that you may be useful in this life. A good character is a capital of more value than gold or silver.” –*Messages to Young People*, p. 412, 415

“Are you ready to make the surrender now? You are to put away your sin right now when you see it.... Do not make leeway [that] you are going to overcome by degrees; you are going to try little by little to give up sin. Now, while it is called today, heed the invitation and harden not your hearts. Oh, my soul, why not leave the cursed thing today? Sin crucified my Lord. Why not turn from it with loathing? Why not love the things that Christ loved, and hate the things that Christ hated? He has made provision ample enough for you that you can, through Him, be more, yea, more than overcomers.” –*The Upward Look*, p. 283

A certain *Swami Vivekananda* said, “Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success.” If this idea is to live for Christ, you will find a peace and happiness in life that the world cannot offer.

A man's mind may be likened to a garden which may be intelligently cultivated to focus on Christ, or it can be allowed to run wild.



Just like a gardener cultivates his plot, keeping it free from weeds, and growing the flowers and fruits, so may a man tend the garden of his mind, weeding out all the

wrong, useless, and impure thoughts, cultivating useful Christ-centred thoughts. It can be done only by the grace of God. He will then have a greater understanding of the seriousness of having impure thoughts and how they can shape his character in the wrong direction.

Thought will eventually become your character. This does not mean that a man's one thought at any given time are an indication of his *entire* character, but thoughts dwelt upon consistently are what shape character. If a negative thought enters the mind, it can be dismissed by giving it to Christ and thinking a positive thought instead, or singing a spiritual song. However, a negative thought consistently cherished will lead one away from Christ.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2022

Only if we respond like Joshua and Caleb when facing the obstacles in front us, can we call the heavenly angels to help us.

You have to believe that whatever God asks you to do, you can do it with His help. Miracles come in “cans” not in “cant’s.”
(Joyce Meyer)

Not every challenge we face is life-threatening. Many people have lost a job at one point or another, or failed in school, or otherwise seen their careers, their livelihoods, or futures threatened. The human reaction initially can be fear, anger, or frustration. If we are like Joshua and Caleb, though, we will recognize that the real obstacle to our

peace and happiness is our reaction to these circumstances. We can wander in the wilderness for forty years, or think of the positive side of the matter. With a true trust in God, we can let go of the idea that the negative circumstances will go away. We can go forward into the future with a positive trust in God, regardless if the current outward circumstances appear negative. The outcome may not be what we wanted, but the Lord said, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8–9

When you put your trust in God, He guides your mind so that you no longer desire that which is not good for you. And also you no longer worry about the future.

Jesus went to the tomb of Lazarus believing and knowing that God was working through Him. Often we may have to go somewhere or do something that seems humanly very challenging, but we must believe that the

Lord is with us if it is He that directed us in that direction. He has promised, and we do not need to doubt or worry. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Philippians 4:6

Here are some suggestions to keep your thoughts Christ-centred:

Read your Bible regularly to get to know Jesus more fully. Trust Him and accept Him as your personal Saviour and Lord.

Use only positive (Christ-centred) words while talking. If you are always telling yourself "I can't" you may start to believe that it is the truth. Substitute the negative words with positive ones.

Direct your thoughts to Christ. This practice can help you turn to Christ immediately when you start to feel negative.

Believe you will succeed by Him that strengthens you (Christ). Believing in Christ will lead to a successful Christian life. Put away your doubts and realize that you will reach your goal through Him who strengthens you.

Analyze what went wrong. Thinking positively does not mean that nothing will go wrong, or that there is no hardship before you. When things go wrong, stop, think and pray. What led to this situation? Was it a mistake you made? Or was it the leading of the Lord and you need to simply trust in Him? (as did Job).

Learn from the past. You cannot change your past, but you can learn from your past mistakes. Whenever you get negative thoughts about the past, turn to Christ, leave the past with Him and replace these thoughts with positive thoughts about what Christ has for you in the future. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14

Remember, things could be worse. No matter how bad your situation is, remember that it could be worse. Be grateful for all the good things. Count your blessings and see how God has been leading you. Look at the positive things that God has done in your life.

Look for opportunities. In every failure, there is an opportunity to improve. Learn the lessons the Lord is teaching you through your failures and turn to Him for help in the future.

Stop making excuses. Adam and Eve did this after their initial sin. There are always a million excuses people make for their failures. Do not make excuses. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13

Associate yourself with those who think positively. Spend time with the friends and family members who choose to look on the bright side of life. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Corinthians 15:33

Take control of your decisions: In every decision, ask yourself, "What would Jesus do?" Will this decision bring honour and glory to the Lord? Or only to myself?

Smile: Sometimes all it takes to feel good is to put a smile on your face and understand that you do not own all the problems of the world. There are others also who are struggling. Christ can help you in all your life's challenges.

Where should our thoughts be? "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8

May the Lord give you a positive Christ-centred mind for this year 2022. Amen.

Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jeremiah 17:9

**"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
Philippians 2:5-10**

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:10



What is an insult? How would you describe it? We all know that an insult is not a nice thing. If we have been insulted, we often feel bad and offended. I am sure we all, at some point in our lives, have been insulted. Think back, how did you react? Perhaps you may have insulted someone else, whether intentionally or unintentionally. How did you feel when you saw the other person feeling badly?

Although we are all familiar with the word and its negative connotation, I will seek to define it more exactly so that we can consider it more seriously when we apply it to our spiritual life.

An insult is to speak or treat someone with disrespect or scornful abuse.

Why do people insult? It is sometimes as an attempt to reduce the social status of the recipient and raise the relative status of the insulter, to deeply humiliate or wound one's feelings and arouse them to anger. Thus, when anger is aroused, insults can be retaliated back and forth. Unconverted people have been known to get angry at times and argue and be very insulting to each other.

It can also be to exult contemptuously when one has won the victory. Such as in a large-scale battle or a mere argument in the home. Its purpose is to offend or demean the recipient.

Simply put, it is an act that injures another's honour or self-respect; contemptuous treatment toward one who is entitled to respect.

The word insult originated in the mid-16th century from the Latin word: *insultare* which literally translates to mean: "jump or trample on." It is made up of the prefix *in-*, meaning "on, upon," and a form of the verb *salire* "to

leap"

I would like us to keep this original meaning in mind when read through this article. Ask yourself, would you insult, (jump on or trample on) God?

Many people in the world—such as Atheists, have no shame in insulting the name of God. They claim to not believe in Him, and thus have no issues in insulting His name.

Many Christians and non-Christians take His name in vain, and this is an insult to Him. They use His name in a common fashion when they are angry, surprised, or frustrated. They unthinkingly use His name as a common word. Often when they take His name in vain, it is not a good situation—it is at a time when they are upset, things are going wrong, or someone else has insulted them.

"Those who are brought into covenant relation with God are pledged to speak of Him in the most respectful, reverential manner. Many refer to God and mention His name in their religious conversation much as they would mention a horse or any other common creature. This dishonors God." —*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2. p. 185. "By the thoughtless mention of God in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 306–307

In the Bible we have examples of those who insulted God, such as the Assyrian general in the time of Hezekiah "Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us." 2 Kings 18:29–30. The result was not a good one for the enemies of God's people. "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of

the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." 2 Kings 19:35

King Saul started out as a good man. He was a worshipper of the true God, but he fell away and insulted God. "Saul had had the most ample proof that Samuel was divinely inspired. His venturing to disregard the command of God through the prophet was against the dictates of reason and sound judgment. His fatal presumption must be attributed to satanic sorcery. Saul had manifested great zeal in suppressing idolatry and witchcraft; yet in his disobedience to the divine command he had been actuated by the same spirit of opposition to God and had been as really inspired by Satan as are those who practice sorcery; and when reprov'd, he had added stubbornness to rebellion. He could have offered *no greater insult to the Spirit of God* had he openly united with idolaters." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 635. It all began with him not regarding the command of God, as brought to him through the prophet.

And here is a serious warning we can take from the example of King Saul. "It is a perilous step to slight the reproofs and warnings of God's word or of His Spirit. Many, like Saul, yield to temptation until they become blind to the true character of sin. They flatter themselves that they have had some good object in view, and have done no wrong in departing from the Lord's requirements. Thus they do despite to the Spirit of grace, until its voice is no longer heard, and they are left to the delusions which they have chosen." –*Ibid.* In the end they are so deceived that they think they are doing good, but in reality, they are departing from the Lord's requirements and thus insult the Lord.

King David, who was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), was not perfect. Sadly he made a serious mistake near the end of his life. "It was *an insult to God* when David numbered Israel. God's rebuke rested upon him, for he made himself as God, as though he could tell the strength of the armies of Israel by their numbers." –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 152

Punishment followed swiftly and David sincerely repented of his presumption. Well-meaning, faithful people may make mistakes also, unthinkingly, and insult God. For this reason we must consult God in every decision we make in life and not act on impulse. Keep that connection with heaven strong every moment.

Who was insulting the Apostle Paul? "The contempt and insult that he received from *the Jews*, caused him

great anguish of spirit." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 250. Clearly it was from those who claimed to be the followers of the Lord at that time. Christians are not exempt from this temptation.

Some people in the world get angry with God if things do not go their way. People without Christ defy and insult God with no remorse. As followers of Christ today, would you or I insult God? I hope we can all emphatically answer, "No!" And I am sure none of us would ever do so purposely. However, there are some lifestyle practices that are actually an insult to God; practices we may not have considered as being that serious, but they are an offense and an insult to God.

Read through the following statements prayerfully and thoughtfully, and examine yourself to make sure you are not harbouring some practices that would insult your Maker. When you read the word "insult" think of the word "jump on or trample on" as the original translation of the word was.

"Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, *insult Jehovah*. They bring the name of Christ as their authority for the fulfillment of the promise, but they do not those things that would show faith in Christ and love for Him." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 143

What are the conditions, mentioned in the statement above? It is not simply the keeping of the Ten Commandments in letter, but it is the keeping of the Law also in spirit, as we shall see.

First of all, how do you treat the leaders in your church? Those who speak and preach every week and are called to lead His flock? If you speak or think negatively of them, you are on dangerous ground.

Some have gone to other churches because they seem to have more dynamic preachers than some of the simple speakers in God's church. These people claim to receive a greater blessing. "We offer *insult to the Prince of life*, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324. The reality is that many of these so-called dynamic preachers have been educated in the art of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). If you do not know what this is, go and do some research. The speakers whom God uses are those who are simple and straightforward.

"It is hardly possible for men to offer *greater insult to*

God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities He would use for their salvation." –*Conflict and Courage*, p. 108. Following this quote, is given the example of Korah, Dathan and Abiram who refused to support Moses, and then of Lucifer who complained of the government of God and sought to overthrow the order of it as established in heaven. To reject or complain and speak negatively about God's chosen leaders, speakers, or workers, and not support them is an insult to God. "It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs. It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that He has appointed to lead them." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5 p. 680

If we keep in mind the definition of insult of, "to trample on", consider before speaking negatively of any leader in the church. God has put them there and when you speak negatively of them, you insult God. You doubt His wisdom in the choice He made of a leader.

What about your own self? God created man in His own image and it is an insult to Him, when man defaces the image that he was created in. This leads to many health destroying habits, the main one being diet. However, there are other aspects to consider also, such as lack of sleep and exercise, but we will consider a few quotes regarding diet here.

"They indulge the depraved appetite in the use of slow poisons, which corrupt the blood, and undermine the nervous forces, and in consequence bring upon themselves sickness and death. . . In this they *insult Heaven*. They rebelled against the laws of nature, and suffered the punishment of her abused laws." –*Christian Education*, p. 11. What is "slow poison"? One that takes your life and health away from you slowly and imperceptibly, and this is done by deviating from the laws of health given by God, even if in a very small proportion.

"Man should estimate himself by the price which has been paid for him. When he places this value upon himself, he will not knowingly abuse one of his physical or mental faculties. It is an *insult to the God* of heaven for man to abuse his precious powers by placing himself under the control of Satanic agencies, and besotting himself by indulging in that which is ruinous to health, to piety, and to spirituality." –*Conflict and Courage*, p. 35

Stop and think. Before putting that food in your mouth. Ask yourself, is it beneficial or is it detrimental, only to satisfy my depraved taste buds for a few moments in time? Will it strengthen me to the glory of God? Or am I

trampling on God by not caring that this little indulgence will have a negative effect on my health, even if ever so slightly?

Here is another serious matter to consider for the entire church. It is not individual in nature. "The names of those who sin and refuse to repent should not be retained on the church books, lest the saints be held accountable for their evil deeds. Those who pursue a course of transgression should be visited and labored with, and if they then refuse to repent, they should be separated from church fellowship, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Word of God. . . .

"Who, after reading the record of Achan's sin and punishment, can think it according to the will of God that those who do wickedly, refusing to repent, are to be retained in the church? To retain them would be an *insult to the God of heaven*." –*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1096. Names are often left on the church record, with the thought of this being merciful to the sinner. Yes, God has patience and is very longsuffering and He asks us to do the same since we are all sinners. However, when one chooses to "do wickedly, refusing to repent" and continues living in open sin, violating their baptismal vows, they should be let go to follow the course of their own decision. Prayer should be made for them continually, as there is still an open door for them to return. We must not insult God in heaven by not doing our duty as a church as outlined in Matthew 18.

Another way Christians insult God is through their unwillingness to help the poor. They keep all their material wealth for themselves as though it were their own to use as they choose—a result of their own hard labour. "The reason why God has permitted some of the human family to be so rich and some so poor will remain a mystery to men till eternity, unless they enter into right relations with God and carry out His plans, instead of acting on their own selfish ideas that because a man is rich he is to be more highly respected than his poor neighbor. God makes His sun to shine on the just and on the unjust, and this sun represents Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, who shines as the light of the world, giving His blessings and mercies, seen and unseen, to rich and poor alike. This principle is to guide our conduct toward our fellowmen. . . . It is the *highest insult to God's goodness* to doubt whether He would be willing for us to impart to others the blessings, spiritual and temporal, which He has freely given us." –*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 280

And what about missionary work? What are you doing for the salvation of sinners? Are you keeping yourself locked up in the confines of your own home; keeping your light to yourself? Then you are sadly insulting (trampling on) God. "For the conversion of one sinner the minister should tax his resources to the utmost. . . . And if Christ left the ninety and nine that He might seek and save one lost sheep, can we be justified in doing less? Is not a neglect to work as Christ worked, to sacrifice as He sacrificed, a betrayal of sacred trusts, an *insult to God*?" –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 370

"Every soul is to minister. He is to use every physical, moral, and mental power, through sanctification of the Spirit, that he may be a laborer together with God. All are bound to devote themselves actively and unreservedly to God's service. They are to cooperate with Jesus Christ in the great work of helping others. . . . All are not called upon to enter the ministry, but nevertheless, they are to minister. It is an *insult to the Holy Spirit of God* for any man to choose a life of self-serving." –*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1159

And here is the greatest insult: "The greatest insult we can inflict upon Him, is to pretend to be His disciples while manifesting the spirit of Satan in our words, our dispositions and our actions. It does not behoove those from whom Jesus has so much to bear, in their failings and perversity, to be ever mindful of slights and real or imaginary offense. And yet there are those who are ever suspecting the motives of others about them. They see offense and slights where no such thing was intended. All this is Satan's work in the human heart. The heart filled with that love which thinketh no evil will not be on the watch to notice discourtesies and grievances of which he may be the object. The will of God is that His love shall close the eyes, the ears and the heart to all such provocations and to all the suggestions with which Satan would fill them. There is a noble majesty in the silence of the one exposed to evil-surmising or outrage. To be master of one's spirit is to be stronger than kings or conquerors. A Christian leads one to think of Christ. He will be affable, kind, patient, humble and yet courageous and firm in vindicating the truth and the name of Christ." –*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1160

Here is contrasted the true and false Christians. No mention is made of doctrine. One may believe and teach the most perfect doctrines of the Bible, but if love is lacking, they are nothing (1 Corinthians 13). The false Christians are in a lukewarm condition and if they refuse to the repent, the Lord says that, "I will spue thee

out of My mouth." Revelation 3:16. Let us be as the genuine Christians so that our names will be retained in the Book of Life.

Yes, we may have insulted our loving Master. Yes, we have walked errantly. Yet, today there is still mercy. Today there is still time to repent. Today Jesus is calling each and every one to turn to Him and find strength to overcome all sin. He loves you and yearns to have you with Him in heaven. He wants you to be saved more than you yourself do. He has promised to help, and He will deliver. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Matthew 11:28–30

Read the following promise carefully: "We should carefully consider what is our relation to God and to one another. We are continually sinning against God, but His mercy still follows us; in love He bears with our perversities, our neglect, our ingratitude, our disobedience. He never becomes impatient with us. We insult His mercy, grieve His Holy Spirit, and do Him dishonor before men and angels, and yet His compassions fail not. The thought of God's long-suffering to us should make us forbearing to one another. How patiently should we bear with the faults and errors of our brethren when we remember how great are our own failings in the sight of God." –*That I May Know Him*, p. 181

"Make decided, radical changes through the grace given you of God. No longer insult His grace. He is saying with tears, 'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life' (John 5:40). Now Jesus is inviting you, knocking at the door of your heart for entrance. Will you let Him come in?" –*Ibid.*, p. 56

How wonderful a Saviour we have. He has promised to help each one to overcome and have a character that is ready to meet Him when He comes again in the clouds of glory. He is waiting for you. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. Amen

Wendy Eaton



TRUTH & ERROR



Modern technology has made our lives easier, faster, better, and seemingly more interesting; the world has become a global village. You can connect from one side of the world to the other within seconds. Artificial intelligence is overtaking humans; we live in a time where everyone is busy making their very own life successful. They are least concerned about whether the way they are choosing to achieve it, is wrong or right! Many people seem to believe lies and hate the truth. Do you wonder why we live in a world full of lies and deception? Because the truth hurts. Although, it can also set us free. When you have the truth, you have peace. We have peace in believing that what God has promised He is able to perform.

The Lord has provided human beings with the most powerful machine—the brain—to think and then decide which way to follow. Unfortunately, the majority choose the attractive, easy, and exciting life, forgetting that appearances can be deceptive. This world is full of deception. Lying about something seems to be much more widespread while speaking truth is less common.

If it were not for the deception of error mixed with truth, many in the world, who are hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, would be convicted and converted by the plain, cutting truths of the Word of God. But, false Christianity is so confused and discordant, that the people do not know what to believe as truth. The sin of the world's impenitence lies at the door of the church. Satan is willing to use 99% truth in order to mix in 1% of lies! Some churches may teach 99% truth in some cases; but the 1% error is always a perversion of the truth, creating confusion. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isaiah 5:20

Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. There is a vast difference between truth and error; though through the influence of sectarianism many have concluded that the difference is quite un-

important. It makes no difference, they say, what a man believes if he is only sincere. But, it is quite clear in the Scriptures that men may sincerely "believe a lie," and that, as a consequence, they will be damned. Those "who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Most Christians admit that we must worship God in spirit, to be accepted by God, but, it is no less a requirement for us to worship Him in truth. Since all God's requirements are just, we may, notwithstanding the lies of sectarianism, attain to a knowledge of the truth.

"Satan will work with all his deceptive power to influence the heart and becloud the understanding, to make evil appear good, and good evil. The stronger and purer the faith of God's people, and the firmer their determination to obey Him, the more fiercely will Satan strive to stir up against them the rage of those who, while claiming to be righteous, trample upon the law of God. It will require the firmest trust, the most heroic purpose, to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 431

On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.

There is confusion everywhere. Wickedness is increasing. Society is in a terrible state as it was in the time of Noah. How was it in Noah's day? "GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Genesis 6:5

"The inhabitants of the antediluvian world turned from Jehovah, refusing to do His holy will. They followed their own unholy imagination and perverted ideas. It was because of their wickedness that they were destroyed; and today the world is following the same way. It presents no flattering signs of millennial glory. The transgressors of God's law are filling the earth with wickedness. Their

betting, their horse racing, their gambling, their dissipation, their lustful practices, their untamable passions, are fast filling the world with violence." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 633

WHAT IS CONFUSION?

Confusion is the inability to think as clearly or as quickly as you normally should. You may feel disoriented and have difficulty paying attention, remembering, and making decisions. Wine (false teaching) or alcohol make people drunk and disoriented.

Bebel, means [Heb.] Confusion; disorder. [Revelation 14:8.] "The term 'Babylon' is derived from 'Babel' and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion. In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as a woman—a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 381

"The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error. This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God's holy and sanctified day. These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches, and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'" –*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 2, p. 362. It is our individual duty to walk humbly with God. We are not to seek any strange, new message.

FIVE PHASES OF BABYLON/BABEL

1. The Tower of Babel

"Here they decided to build a city, and in it a tower of such stupendous height as should render it the wonder of the world." –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 68

"And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." Genesis 10:8–10

"For a time the descendants of Noah continued to dwell among the mountains where the ark had rested. As their numbers increased, apostasy soon led to division. Those who desired to forget their Creator and to cast off the restraint of His law felt a constant annoyance from the teaching and example of their God-fearing associates, and

after a time they decided to separate from the worshipers of God. . . .

"These enterprises were designed to prevent the people from scattering abroad in colonies. God had directed men and women to disperse throughout the earth, to replenish and subdue it; but these Babel builders determined to keep their community united in one body, and to found a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth.... The magnificent tower, reaching to the heavens, was intended to stand as a monument of the power and wisdom of its builders, perpetuating their fame to the latest generations" –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 68

"Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." Genesis 11:9

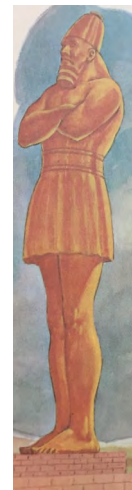
2. Babylonian Empire

Now we come to the Babylonian empire which displayed its strength with the great image set up by the King Nebuchadnezzar in the plains of Dura. He then issued a decree that all who would not bow down and worship this image should be killed.

"Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" He said, as he despised God!

"In vain were the king's threats. He could not turn the men from their allegiance to the Ruler of the universe. From the history of their fathers they had learned that disobedience to God results in dishonor, disaster, and death; and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the foundation of all true prosperity. Calmly facing the furnace, they said, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so [if this is your decision], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.' Their faith strengthened as they declared that God would be glorified by delivering them, and with triumphant assurance born of implicit trust in God, they added, 'But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.'" –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 507

"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee." Daniel 4:28–31



3. Roman Catholics—Babylon, the great Whore.

“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” Revelation 17:5



“The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as ‘arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:....and upon her forehead was a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots.*’

Says the prophet, ‘I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.’ Babylon is further declared to be ‘that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’ Revelation 17:4–6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet color, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared ‘drunken with the blood of the saints’ as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. Babylon is also charged with the sin of unlawful connection with ‘the kings of the earth.’ It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 382

4. Protestant & charismatic churches

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Revelation 14:8

“Babylon is said to be ‘the *mother* of harlots.’ By her *daughters* must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the *fall* of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore, it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries.”—*Ibid.*, p. 382

5. Seventh-day Adventist Church

It is startling to hear that the SDA Church has departed from the truth in some of their teachings, but this is reality.

After their departure from the faith in World War 1, the candlestick was removed from their midst and handed to the faithful remnant who refused to partake of the apostasy and were thus disfellowshipped. There has been a delay in the proclamation of the everlasting gospel in its purity. In the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, the failures of the church today are compared to the failures of Ancient Israel when each generation shared in the guilt of their fathers because they not only shared the same fallen human nature but exercised the same unbelief. There are many tragic evidences of backsliding, disobedience to the Spirit of Prophecy, and even apostasy. The history of the church since 1888 gives clear evidence of this departure from truth.

“Those who can ignore all the evidences which God has given them, and change that blessing into a curse, should tremble for the safety of their own souls. Their candlestick will be removed out of its place unless they repent. The Lord has been insulted. The standard of truth, of the first, second, and third angels’ messages has been left to trail in the dust. If the watchmen are left to mislead the people in this fashion, God will hold some souls responsible for a lack of keen discernment to discover what kind of provender was being given to His flock.” — *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, vol. 1, p. 58

“The atmosphere of the church is so frigid, its spirit is of such an order, that men and women cannot sustain or endure the example of primitive and heaven-born piety. The warmth of their first love is frozen up, and unless they are watered over by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, their candlestick will be removed out of its place.” — *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 167. “And he [an angel] cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:2, 4

“This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14 (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844. A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred.” —



The Great Controversy, p. 603

“Of those who boast of their light and yet fail to walk in it Christ says, ‘But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum [Seventh-day Adventists, who have had great light], which art exalted unto heaven [in point of privilege], shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.’” – *The Review and Herald*, August 1, 1893

Independent ministries, and groups involved in independent ministry

“God has a church upon the earth who are His chosen people, who keep His commandments. He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 61

“God is teaching, leading, and guiding His people, that they may teach, lead and guide others. 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 the ruin of souls will follow. Those who rally now to support and build up the truth of God are ranging themselves on one side, standing united in heart, mind, and voice, in defense of the truth.” – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 158

During the Great Apostasy, many gospel truths were changed or lost. These truths were restored in the days through the faithful pioneers of the Advent movement. “The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Isaiah 58:12 (Isaiah 61:4). “The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God’s law—the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard.” – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 677

The truth is able to save. It will be the shield and buckler for the saints in the time of trouble, their seal and passport to the city of God. When the time of trouble, the wrath of God is poured out in the seven last plagues, and the wicked of earth will be cut off, the faithful will be protected as described in Psalm 91. “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be

thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that escapes by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” Psalm 91:4–10

“Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in.” Isaiah 26:2. Ah! Here is the grand result. The gates of the city of God will be thrown open, and the righteous nation that keeps the truth will be welcomed in. And since the law of God is the truth, how beautifully does this harmonize with the last benediction of the coming One: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14

HOW CAN WE KNOW THE TRUTH?

“The acquisition of this inestimable knowledge is not the exclusive privilege of the wise and prudent of this world. The poor may obtain it as well as the rich; especially if they be poor in spirit. No collegiate course of instruction can avail so much toward gaining this knowledge, as a spirit of humble obedience to the will of God. We shall find a genuine and infallible guide to the knowledge of the truth in the word of God.

“There is a ‘present truth,’ 2 Peter 1:12, for the present time. The present truth is that God is now moving out a message, Revelation 14:9–12, by which to restore His down-trodden truth to all the remnant of His little flock, in order to prepare them for translation into His everlasting kingdom at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is near, even at the door.

“Reader, if you would be of that happy number, obey the truth.” – *Truth*, Roswell F. Cottrell, p. 12–13

“The Lord is soon coming. Talk it, pray it, believe it. Make it a part of the life. You will have to meet a doubting, objecting spirit, but this will give way before firm, consistent trust in God. When perplexities or hindrances present themselves, lift the soul to God in songs of thanksgiving. Gird on the Christian armor and be sure that your feet are ‘shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.’ Preach the truth with boldness and fervor. Remember that the Lord looks in compassion upon this field and that He knows its poverty and its need. The efforts you are making will not prove a failure.” – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 237. Amen.

Daniel Kimeu

HEALTH MATTERS:



You have probably heard the saying, “You are what you eat.” But, have you ever heard of the phrase, “You are *when* you eat?” As well as the type of diet we consume, the timing of our meals can have a great impact on our overall health. Sister White has several quotes about the timing of meals that gives us an idea that adherence to a strict schedule is of vital importance. This month we will begin to delve into the science that supports the counsel given to us over 100 years ago.

Eating patterns have changed as our world has become busier, we hurry to our jobs and do not finish until late, we attend school and then we need to work on assignments. After work we run errands, we take care of our families; overall we have less time to prepare food, and we definitely no longer have time to sit down for what we refer to as “proper meals”.

Often people stay up late in the evenings, so they wake up from bed at the very last minute before having to rush out the door to get to work or school; they do not have time to eat so they skip breakfast. These same people often do not have time to prepare a meal for lunch either. They might buy a snack from a fast-food vendor or cafeteria and eat it whenever they have time. Then the biggest meal of the day is eaten when they arrive home in the evening. Often this meal does not satisfy the hunger from skipped or unsatisfactory meals during the day, so then hunger is satisfied by snacking before bedtime. Then there are others who do not have regular meal times, but just snack throughout the day whenever they have time. Others may have regular meals, but snack in between to satisfy their hunger. Do you fit in any of these scenarios in the timing of your meals and snacks schedule?

Our digestive system consists of many different parts, working together in harmony to break down the food that we eat into the various macronutrients, vitamins and minerals so that our body can absorb them and use them where needed. This includes things like providing energy, in building and repairing cells, for heart and lung

function, and in keeping our immune system healthy. When we eat, the whole digestive tract initiates a process that takes several hours to complete, before food is absorbed into the body, and the waste products separated from the nutrients. We use anywhere from 15–30% of our calories that we consume to actually produce

the energy to digest and use the food we eat. Whole foods require more calories to consume than processed foods. As an interesting aside, in a study comparing 100 calories of a whole food versus 100 calories of a processed food, the net calorie intake was 46% less for the whole food. For those who want to lose weight, eating the same amount of calories of whole foods vs processed foods will result in a greater weight loss.

The digestive process and the energy required is repeated every time we ingest even the smallest morsel of food or liquid. Therefore, those who eat continually throughout the day are using up the body’s energy for food digestion on an ongoing basis. This can contribute to a feeling of fatigue that so many people complain about. It may be more about the constant digestion of food versus lack of proper sleep. When the body has less energy, it decreases the body’s ability to digest food properly, and a vicious cycle is created.

When food enters our mouth and we take that first bite, the digestive process begins. Saliva, a digestive enzyme, combined with chewing, starts to break the food into smaller pieces. The food then enters the esophagus; once it reaches the end, a sphincter opens to allow the food to enter the stomach. In the stomach, digestive juices and the movement of stomach muscles break the food down even further. After the stomach has done its work, the thick liquid containing digestive juices and partially digested food moves into the small intestine. The small intestine further digests the food with help from the liver and pancreas. Finally, the walls of the small intestine absorb water and nutrients into the bloodstream. The waste products continue to move into the large intestine and are eliminated via the anus.

The length of time it takes for food to be fully digested and absorbed into the bloodstream can differ from the type of food eaten, one’s metabolism, body type, level of physical fitness and activity, sleep, water intake, gut health, age, and stress. Therefore, the length of the diges-

tive process differs from person to person. However, there are some averages that we can look at.

Food generally stays in the stomach between 40–120 minutes or even longer. Once food leaves the stomach, it will spend another 40–120 minutes in the small intestine. The denser the food, i.e., the more protein or fat that it contains, the longer it takes to digest. Liquids leave the stomach the fastest as there is the least amount to digest. Plain water leaves the stomach in 10–20 minutes, whereas a smoothie can take up to 60 minutes.

Simple carbohydrate foods such as rice and pasta can average 30–60 minutes in the stomach. Vegetables take anywhere from 30–60 minutes to digest. Fruits, because they are simple sugars and contain fibre take 20–40 minutes to digest, depending on the type of fruit. Carbohydrates have the shortest digestion time because they are needed as fuel for the body, especially for the brain and working muscles, and can provide quick energy. Processed carbohydrates are absorbed faster than whole food carbohydrates because they do not contain fibre. Our body can store excess carbohydrates, thus the body has a ready supply of energy whenever needed.

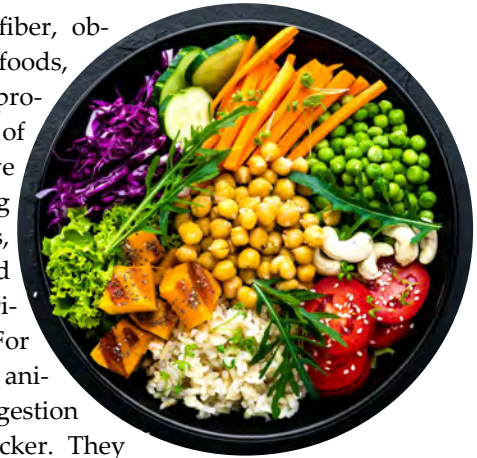
Once protein and fats are added to the meal, the time in the stomach increases. Grains and beans take anywhere from 90 minutes to 3 hours to digest, whereas complete digestion of seeds and nuts takes 1–2 hours. Protein begins to be broken down in the stomach, however most of the protein is broken down into individual amino acids in the small intestine. Because proteins are not needed for energy, they are not in such immediate demand as carbohydrates, however proteins are used as building blocks for muscles, skin, hair and hormones and enzymes critical for healthy body function. Fats take the longest to digest, and are the last to leave the stomach. The majority of their digestive process takes place in the small intestine. Since fat and water do not mix, the processing time is slower because the end product of a fat needs to be water-soluble to enter the bloodstream.

The digestive process in those who eat animal products including meat, fish, dairy and eggs, take the longest because of the complexity of animal protein and saturated fats, along with preservatives and sodium. On average, three to four hours are needed to fully digest these products. Once the waste products of these foods move to the large intestine, it can take up to three days before they are eliminated. The length of time these foods remain in the large intestine is a major contributor to colon cancer.

Because we do not digest carbs, proteins, and fats in isolation, the digestion time for each meal can vary widely. On average, in a healthy person, the stomach can totally empty in 4–5 hours after a meal. Another two to three and a

half hours are needed for food to be absorbed into the body via the small intestine. These numbers take into account people who consume meat as well as other foods. Another 30–40 hours is required for food to move through the large intestine before the waste is eliminated.

However, diets high in fiber, obtained solely in plant foods, speed up the digestive process and the movement of food through the digestive system. When comparing vegetarians to meat-eaters, the passage time for food is faster because vegetarians consume more fiber. For vegans who consume no animal products, their digestion time would be even quicker. They not only have faster digestive system transit times, they also have more frequent bowel movements. The less time that food sits in the large intestine, the healthier our digestive system will be. We should be consuming 25–30 grams of fiber daily. Any less will slow down transit times, especially when meat takes up a good portion of one's diet. Meat-eaters also have delayed digestion because of the amount of fats consumed, especially saturated fats. They take more time and effort to be broken down when compared to protein and carbohydrates.



When all these factors are taken into account when we plan our meal times, what is the best pattern of eating? Sister White counsels us, "The stomach must have careful attention. It must not be kept in continual operation. Give this misused and much-abused organ some peace and quiet and rest.... After the regular meal is eaten, the stomach should be allowed to rest for five hours. Not a particle of food should be introduced into the stomach till the next meal. In this interval the stomach will perform its work and will then be in a condition to receive more food." – *Child Guidance*, p. 389

Based on her counsel, and the evidence we have from science, we should space out our meals throughout the day so that we have at least five hours in between each meal in order for the digestive process to be fully completed before consuming more food. This gives the stomach time to rest, and improves our digestion and energy levels. Even eating the smallest morsel of food in between meals will start the digestive process all over again, and the stomach does not get its needed rest.

Next month we will learn more about the timing of meals and how it impacts our health.

Be Ready to Give an Answer for Your Faith



It is very common for schools to teach that the beginning of this world happened millions of years ago, and all the plants and animals evolved to what they are today, starting with just a small cell. The truth about God creating the world is rarely taught in schools. We call this, the theory of evolution. Sometimes it is not easy to think of what kind of answer to give as Christians, because the science teachers say that we do not have evidence, and everything we believe in is by faith, and faith has no part in science. They claim that the theory of evolution can be scientifically proven.

There are a few Christian teachers who believe in Creation as the origin of all life, although they are still required to teach the theory of evolution—they teach it as only a theory that is taught in the science community.

Mr. Smith was one such teacher who believed in creation. He prayed for ways that he could witness to his students without bringing opposition from the school. Most of the students and teachers believed in evolution, so it would not be an easy task.

One day, during a lecture about the origin of things, he stated that no one could produce a plausible theory for the origin of odour, colour, taste, shape, or power. His argument was that none of these were the product of development—something that changed or evolved over time. They were the result of a definite decision on the part of the living God. He mentioned things like the fact that strawberries always have the same odour, no matter where they are grown, and that their odour is never confused with the odour of any other thing in all the world. Every fruit has its own odour and so does every animal. The odour of the one is never like the odour of the other and nor does it ever change.

He went on to say that the taste of vegetables, fruits, nuts, grains, meats, etc., have always remained the same, and

that one is never mistaken for another. He stated that only the living God could give peaches their peculiar taste; that colours could not have happened by themselves; that bananas are yellow because God made them so, and plums are blue or red because God made them so. He stressed the fact that an intelligent God designed each of these by His own power and will. He continued by saying that each plant and animal has its own shape. Chickens do not grow as large as ostriches, neither do bananas grow as long as broomsticks. There are no square apples and no oblong pumpkins with square edges. Everything has its own peculiar shape from God.

He concluded his lecture by stating that the origin of power is a great mystery. Who knows how the sun was first placed in the heavens, or when the first gallon of water ran over Niagara Falls? All of this is a mystery, except as we believe the Bible concerning creation.

During the lecture he had made reference to the resurrection, saying, "Every corn field is a graveyard. A grain of corn is planted in the spring, and while it is dying tender shoots are formed which force their way up through the hard soil to emerge into the sunshine and to grow into a stalk. Every living plant comes out of a grave. We do not understand the power of life, nor how it is that a soft, tender leaf can force its way through the hard ground, break the topsoil, push up a heavy clod and emerge. Every spring we see it done and we rejoice that it is so. The sun above us has the power to dispel the darkness about us and draw latent life into the light."

At the end of the lecture, a young man came to Mr. Smith with the attitude of one whose intelligence had been insulted. He said, "Surely you do not mean to tell me that you believe in the resurrection?" He replied,

"Certainly, I do," answered Mr. Smith, "A resurrection of the human body will take place in God's good time, just as there is a resurrection of seeds in their appointed time." He looked at Mr. Smith in astonishment, as though the teacher was out of his mind and maybe going a little senile. Then he asked, "Do you mean to tell me that you believe that Lazarus came out of the grave when Jesus spoke to him?" "Yes," replied Mr. Smith, "certainly and positively; there is no question about it. Jesus had given him his life. Jesus had allowed it to be taken from him, and then Jesus could give it back to him again, and He did so." Again the young man expressed his unbelief in Mr. Smith's foolishness and said, "You look intelligent. How is it that one who is intelligent would believe such foolishness?"

By this time Mr. Smith thought to ask this wise young man a few questions to see how much he really knew, so he asked, "I suppose you reject the idea of the resurrection because you cannot understand it. Am I correct in this?" "Yes," he replied, "you are correct. Tell me, how did Lazarus come out of the grave?"

Mr. Smith replied, "Now you have changed the question. First, you asked whether Lazarus did come out, and I replied that he certainly did. Now you ask me *how* he came out, and I must reply that I do not know."

The young man seemed to think that he had won the victory, so Mr. Smith continued by asking, "Do you reject the truth of the resurrection simply because you cannot understand it?" The student answered most emphatically, "Yes sir; I will believe nothing that I cannot understand."

Mr. Smith then decided to ask the student a question from nature. "Do you believe that butterflies come out of cocoons?" He replied that he did. The teacher then asked, "How does the butterfly get out?" This question baffled the young man. The other students standing around listened to the conversation intently. The young man was now seeking to find some answer that would reveal his marvelous knowledge and his wonderful understanding of nature.

After a few moments later he replied rather officiously, "It bites its way out, of course."

"How many teeth does a butterfly have?" asked Mr. Smith.

He hardly knew what to say to this simple question, so he replied, "I do not know. How many teeth does it have?"

"Well, you see there is at least one thing that you do not know," was the teacher's reply. "As a matter of fact a butterfly does not have any teeth at all, not even a mouth, but only a long, slender proboscis." Again he asked the

student, "How does the butterfly get out?"

He replied, "I suppose it emits a sort of acid which burns a hole through the cocoon."

Mr. Smith then asked him if he did not think it would be strange for a butterfly to emit an acid strong enough to burn through the tough cocoon and yet would not burn itself. He admitted that this was true and that he must be wrong.

"That is right," said Mr. Smith, "So there are two things that you do not know. Tell me, how does it get out?"

By this time a large number of students had gathered around to listen. His reply to the third question was, "I suppose it must swell up and burst its way out."

Quickly the teacher answered, "Now there are three things that you do not know, for the cocoon is water-proof, air proof, light proof and heat proof. How could it swell up when there is no air with which to expand? Did you ever try to tear a cocoon with your hands?" The student answered that he had often tried to do it, but had never succeeded.

Then Mr. Smith said to him, "You cannot tear a cocoon with your big, strong hands, but you are so wise and well informed that you are confident that the soft, tender butterfly could tear it by swelling up with air which it does not have."

One more time the teacher asked him, "How does the butterfly get out?" The student finally gave up. He had to admit that he did not know. The teacher then asked him, "Does the butterfly come out of the cocoon?"

"Yes, certainly it does," answered the student.

"So did Lazarus come out of the tomb when Jesus spoke," Mr. Smith replied, "but I cannot tell you how he did it."

The discussion was over. The young man left the room quietly, defeated. Although it seems that the young man was still not accepting the explanation, many of the other students were. They saw the foolishness of the young man's argument. A few of them asked more questions, and began to attend the youth Bible Studies on the college campus.

Those with whom we speak are not always willing to listen and accept, but we should always explain the things of God when we have an opportunity. There may be others who are listening and who will accept what we say.

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15

MOSES

Part II

From Midian to Egypt



Moses many weeks was on his way, over him God's watchful eye,
Guiding every step so that he may
Go there where God wanted him to come
To a place directed to become his home. -
Jethro was a goodly man in distant Midian,
Had seven daughters, worshipped God, took Moses in to ease his lot,
Gave his oldest daughter Zipporah for wife
And thus begun for Moses an altogether different life.
He tended sheep, the many, many Jethro owned,
To find pasture led them through the land;
Moses had to learn to understand and handle these animals so gentle.
Rough words or shouting unsettled, frightened them to scatter,
they must not be rushed to sprint like horses,
No, but rather to be calmly, gently called together,
With much care to gather, to lead them to the resting place,
Not push them like to run a race.
This was all new to Moses the former general.
Whose command always was instant.
Constant movement was his exercise,
Bold achievements and courageous enterprise.
But this strange task was a great challenge,
There was no way he could himself avenge
But what he needed now was patience,
And learn to navigate without restlessness
Big herds of sheep with gentleness.
Sometimes had to be away from home finding pasture, there to roam
Longer times to be exposed to weather changes and disposed
Of proper shelter, maybe find a bush or rock to rest and watch the flock.
.....
Months turned years, two sons were born to Moses there in Midian,
He no longer looked like an Egyptian,
The simple shepherd life made him humble but alive
To bear his duty with great care,
As a loving husband, father and protector,
It was the life for Moses God had planned for.
Far away from royal duties, high ambition,
Country life wrought the mighty transformation
In Moses' attitude and character. Being often there in solitude
Among the mountains, wilderness, with flocks of sheep in quietness.
Alone with God he became content, with the simple life at hand.
Moses was now humble, meek and patient, right after God's intent,
He was now the man - thus Providence could use him then.
.....
It was a day like many others, a distance far from home away,
Moving to find fodder for the day.
Moses and his flock came to a mountain, where was grass,
He let the sheep there grazing, while himself did gaze
At the site of his surrounding, and he found a spot for resting
Right there by that great mountain.
The sky was deeply blue, and crisp the morning air,
The mountain's rim clear cut against the heaven fair.
In the stillness and tranquility Moses felt
Serenity around him, very different from the other places he had been.
As he sat meditating upon God, suddenly he saw close by a spot
Of a most unusual sight. He got up there so he might behold
What it may be, to investigate and see.

Then he saw it was a desert bush on fire,
 But there were no flames to burn it up or smoke,
 As he looked on, he heard a voice out of the fire calling:
 "Moses, Moses."
 In utter shock Moses fell on his face stammering: "Here am I."
 It was God's voice so nigh "Put off thy shoes, for this is holy ground. I am
 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob."
 And Moses hid his face, he was afraid, God Himself was in this place,
 That echoed from the bottom of the mount.
 "I have seen the affliction of My people, I know their sorrow,
 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of Pharaoh,
 And bring them unto a good land, flowing with milk and honey and
 I have heard the cry of the children of Israel, in their oppression,
 And make occasion, to send you to Pharaoh to bring
 My people out of Egypt."
 Moses was not pleased at all, as he received God's call,
 Of His commission to be on the mission
 He had anticipated long ago, but now his confidence was so very low.
 "Who am I to go to Pharaoh to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"
 God said He would be with him, to say to the Israelites that I AM
 Had sent him to deliver them.
 And that they would serve Him on this mountain.
 However, Moses was not very enthusiastic, but rather fearful,
 Doubtful drastic, though God showed His power to bend the rod a serpent
 And Moses's had made leprous.
 Even these two signs did not make him fervent, joyous.
 He kept on debating, not being eloquent, slow of speech,
 Doubting to reach the confidence of Israel.
 But God assured He will be with him, and teach him what to say.
 But it was of no avail, Moses wished he had his way,
 Saying, God would send some other one away.
 Now God's patience was now over:
 "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother?
 He can speak well, and behold he is coming hither to meet you,
 And all will be well."
 Aaron would be his spokesman before the people, and God will
 Give His words to Moses to instruct Aaron what to say to them.
 And then was silence once again...
 Thoroughly shaken Moses rose, and in this pose
 He looked, the bush was not consumed, not a leaf or twig had moved,
 With great amazement slowly he removed,
 Intensely thoughtful pondered on the vision
 With every step he came to the conclusion,
 That truly he was chosen for this great mission, and there was no reason
 for dismay, or delay, for God Himself will lead the way.

Moses on his way returning to Jethro in those traveling days,
 Was deep in thoughts about his calling, causing to awaken confidence,
 And faith and trust, now to God surrender all he must.
 Peace and joy came over Moses then,
 New vigor, enthusiasm filled the man, a holy glow was on his brow,
 When he conveyed God's call and vision on to Jethro.
 The man of God did not object, as Moses and his family
 He with respect did let depart and blessed them in his heart,
 To call God's protection on this long, great journey
 To the land of Egypt, with provender, donkeys, sheep equipped.
 But God detect in Moses one defect,
 His youngest son he had not circumcised,
 And before he realized, God was to kill him at the inn,
 Then Zipporah, she saved the situation,
 Taking a sharp stone,



Quickly she fulfilled the rite, the misdeed to atone.
Aaron also by God's call was on his way to meet them all
At the very mountain of the vision,
Very joyous was the brother's safe reunion.
Then Moses telling Aaron of God's signs and plans,
They eagerly began returning to the land,
As God gave the command, to go to Pharaoh,
To let God's people go.
End of Part II
To be continued.

Edda Tedford, Canada



Ethiopia

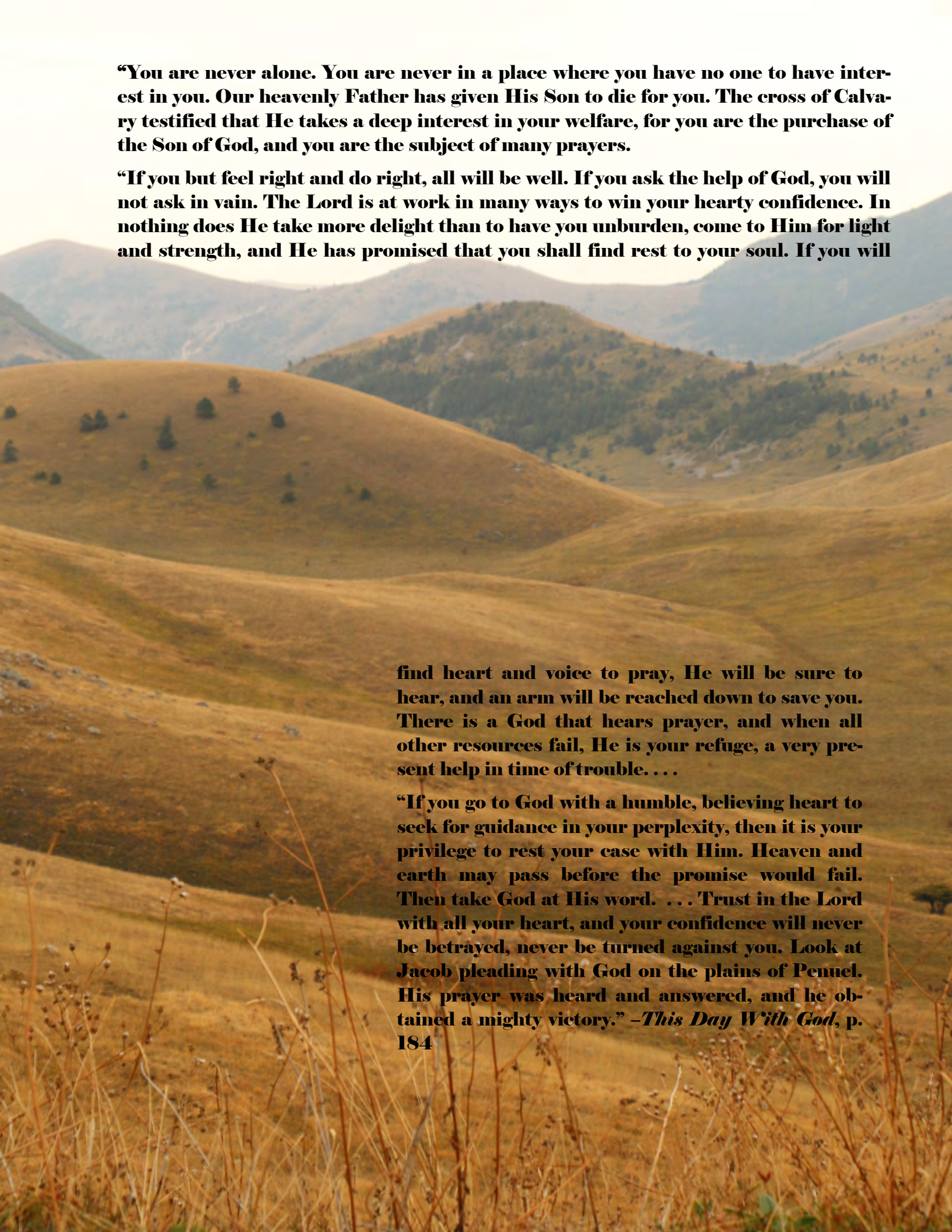


Guatemala



Nicaragua





“You are never alone. You are never in a place where you have no one to have interest in you. Our heavenly Father has given His Son to die for you. The cross of Calvary testified that He takes a deep interest in your welfare, for you are the purchase of the Son of God, and you are the subject of many prayers.

“If you but feel right and do right, all will be well. If you ask the help of God, you will not ask in vain. The Lord is at work in many ways to win your hearty confidence. In nothing does He take more delight than to have you unburden, come to Him for light and strength, and He has promised that you shall find rest to your soul. If you will

find heart and voice to pray, He will be sure to hear, and an arm will be reached down to save you. There is a God that hears prayer, and when all other resources fail, He is your refuge, a very present help in time of trouble. . . .

“If you go to God with a humble, believing heart to seek for guidance in your perplexity, then it is your privilege to rest your case with Him. Heaven and earth may pass before the promise would fail. Then take God at His word. . . . Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and your confidence will never be betrayed, never be turned against you. Look at Jacob pleading with God on the plains of Penuel. His prayer was heard and answered, and he obtained a mighty victory.” *—This Day With God, p. 184*