



The Reformation
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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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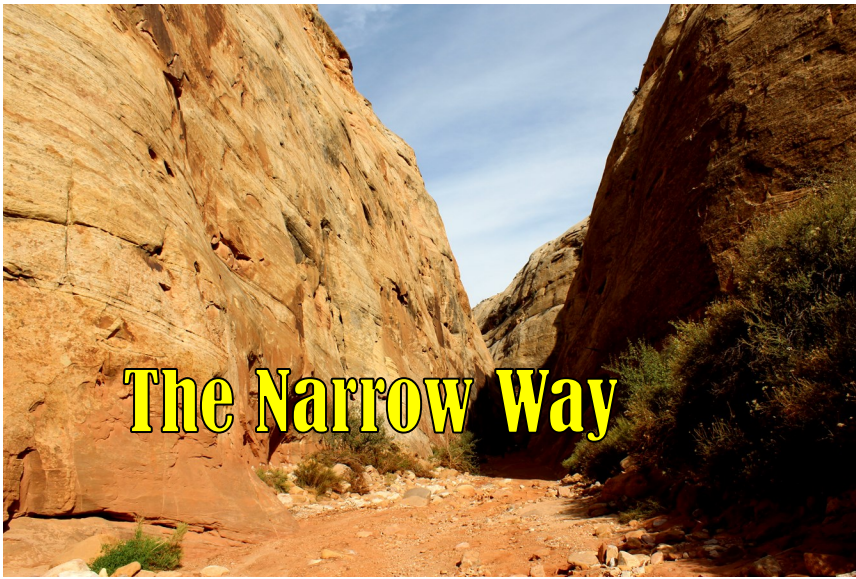
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The Narrow Way

*“Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”
Matthew 7:14*

“Those who walk in the narrow way are following in the footprints of Jesus. The light from heaven illuminates their path.” –*Medical Ministry*, p. 62

“If we take Christ for our guide, He will lead us safely along the narrow way. The road may be rough and thorny; the ascent may be steep and dangerous; there may be pitfalls upon the right hand and upon the left; we may have to endure toil in our journey; when weary, when longing for rest, we may have to toil on; when faint, we may have to fight; when discouraged, we may be called upon to hope; but with Christ as our Guide we shall not lose the path to immortal life, we shall not fail to reach the desired haven at last.

“Christ Himself has trod the rough pathway before us and has smoothed the path for our feet. The narrow path of holiness, the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, is illuminated by Him who is the light of the world. As we follow in His steps, His light will shine upon us, and as we reflect the light borrowed from the glory of Christ, the path will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.” –*Our Father Cares*, p. 134–135

“Men and women who profess to be disciples of Christ and to keep all the commandments of God will have to feel in their daily lives the true spirit of agonizing to enter in at the strait gate. The agonizing ones are the only ones who will urge their passage through the strait gate and narrow way that lead to life eternal, to fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. Those who merely seek to enter in will never be able. The entire Christian life of many will be spent in no greater effort than that of seeking, and their only reward will be to find it an

ever impossibility for them to enter in at that strait gate.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 479-480

“Many today think that when they begin their Christian life they will find freedom from all want and difficulty. But everyone who takes up his cross to follow Christ comes to a Rephidim in his experience. Life is not all made up of green pastures and cooling streams. Disappointment overtakes us, privations come, circumstances occur which bring us into difficult places. As we follow in the narrow way, doing our best, as we think, we find that grievous trials come to us. . . . Conscience stricken, we reason, if we had walked with God, we would never have suffered so. . . .

“But of old the Lord led His people to Rephidim, and He may choose to bring us there also, in order to test our faithfulness and loyalty to Him. In mercy to us, He does not always place us in the easiest places; for if He did, in our self-sufficiency we would forget that the Lord is our helper in time of necessity. But He longs to manifest Himself to us in our emergencies, and reveal the abundant supplies that are at our disposal, independent of our surroundings; and disappointment and trial are permitted to come upon us that we may realize our own helplessness, and learn to call upon the Lord for aid, as a child, when hungry and thirsty, calls upon its earthly father.

“Our heavenly Father has the power of turning the stony rock into life-giving and refreshing streams. We shall never know, until we are face to face with God, . . . how many burdens He has borne for us, and how many burdens He would have been glad to bear if, with child-like faith, we had brought them to Him.” –*Signs of the Times*, September 10, 1896

“Those who travel in the narrow way are talking of the joy and happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy, sacred joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, nor talk like them, nor act like them. A pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled it Himself. His followers see His footsteps, and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely; so can they, if they follow in His footsteps.” –*Christian Experience and Teaching*, p. 156

Ellen G. White



Singleness of Purpose

Life is complicated, we have so many things to take care of and we do not always have time for everything. When two people fall in love, suddenly there is time for everything. There is a saying, "When there is a will, there is a way." If a person wants something badly enough, often he will be able to get it.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forging 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

Here Paul says, "This one thing I do..." All his strength, his mind, and his striving, was for one thing only. All his time, effort, and talents, were spent for one thing. He had forgotten his past, his defeats as well as victories, and also his many experiences. Yesterday's victories are not sufficient for today. He was reaching forth for the things that were before him. He pressed toward the mark as a man running a race. He kept his eyes fixed on the goal, without looking to the right or to the left. No other interest, no time for unnecessary work. No wasting precious time. Every member in his body was taxed to reach the goal. If you want salvation as your only goal, you will gain it. Paul had no divided interests. He put all on the altar, and he succeeded.

Have you ever admired a beautiful painting? The colours are so natural. You may say, "I wish I could paint like this." How is it done? You hear of many famous artists, how dedicated they are to their work. Great painters often neglect to eat properly or to sleep. They stay in their studio day after day. They often do not care what happens around them. Only one thing is important to them, and when all the focus is concentrated into one interest, they will be successful. They will produce beautiful paintings that others admire and pay fortunes to buy. These paintings came from the hand of an artist who put his all into it. Not just days, but years—a lifetime.

You hear beautiful music, great musicians playing. It captivates the mind. People pay money to attend concerts of these famous musicians performing. Many children, when they hear the music, say, "I want to learn to play music like this." So, the parents go out and buy an instrument such as a piano or violin, and enroll their child into music lessons. Then begins the practice for hours every day. Other children are playing ball outside, having fun. And, soon the desire dies out. The child says, "Who cares about music? It is too hard. I will never learn to play."

This is the reason why there are so few great artists, because so few are willing to dedicate their all to it. Some may try an instrument for a while, and then switch to something else. Soon he can play a dozen instruments—but is he any good at any of them? Very seldom.

Let us consider some businessmen who work day and night; they ruin their health and risk death, just to make money. Often they have heart attacks before they retire. Some are successful, whereas others end up in bankruptcy.

A mountain climber risks his life to reach the top of a high mountain. Why? What for? Often for fame and earthly glory. Men have crossed oceans in little boats. They have challenged the odds to become famous, to do something that others have not been able to do.

An athlete practices for hours and hours, taking care of his body to be able to run the race well, in order to obtain another trophy for his collection.

All of these have one purpose, one goal. The singleness of purpose is the secret of success.

In the Christian life, the same applies. A divided interest is weakness, whereas singleness of purpose is strength. "But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him, and said, Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:40-42. What was this one thing with Mary? It was to sit at the feet of Jesus and to listen to His words.

Jesus came to the home of Mary and Martha with all His disciples. They were probably all tired and hungry. Martha, being very hospitable tried to provide all the necessary comforts and food for everyone. But, Mary just sat at the feet of Jesus as He was teaching His disciples. There was a meeting, with Jesus as the speaker, and Martha lost the blessing.

This world is filled with work, and duties to perform. We

could be busy from morning until night, seven days a week, and the work would never end. Jesus could have said, "two things are needful, to serve visitors, and to listen to His words. Martha would have felt better. But no, Jesus said, "One thing is needful."

Someone else had the same desire as Mary. "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple." Psalm 27:4

David had only one desire. He could have desired many things—peace among countries, riches, honour, comforts, wisdom. No, David had only one desire and that was so that he may dwell in the house of God all the days of his life. Being a king meant that he had a very busy life. He was a judge, an army general, and looking after the affairs of the nation was a full time job. Still he had time to go to the temple to behold the beauty of the Lord, and learn of God.

David had only one goal in his life, one purpose and went on to say, "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Psalm 84:10. One day in God's temple was better than 1,000 days somewhere else. Is this your desire also?

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:31-34

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. The first in our life. How do we seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness? It is through Bible study, prayer, attending meetings, meditating, and obeying His commandments.

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isaiah 55:2. Why spend money on needless things, and labour for things that do not really satisfy?

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in

time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." Luke 8:11-14

The cares of this life choke the little plants of love in the heart; and, therefore, love to God cannot grow.

Today's man has two problems, and both have to do with time. Man has no time to study the Bible, to seek God, to prepare himself for the coming of the Lord, or to do missionary work—too busy.

The second problem is boredom, nothing to do, life is uninteresting, dull. To kill time they spend it in reading, shows, entertainment, and in pleasure-seeking. Idleness is a curse; it leads to evil, to sin.

If we let the Lord organize our lives, He will show us how to reorganize our lives, making time for needful things. If we seek the Lord the way David did, we can say "Thou prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." Psalm 23:5-6

David had learned another lesson: "He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved." Psalm 47:4. The Lord will choose an inheritance for us in this life already. He know us and loves us. We are stewards of His goods. Which is easier? To be a faithful steward over one talent or over five talents? Many talented people become unfaithful and forget God.

Jesus spoke of singleness of purpose. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24

In the next verse He continues, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Matthew 6:25

What is Jesus explaining in these two verses? He is telling us that it is impossible to serve two masters. Worrying for our lives means serving two masters. If we try to serve two masters, we lose both of them. God cannot bless us or protect us. We are not fully enjoying the world and its pleasures.

In the lives of all men there are ups and downs, happy days and sad days, good luck and misfortune. But, in the life of a Christian there is only one mood. "Rejoice evermore." 1 Thessalonians 5:16. "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand

there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:11

In the life of a true Christian there will not be so many downs, only ups—continually reaching higher and higher, drawing closer to God, nearer to heaven, to greater happiness and joy.

Why then are there sad, gloomy, unhappy Christians? "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." Psalm 32:10–11

The rich, young man went away sorrowful. He needed one more thing in order for his joy to be full. He had kept all the commandments all his life, yet still he was sorrowful, insecure about his salvation.

What about the trials, tests, and persecution in a Christian's life? What made Abraham so great that he was called the "father of faith"? It was the sacrifice he was willing to make; he offered his son as a sacrifice. Abraham lived 175 years. He was wealthy and respected by all. but the greatest test of his life took three days.

Daniel is famous for being in the lion's den for one night. He was also wealthy. He was a respected statesman. He was the prime minister before and after his test.

Joseph was the favourite son of his father while at home. He ended up being cast into prison. But only for a little while, then he was exalted above all his brothers.

"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:1–3

Even though the Lord has torn, He will heal the smitten, He will bind them up. How soon? After two days. If we follow the Lord, our going forth is prepared as the morning. He is like the sunshine and the rain. Jesus, the Sun of righteousness will shine upon us. The Holy Spirit will refresh us like the rain.

Job was a wealthy man, the greatest of all the men in the East. He had 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and a very great household. And then he lost it all for a time.

"So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters." Job 42:12–13. The amount of his livestock doubled

after he lost everything. The Lord blessed him for his faithfulness throughout the trial.

"Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness. For His anger endureth but a moment; in His favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psalm 30:4–5. The Lord's anger is short towards us.

While we are tried and tested, what will the Lord do? "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deuteronomy 33:25. The Lord gives strength to the weak.

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3. All that we must endure is for a reason. It is to purify our characters.

We may have to forsake something when we follow Jesus. "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Matthew 19:29. When we forsake our sins and idols for Jesus' sake, we receive something 100 times better. The Lord is good. He loves His children dearly. He wants us to be happy, rejoicing every day.

There are two kinds of Christians, two classes of professors of religion—not good, better, or best. But, saved and unsaved. Those that are saved are happy, joyful and smiling. They love God. They love their fellowmen. Those that are still unsaved are often perplexed, sad, distressed, confused, critical, fault-finding, fanatical.

The Pharisees were a very religious sect, strict in outward ceremonies. But, they did not have the sweet love of Jesus in their hearts. With the love of Jesus in the heart, we will be like a compass. It does not matter where it is positioned, it always points towards the north.

What is in the north? "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." Isaiah 14:13. These verses refer to Lucifer; however, we see here that in the north is the throne of God.

Wherever we are we should always point to God—seek Him, follow Him—to have one purpose in life. One Master, one Shepherd to follow, one God, and to reflect Christ's character. One plan to save souls.

One thing is needful; if you find it, accept it. All other things shall be added unto you besides. Amen.

Adapted from a sermon by Timo Martin

Seven Blessings

of Revelation



It is well known that there are many sevens in Revelation as a symbol of perfection and fullness. There are seven churches, seven spirits, seven stars, seven seals, seven horns, seven eyes, seven trumpets, seven angels, and so on. However, it is rarely discussed that Revelation also has seven blessings. In this article, we will study the meaning and significance of the seven blessings of Revelation.

THE FIRST BLESSING

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 1:3

Revelation is a book given especially to those who live in the last days. The final crisis is coming, and the time is coming when every person and nation will need to make a choice that will determine their eternal fate. Therefore, there was never a time as now when it has been so crucial to study this book “for the time is at hand.” Through the book of Revelation, God shows us what will happen to us during the world’s final era.

Indeed, most of these seven blessings in Revelation specifically apply to the remnant people of God. And the first blessing shows us how we must study the book of Revelation to receive all these blessings. Just as we need a key to open a treasure box, we need three elements to understand and receive the prophecies, messages, and blessings of Revelation: Read, hear, and keep.

First of all, if we do not read we cannot receive anything, just as we cannot nourish our bodies without eating. But this reading is not merely the act of reading letters and words. Reading means active participation in seeking the truth and understanding. “For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:8

Some Christians take a passive stance. They believe that going to church and listening to sermons is enough to maintain their spiritual life; thus, barely reading and seeking the words of God by themselves. Those who do so are not on safe ground. Only those who seek and read will find the treasures hidden in Revelation.

However, what about the opposite? What if someone studies the Bible alone and does not attend church? That will expose them to a high risk of a wrong interpretation. “For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Matthew 7:8. God has entrusted the truth to the church, not independently to individuals.

“God has made His church a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give one an experience independent of the church. He does not give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church, while the church, Christ’s body, is left in darkness.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 414

Therefore, the willingness to “hear” and learn from the channel God has assigned and anointed is the key to receiving the treasures found in Revelation.

However, all the reading and hearing would be in vain if we do not “keep” the word. What if we know the future, that there will be a fire in our house tomorrow? Would we not escape to save our lives? What happens if we do not escape? It is the same. God not only shows us the future but also gives us instructions on what we can do to be saved. We will lose our eternal life if we do not keep those words. “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

Only when we realize that “the time is at hand” and be ready to “read, hear, and keep,” we will be able to receive the seven blessings of Revelation.

THE SECOND BLESSING

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” Revelation 14:13

The second blessing is given to those who died after receiving three angels’ messages (Revelation 14:6–12) as they will be counted as part of the 144,000 (Revelation 14:1–5) and therefore be privileged to see the second coming of Jesus. This is unlike the great multitude who will be resurrected after Jesus comes to the earth. Those who receive this second blessing will be able to see the complete procession of His second coming.

But that is not all that is contained in this blessing. The blessing continues: “their works do follow them.” What does it mean?

John the Baptist was a servant of God who prepared for the first advent of Jesus, just as we, today, should prepare for the Second Advent.

In human eyes, the life of John the Baptist seemed to be a failure. Even John the Baptist himself had suffered from this idea: “There were hours when the whisperings of demons tortured his spirit, and the shadow of a terrible fear crept over him. Could it be that the long-hoped-for Deliverer had not yet appeared? Then what meant the message that he himself had been impelled to bear? John had been bitterly disappointed in the result of his mission. He had expected that the message from God would have the same effect as when the law was read in the days of Josiah and of Ezra (2 Chronicles 34; Nehemiah 8, 9); that there would follow a deep-seated work of repentance and returning unto the Lord. For the success of this mission his whole life had been sacrificed. Had it been in vain?”

“John was troubled to see that through love for him, his own disciples were cherishing unbelief in regard to Jesus. Had his work for them been fruitless? Had he been unfaithful in his mission, that he was now cut off from labor? If the promised Deliverer had appeared, and John had been found true to his calling, would not Jesus now overthrow the oppressor’s power, and set free His herald?” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 216

It was the same experience of the Adventist pioneers. They had been looking forward to the second coming of Jesus. They had invested their whole life in preparation for His coming. They sold all their properties and gave up everything on this earth. On October 22, 1844, all their works and labours seemed to be in vain. However, was it indeed in vain?

It is also the same experience we will go through, especially during the time of Jacob’s trouble. Demons will whisper to us that all our faith was in vain. All our repentance was in vain. Demons will tell us that the church of God is gone, all scattered around the world, thus implying that all our works and labours for the gospel were in vain.

However, is it indeed in vain?

“Jesus did not interpose to deliver His servant. He knew that John would bear the test. Gladly would the Saviour have come to John, to brighten the dungeon gloom with His own presence. But He was not to place Himself in the hands of enemies and imperil His own mission. Gladly would He have delivered His



faithful servant. But for the sake of thousands who in after years must pass from prison to death, John was to drink the cup of martyrdom. As the followers of Jesus should languish in lonely cells, or perish by the sword, the rack, or the fagot, apparently forsaken by God and man, what a stay to their hearts would be the thought that John the Baptist, to whose faithfulness Christ Himself had borne witness, had passed through a similar experience!” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 242

The life of John the Baptist was not in vain. Even though he could not see it, his life became a comfort and encouragement for thousands of martyrs throughout the ages. His works did follow him.

The lives of Adventist pioneers were not in vain. Even though they may not have recognized it at the moment, they were laying the foundation for the last church of God on this earth. Their works did follow them.

So it will be with our lives. They will not be in vain. There will be moments when they seem to be in vain. However, God has promised in His blessing that our works will follow us. We might not be able to see it. However, it does not matter. What matters is that God can see it.

This promise has more meaning, just as many Bible verses have multiple layers of lessons for us to learn from. Work was given to human beings as a blessing. However, labour was cursed as a result of our sins.

“To the dwellers in Eden was committed the care of the garden, ‘to dress it and to keep it.’ Their occupation was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. God appointed labor as a blessing to man, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body, and to develop his faculties. In men-

tal and physical activity Adam found one of the highest pleasures of his holy existence. And when, as a result of his disobedience, he was driven from his beautiful home, and forced to struggle with a stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor, although widely different from his pleasant occupation in the garden, was a safeguard against temptation and a source of happiness. Those who regard work as a curse, a burden though it be with weariness and pain, are cherishing an error. The rich often look down with contempt upon the working classes, but this is wholly at variance with God's purpose in creating man. What are the possessions of even the most wealthy in comparison with the heritage given to the lordly Adam? Yet Adam was not to be idle. Our Creator, who understands what is for man's happiness, appointed Adam his work. The true joy of life is found only by the working men and women. The angels are diligent workers; they are the ministers of God to the children of men. The Creator has prepared no place for the stagnating practice of indolence." *—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 50*

For our sake, labour was cursed and became difficult. When we think about the impact of work on our lives, it seems to be a great loss, but we will still work in heaven, however, the labours in heaven will be totally different from the labours here on earth. Just as it was at the beginning, our work will be our highest pleasure and enjoyment. In this way, our labour will be restored to that which God intended for us.

THE THIRD BLESSING

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Revelation 16:15

It was not only the joyous labour that we lost in the Garden but also our garments. What was the garment that our first parents wore? What was it made of? It was neither silk, cotton, nor leather.

"As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health and glowed with the light of life and joy. Adam's height was much greater than men who now inhabit the earth. Eve was somewhat less in stature; yet her form was noble, and full of beauty. The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them." *—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 45*

The light and glory of God comes from His character, His righteousness. For this reason, Adam and Eve lost their garments of light as soon as they committed sin. They lost His character through sin, and naturally, their garments

were lost also. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Genesis 3:6-7

Since then, the human race has tried to hide their nakedness through their works. Many have attempted to become righteous through their own efforts. Sometimes, they have tried to keep the law of God in their own strength. Sometimes, they went on long journeys to visit "sacred places." Sometimes, they even tortured their bodies. However, none of these works could hide their nakedness.

However, in His mercy, God has given us a garment. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Genesis 3:21

And this is how we can restore the garments that we lost, through God's little Lamb, Yes, Jesus Christ. He is our righteousness and the only way to salvation. As the light became brighter and brighter, this garment has been called by many different names and terms: the present truth, the Three Angels' Message, Christ Our Righteousness, the 1888 Message, and so on.



Revelation shows us that we live in a time where we are being investigated to see if we are keeping on these garments. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son. . . . And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Matthew 22:2, 11-13; Revelation 14:6-7

Yes, the time in which we live—the investigative judgment—is when we need to keep our garments more than

at any other time.

The Bible verses we just read provide an important connection between the first three blessings and the following three. We have a place to go, dressed in this garment of Christ Our Righteousness.

THE FOURTH BLESSING

“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” Revelation 19:9

The Seven Blessings of Revelation has a Chiasmus format. Chiasmus means “a rhetorical or literary figure in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, in the same or a modified form.” There are many Chiasmi in the Bible. For example, the Bible's first two chapters describe the creation of the earth. Correspondingly, the last two chapters of the Bible describe the recreation of the world. Also, the third chapter of Genesis describes how sin entered into the world, and the third chapter from the last of Revelation describes how sin will vanish.

The Seven Blessings of Revelation has the same pattern. The first and sixth, the second and fifth, and the third and fourth correspond to each other, leaving the seventh as a conclusion.

The wedding ceremony that we will a end with the restored garment will be that of Christ and the New Jerusalem. This ceremony will take place at the end of the Great Controversy. In other words, this event will mean the end of sorrow, suffering, and sin. It will be our honour to



a end this ceremony that represents the great and eternal victory of Jesus.

Also, this wedding will have significant meaning for the marriage institution itself. As there will be no more marriages in heaven, the union of Christ and New Jerusalem will be the last marriage in history. In this way, the marriage institution will be made complete and sealed, fulfilling its sacred purpose since the beginning. Also, God

will declare the end to the great suffering brought to marriage institutions, families, and societies by sin. In this way, God not only restores the marriage but also completes and fulfills it.

THE FIFTH BLESSING

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” Revelation 20:6

In contrast to the special resurrection in the second blessing, we can see the first resurrection in the fifth blessing, which applies to the great multitude, which includes all the saved people except the 144,000.

Here, just as in other blessings, God has promised a restoration. In the beginning, humans were given dominion over the earth. “Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands. Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature.” *—The Review and Herald, February 24, 1874*

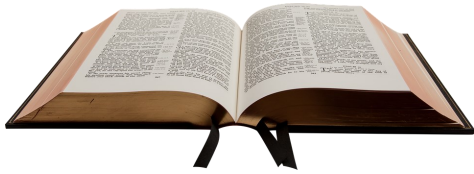
However, we have given this rulership to Satan by yielding to his temptations. Since then, we have become slaves to Satan and to our sins. However, Jesus came to this earth, defeated our enemies, and set us free. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1

However, Jesus did not stop by just setting us free. He has promised to make us His kings and priests again. “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:9–10

THE SIXTH BLESSING

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Revelation 22:7

We can see that this verse corresponds with the first blessing. However, there are some differences. Unlike the first blessing, it does not have “readeth” and “hear.” By the time we come to the sixth blessing, we reach the last chapter of Revelation. It means that those who reached this verse have been reading and hearing. Therefore, there is no need to talk about reading and hearing again. Still, the



Bible reemphasizes the need to “keep”.

By this time, readers and hearers should have a good idea

regarding the events of the future. However, if we are not doers of His word, all the reading and hearing will be in vain. We need to be doers to complete these seven blessings and receive them.

THE SEVENTH BLESSING

“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

Probably among all seven blessings, this promise will have the most personal and emotional meaning for human beings. The story of sin and misery started when our first parents chose the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil instead of the Tree of Life. Immediately after sin, the gate to the Garden of Eden was closed, and we lost access to the Tree of Life and eternal life.

“But after man’s fall, holy angels were immediately commissioned to guard the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light having the appearance of a glittering sword. None of the family of Adam were permitted to pass the barrier to partake of the life-giving fruit; hence there is not an immortal sinner.” –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 60

The Garden of Eden remained on this earth until the Flood. Throughout their lives, Adam and his family could see the Tree of Life beyond the gate. “The beautiful garden of Eden, from which our first parents had been driven, remained until God determined to destroy the earth by a Flood. The Lord had planted that garden, and especially blessed it; and in His wonderful providence He withdrew it from the earth, and will return it again, more gloriously adorned than before it was removed. God purposed to preserve a specimen of His perfect work of creation free from the curse which sin had brought upon the earth.” –*The Signs of The Times*, February 20, 1879

Picture yourself watching this tree along with the other families of Adam. What feelings it would have brought about, seeing the tree yet without having access to it, due to our sins! And ever since that time, it has become the desire of our human race to return to this tree, calling the end to the long history of sin. We have gone to the wrong tree. How exceedingly we have been wishing to have a second chance to choose the right tree again!

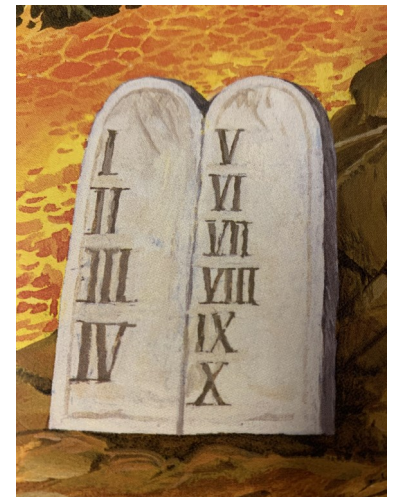
The last blessings of Revelation close as it gives promise to our long desire. “Blessed are they that do His com-

mandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14

The gates will not be closed again. They will be wide open. There will be no more glittering swords to stop us. We will enter as people who have a right to eat from the Tree of Life, thus enjoying eternal life.

“While seated in this beautiful, retired park, free from all confusion and bustle, a sweet peace came over my spirits. I seemed to be taken away from myself, and the bright home of the saints was presented vividly before me. In imagination I gathered with the saints around the wide-spreading tree of life. Friends and dear home relatives who had been separated from us by death were gathered there. The redeemed, white-robed multitude, who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, were there. No flashing guard stood around the tree of life, barring our approach. With happy, joyous songs of praise, the voices were blended in perfect harmony as we plucked of the fruit from the tree of life.” –*Lectures and Manuscripts*, vol. 3, Lt 30, 1882

This promise has a condition: “they that do His commandments.” Do you think it is a difficult requirement? Not at all. As we discussed already, we earn the right to this tree, not by our works, but by God’s little Lamb. The central message of Revelation, more especially the Present Truth and the Three Angels’ Messages, is Christ Our Righteousness. Simply, it means that we can keep the law of God through His power, not ours. Through faith, we will “do His commandments.” By faith, we will be “doers of the word.”



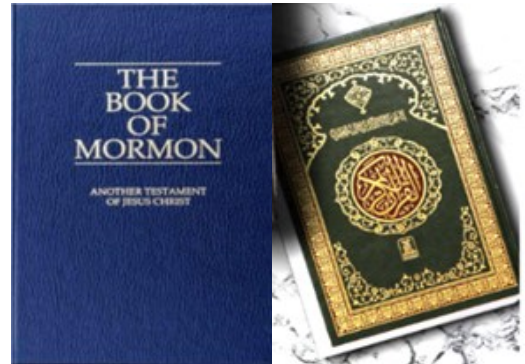
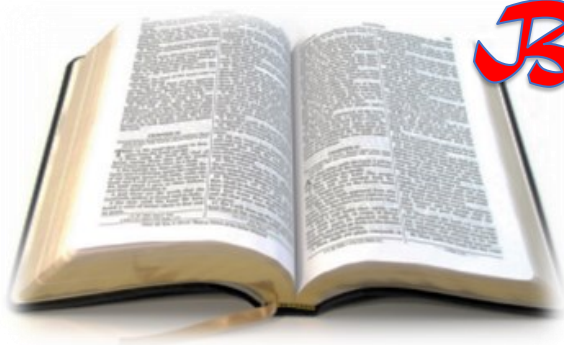
My dear brothers and sisters, are you ready to receive the seven blessings of Revelation? Are you ready to read, hear and keep? God has prepared so many gifts for us. God is about to show us the future. God is about to restore our labour, garments, wedding, dominion, and the Tree of Life. God is inviting you today to come and receive all of these. May God bless us that we all will be partakers of these blessings. Amen.

Makoto Matsumoto

The Bible and Other Sacred

Books

Part 2



How well do you know the Bible? Do you value it as the Word of God?

Have you ever read any other religious books that are called (holy) sacred books from other religions? If you have read some, how did you think they compare with the Bible?

Regarding religions, are they all true? From your own research, which books specifically are inspired and agree with God's Word? We know that the Bible was written by holy men who were inspired by God. But what about the others? There are many other "sacred" books for many religions, such as: Quran for Muslims, the Tripitaka for Buddhism, the The Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Arabic: The Most Holy Book) for Bahá'í Faith, Hadith, and The Tafsir for Islam, The Tao Te Ching of the Taoism, the *Kojiki* for Shintō religion. Which ones are trustworthy?

"What is truth?"

In the year AD 31, this question was asked by the Roman governor, Pilate. He was judge over the people. He ruled other lands for many years, but he asked, "What is truth?"

Why did he ask this important question? Because Jesus confirmed that He is a king. "Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." John 18:37-38

I ask you now, what is truth for you? How do you know that other religious writings are not inspired by God? How sure are you about your belief? Or have you been raised to believe that only the Bible is the inspired word of God?

This leads us to ask about other books that claim to be inspired by God. We will look in detail at the Quran and the Book of Mormon and compare them with the Bible. These books, however, are quite different from the Bible.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Book of Mormon is one of several books considered as holy by Mormons, who refer to themselves as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. It was the work of one man, Joseph Smith, who did not witness the events described therein.

Joseph Smith lived from 1805 to 1844. He was put on trial in 1826 for being a "glass-looker" (a con-artist), which calls into question his credibility. Smith claimed that he was visited by an angel named "Moroni" in the year 1823, who gave him the location of buried golden plates that contained sacred writings. They were written in the language that Joseph Smith called "reformed Egyptian." However, there is no historical evidence for a language called "reformed Egyptian." In contrast, the Bible was written in known languages: Hebrew and Greek. Joseph Smith lived thousands of years after the supposed history contained in the Book of Mormon. He was not an eye-witness to any of the things he wrote. And no other eye-witness accounts confirm any of the events described therein. Also, the Book of Mormon has no corroboration with other books written by other authors to its supposed history while the Bible was written by multiple authors who were eye-witnesses to the events they recorded.

The Book of Mormon has some teachings that contradicts the Bible teachings such as, little children cannot sin because they do not have a sinful nature (Moroni 8:8). Yet, the Bible teaches that people are born with a sinful nature (Psalm 51:5; 58:3). The Book of Mormon

teaches that Adam's fall into sin was necessary in order for him to have children (2 Nephi 2:22–25). This contradicts the Bible in which God commanded Adam and Eve to go forth and multiply (Genesis 1:28) and to *abstain* from eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17), which would be logically impossible if the Book of Mormon were true.

Mormonism contradicts the Bible truth about the nature of the Godhead as recorded in Scripture. Namely, the Bible teaches that God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit are distinct persons (Psalm 110:1; John 5:31–37; 14:16, 26; 15:26), yet each of these persons is fully God (1 Timothy 1:2; John 20:28; Acts 5:3–4). And there is one and *only one* Living God (Deuteronomy 6:4), and He does not change with time (Malachi 3:6). However, the Mormon religion is *polytheistic*; it has multiple gods. Joseph Smith publicly claimed that God the Father was once a man like us who then ascended to godhood. Mormons teach that human men too can become gods like the Heavenly Father. This violates the biblical teaching that there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

The Book of Mormon fails the test of internal consistency by also affirming and denying the Bible and so the book of Mormon is *not* from God.

There is no historical evidence that anything described in the Book of Mormon actually happened. Moreover, there is no archeology to verify these stories. Archeologists consult the Bible when they want to know where to dig. They do not consult the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon has none of the characteristics of God's Word, but instead has all the marks of being the invention of one man.

THE QURAN

The Quran (or Koran) is the basis of Islam. The Quran likewise was the work of one man: Muhammad. He lived from around the year A.D. 570 to 673 and considered himself a prophet of God. As a child, Muhammad apparently had some limited exposure to Christianity and the Bible. He would often go to a cave to pray, and when he was 40, he reported being visited by the angel Gabriel who gave him revelations from God. He then

began preaching these revelations to others. Muhammad's companions eventually wrote down these revelations, which became the Quran. The Quran is divided into chapters called "Surahs" and often refers to God as "Allah." Like Joseph Smith, Muhammad did not witness the alleged events recorded in the Quran. And, like the book of Mormon, the Quran does not have the corroboration of other authors. Again, this text has none of the characteristics of divine revelation and appears to be the invention of one man.

The Quran also fails the test of consistency with the Bible. Islam is monotheistic but specifically denies the three persons of the Godhead (Surah 4:171), and denies that Jesus is God (Surah 9:31, 23:91), in contrast to Scripture (Hebrews 1:8–12; John 20:28). The Quran endorses much of the Bible including the Gospel (Surah 3:3, 48, 65; 57:27). But it also *contradicts* the Gospel in claiming that Jesus was not actually crucified (Surah 4:157). Without the crucifixion and resurrection, there is no Gospel (1 Corinthians 15:12–19).

According to Scripture, Jesus is the Son of God (Matthew 16:16–17; 26:63–64; Mark 9:7; Luke 1:35; 22:70; John 1:24; 3:16; Romans 1:4, 9; 5:10; 8:3; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:17). This is the uniform teaching of Scripture. The Quran specifically denies that God could have a son. Surah 23:91 states, "No son did Allah begot, nor is there any god along with Him..." In Surah 4:171 the Quran states, "For Allah is One God: Glory be to Him; Far Exalted is He above having a son."

The Quran cannot be part of God's Word, since it both affirms and denies parts of the Bible. In the Bible additional revelations are always consistent with previous revelations. With the Quran this is not true.

Although Muhammad had been exposed to Christianity, his misunderstandings of it are revealed in the Quran. For example, the Quran mistakenly identifies Mary (the mother of Jesus) as the sister of Aaron (and Moses) and daughter of Imran (Surah 19:27–28; 66:12). It seems that Muhammad had confused Mary with Miriam, who lived around 1400 years earlier (Exodus 15:20). God would not make such a mistake, and therefore the Quran cannot be part of His Word. It is not consistent with the Bible.

Unless you search...

"None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain. . . .

"There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for willful blindness,"

—Last Day Events, p. 217-218

Both the Quran and the Book of Mormon endorse parts of the Bible. This is significant because the Bible itself provides tests by which we may judge if any particular book really is divine. One of those tests is that further revelation must be consistent with previous revelation (Deuteronomy 13:1–3; Galatians 1:8–9). The God of truth will never contradict Himself (2 Timothy 2:13).

The Quran and the Book of Mormon each appear to have an entirely human origin without any divine inspiration. They have none of the characteristics of God's Word.

The Reliability of the Bible

The Bible extends to us claims of being God's inspired revelation to man, which is not true for all other so-called Holy and sacred books. Human intelligence and skill alone could not possibly have produced the Bible. It is unique and authentic, far above all other literature.

The Bible is considered a treasure because it contains 31,000 promises and valuable advice for the home, young people, and education. It encourages, comforts, and strengthens us. It tells us "Fear not" 360 times. It has reason to be called the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God, the Holy Book, the Divine Letter, the Book of Books. There is much evidence to prove that the Bible was inspired by God:

The harmony of its message:

The word Bible means "a set of books." There are a total of 66 books: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. Although it was written by more than 40 authors over a period of 1600 years it presents a unified message. These men came from different walks of life and were eye-witnesses to the events they recorded. They include kings, prime ministers, doctors, sheriffs, shepherds, prophets, priests, apostles, and scholars. Some of these men were in palaces. Some in prisons. Some in exile. Some in captivity.

Yet, these books complement each other, and there is one common thread that runs through them. There are no contradictions found because the writings were inspired by God. In spite of the long time period and the changes in society it is a unified whole.

Its historical accuracy, proven by archaeology.

Archaeological excavations confirm the historical verac-

ty of the Bible. 2500 places mentioned in the Bible have been discovered by archeologists. Cities like Babylon, Lachish, Hazor, Meggido, Nineveh, and others along with palaces and artifacts have been uncovered, like the Ivory Palace of King Ahab. God has proven the authenticity of His word as seen in discoveries such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Chester Beatty Codex, and others. Complete libraries have also been found. Numerous discoveries in the Middle East confirm Biblical history.

Prophecies accurately fulfilled:

Prophecy is a strong indicator that the Bible is more than just a human document. The chances that this many prophecies could be fulfilled is very slim from a human standpoint, yet all Biblical prophecies have come to pass. There are more than 2300 prophecies about people, empires, nations, and events that give us a view of the past, the present, and the future and they have all been fulfilled. This can only prove divine origin.

It contains predictions about scientific advances. It mentions cars and airplanes, the laws of gravity, the weight of air, the earth being a sphere, contrary to the knowledge of the time.

Through the prophetic chains in the Book of Revelation, the political and religious history of about 2,000 years has been foretold. We are told why Hitler and Napoleon lost the war, who will rule the world, the cause of the current world crisis, etc.

There are 333 prophecies about a single Man, Jesus Christ, which were written centuries before He was even born.

People have been converted by it.

Reading the Bible has helped people to change dramatically for the better. Terrorists, murders, thieves, adulterers have become decent people and useful members of society. The Bible answers the most important questions of life: Where do we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? It describes the origin of sin in a perfect world and its eradication and salvation through Jesus Christ. Jesus confirmed the authority and reliability of Scripture in His day and He lived by it.

The most widely distributed book:

The Bible is the most widely distributed book in the world. It has been translated—at least partially—into



more than 3600 languages. Yearly more than 150 million Bibles and parts of Bibles are distributed.

“It is the first and highest duty of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk in the light and encourage others to follow his example. We should day by day study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought and comparing scripture with scripture. With divine help we are to form our opinions for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God. . . . The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed. These men are false teachers” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 598–599

The Bible deserves our interest because, in a world filled with books, the Bible stands alone as the Book of the world. It is indeed the Book of Books. Many people affirm this to be true, such as:

Daniel Webster – “I have read it through many times, and I pity the man who cannot find in it a rich supply of thought and rule of conduct.”

Abraham Lincoln – “I am probably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all this book upon reason that you can, and the balance by faith and you will live and die a better man.”

Dr. William Lyon Phelps – “I thoroughly believe in a university education; but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college education is more valuable than a college course without the Bible.”

The Bible should be at the heart of all education. No person is well informed, however thoroughly educated,

without a knowledge of the Bible. The Bible is a timeless and eternal book. The oldest books of the Bible were written more than 1500 years before Christ, or about 3500 years ago. Although written thousands of years ago, its message is as fresh and as meaningful as ever. It is very relevant for mankind today as it has been all throughout history.

Accountability of not searching for truth

“None will be condemned for not heeding light and knowledge that they never had, and they could not obtain.” –*Last Day Events*, p. 218

“Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected. There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. . . . there is no provision made for willful blindness.” –*Ibid.*, p. 219

May God help and assist you in your study of the Bible and in your efforts to help others see and understand what is really the Word of God today, among all the numerous so-called holy books that exist. Time is short. Life is too short, and eternity is too long for you to be wrong. For further personal study on this topic please go to www.biblewell.org. If you have questions or desire to learn more about the truth on various religions and churches, or any other subject, please contact us (www.4truth.ca; ismessenger@yahoo.com). May the Lord help you in your research. Amen.

Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo

“Our Saviour purchased the human race by humiliation of the very severest kind. . . . He points us to the only path that will lead to the strait gate, opening into the narrow way, beyond which lie broad and pleasant pastures. He has marked out every step of the way; and that no one may make a mistake, He tells us just what to do. ‘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 11:29, 30). This is the only way in which sinners can be saved. Knowing that no one can obey this command in his own strength, Christ tells us not to be worried nor afraid, but to remember what He can do if we come to Him, trusting in His strength. He says, If you yoke up with Me, your Redeemer, I will be your strength, your efficiency.”

–In Heavenly Places, p. 53

Young David - The Shepherd Boy

Based on 1 Samuel 16:12-58



Jesse first had seven sons - a perfect number,
Then was born a little later one more member
To his family, David was his name,
Who would bring to Israel great fame.

.....

Since David was the youngest,
He wasn't much regarded by the oldest,
For the oldest sons were soldiers in the army of King Saul,
Were men of war, they had no interest in David's keeping sheep at all.

.....

One day all sons had been at home,
Jesse was told that Samuel would come
To call him and all sons to sacrifice unto the LORD,
For Samuel was on a special errand according to God's word,
To anoint one son, to become the King of Israel.
For God had rejected the rebellious, disobedient King Saul.
And as the oldest son of Jesse, Eliab was passing before Samuel,
He thought because of his great looks and stature
This for sure is he!

But God refused him - saying,
Men judges only by the looks outward,
But the LORD does look upon the heart.
Then Jesse called Abinadab and Shammah, his next sons,
But Samuel said, these are not the chosen ones.
And so all seven passed before the Prophet's face,
He was stunned, none of them God had elected for His cause.
Then Samuel asked Jesse: "Are these all your children here?"
And Jesse said: "Yea, there is one more, the youngest,
He is keeping our sheep." "Go and fetch him!
We will not sit down till I see him."

After some time of waiting, David, ruddy-faced from running,
Beautiful and goodly looking,
Samuel heard God saying: "Arise, anoint him, for this is he!"
Then amidst Jesse and the sons Samuel took the horn of oil,
Anointed David, the astounded young shepherd - before them all.
And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from this day forward.

.....

Young David the Sheep-Keeper

As soon as he was old enough to keep his father's sheep,
David was happy and content out there in nature,
The beauty of the sky, the hills, the bubbling sound of brooks
gave him thrills, he had a curious, investigating mind,
Explored the fields, the trees, shrubs and bushes of all kind.
Was eager learning from all he saw, nature's wonders kept him in constant awe.
The sheep, he knew them all by name, they all were different,



Though looking all the same.
 On the way home some little, weakly lambs he carried in his arms.
 He had compassion on these humble creatures, he never shouted,
 Nor drove them hard, he had none of such features in his heart,
 He was gently leading, calling, guiding them from place to place
 To new feeding grounds, as he made them wander through the year around.

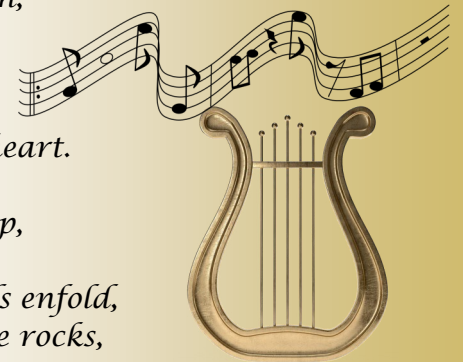


In warm summer nights David stayed in further regions,
 There he and the sheep under the starry sky did sleep,
 There in wonder on the grass he laid,
 Looking up in never-ending awe, what God did create
 The myriads of sparkling stars and worlds He made.
 His mind and thoughts were drawn upward to celestial realms,
 With heart and soul he dreams,
 To have communion with the living God,
 To be with Him and all His host.

In such nights inspiration made him write, composing psalms and songs of praise, to the Creator God, the Majesty of Heaven,
 To Whom holy worship, honour, adoration to be given.

.....
 But keeping sheep to David was not without danger,
 For he had encounter even with a lion and a bear.
 Even though as young he was, David was courageous,
 Let not one lamb or sheep robbed or take them from his keep,
 Love for these creatures gave him boldness to defend,
 Snatch the prey out of the mouths,
 Attacked the beasts with his own hands.
 Skillful with the sling and stone, he hit the lion thus to wound and hurt,
 Then took him by the beard, and slew the lion,
 Even once a bear with his own sword.

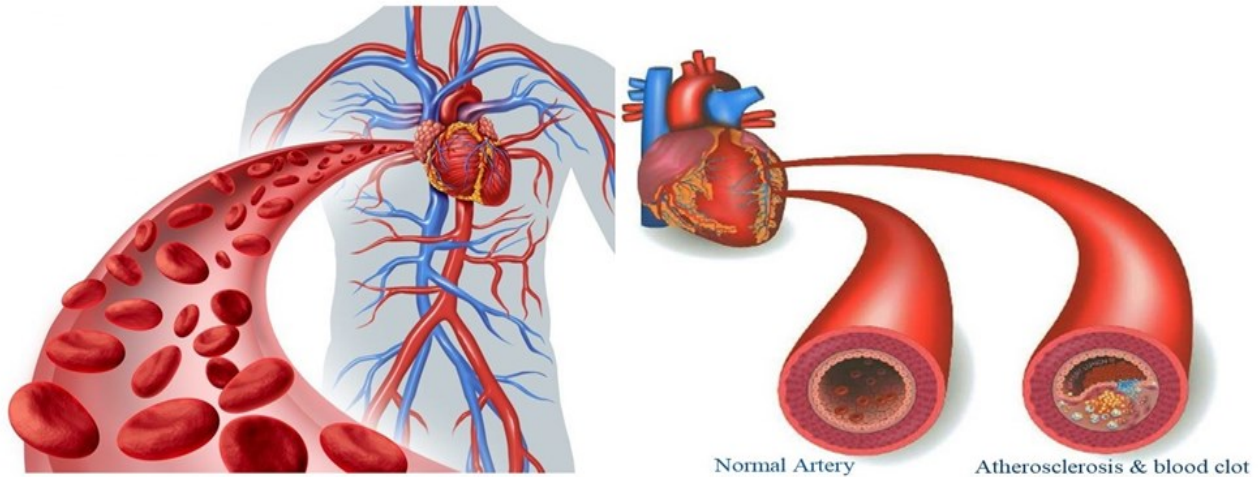
.....
 Out in nature David also played the harp,
 Making melody to God of praise deep from his heart.
 Sometimes a distance from his home
 David then was all alone there with his sheep,
 Exposed to Summer's heat,
 And Winter's cold, sudden downpours, biting winds enfold,
 Shelter nowhere be around, he ran for cover to the rocks,
 Wet and cold he looked for cracks,
 To rest and hide his little life in God's protecting hands confides.
 Ear-splitting thunder, frightful lightning,
 Made David see his helplessness against the elements,
 See his littleness - all this and all the nature's greatness.
 The care and duty for his flock, made David humble, patient;
 Always depended on God's mercy, making Him his Rock. -



.....
 Then one day, he was called home to see his father,
 To send him for an errand, then in an instant,
 his days of shepherding were over.
 -To be continued

Edda Tedford, Canada

Atherosclerosis and Cardiovascular Diseases



Cardiac problems are increasing very rapidly globally; this includes diseased vessels, structural problems, and blood clots. Heart disease is often a silent killer, and a leading cause of death for men and women of all races. Cardiovascular disease is a non-communicable disease taking the lives of about 17 million people each year. These problems are attributed to modernization, rapid urbanization, socioeconomic status, and increased consumption of processed foods. The term cardiovascular refers to the heart (cardio) and the blood vessels (vascular) —the arteries, arterioles, capillaries, which carry the blood throughout the body

Cardiovascular diseases therefore are disorders of the heart and blood vessels. These disorders include unstable angina, heart attack, heart failure, arrhythmia (abnormal heart rhythms), valve disease, high blood pressure, and others.

Coronary heart disease is a disease of the blood vessels supplying the heart muscle itself. Cerebrovascular disease is a disease of the blood vessels supplying the brain. Peripheral arterial disease is a disease of blood vessels supplying the arms and legs. Rheumatic heart disease is damage to the heart muscle and heart valves from rheumatic fever, which is caused by streptococcal bacteria. Congenital heart disease is a birth defect that affects the normal development and functioning of the heart caused by malformations of the heart structure from birth. Deep vein thrombosis is a blood clot located in the deep veins of the body, usually in the legs, which can dislodge and move to the lungs, causing a pulmonary embolism.

ARTERIOSCLEROSIS AND ATHEROSCLEROSIS

Arteriosclerosis occurs when the blood vessels that carry oxygen and nutrients from your heart to the rest of your

body (arteries) become thick and stiff, sometimes restricting blood flow to your organs and tissues. Healthy arteries are flexible and elastic, but over time, as one ages, the walls in the arteries can harden, a condition commonly called “hardening of the arteries”.

Atherosclerosis occurs when fat, cholesterol and other substances build up in the walls of arteries. These deposits are called plaques. Over time, these plaques can narrow or completely block the arteries and cause problems throughout the body. These plaques can also burst, triggering a blood clot. Although atherosclerosis is often considered a heart problem, it can affect arteries anywhere in your body

Aortic (the largest artery carrying blood away from the heart) atherosclerosis can cause thoracic and abdominal aneurysms (a bulging or weakening area in the wall of the vessel). Atherosclerosis is the main cause of cardiovascular disease (CVD) including, angina, heart attack, heart failure, or stroke. Atherosclerosis is mainly located in the innermost layer of many middle-sized and large arteries, especially where the vessels divide.

SYMPTOMS

Mild atherosclerosis usually does not have symptoms, but develops gradually until an artery is so narrowed or clogged that it cannot supply adequate blood to your organs and tissues. Sometimes a blood clot completely blocks blood flow, or even breaks apart triggering a heart attack or stroke.

Other signs can be experienced when moderate or severe atherosclerosis occurs depending on the arteries affected. For instance, if you have atherosclerosis in the arteries leading to your kidneys, you develop high blood pressure

or kidney failure. Atherosclerosis in the arteries leading to your genitals can affect reproductive function. If you have atherosclerosis in your heart arteries, you may have symptoms, such as chest pain or pressure (angina). If you have atherosclerosis in the arteries leading to your brain, you may have signs and symptoms such as sudden numbness or weakness in your arms or legs, difficulty speaking or slurred speech, or drooping muscles in your face. These signal a transient ischemic attack (TIA), which, if left untreated, may progress to a stroke. If you have atherosclerosis in the arteries in your arms and legs, you may have symptoms of peripheral artery disease, such as leg pain when walking.

CAUSES

Atherosclerosis is a slow, and progressive disease that may begin as early as childhood. It may start with damage or injury to the inner layer of an artery. The damage may be caused by:

- High blood pressure.
- High cholesterol, often from getting too much cholesterol or saturated fats in your diet.
- High triglycerides, a type of fat (lipid) in your blood.
- Smoking and other sources of tobacco.
- Diabetes.
- Inflammation from diseases, such as arthritis, lupus, infections, or inflammation from unknown causes.

SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK

Signs of a heart attack may include nausea, sweating, shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, feelings of anxiety, difficulty in swallowing, vomiting, sudden ringing in the ears, and loss of speech. The heart attack itself may feel like a band of intense pressure on the heart. A sharp pain is produced, which may last for several minutes, often extending to the shoulder, arm, neck, or jaw. It may be a small attack, producing relatively little discomfort. Sometimes it is mistaken as indigestion. In some cases, there are

no symptoms at all. This is termed a "silent heart attack."

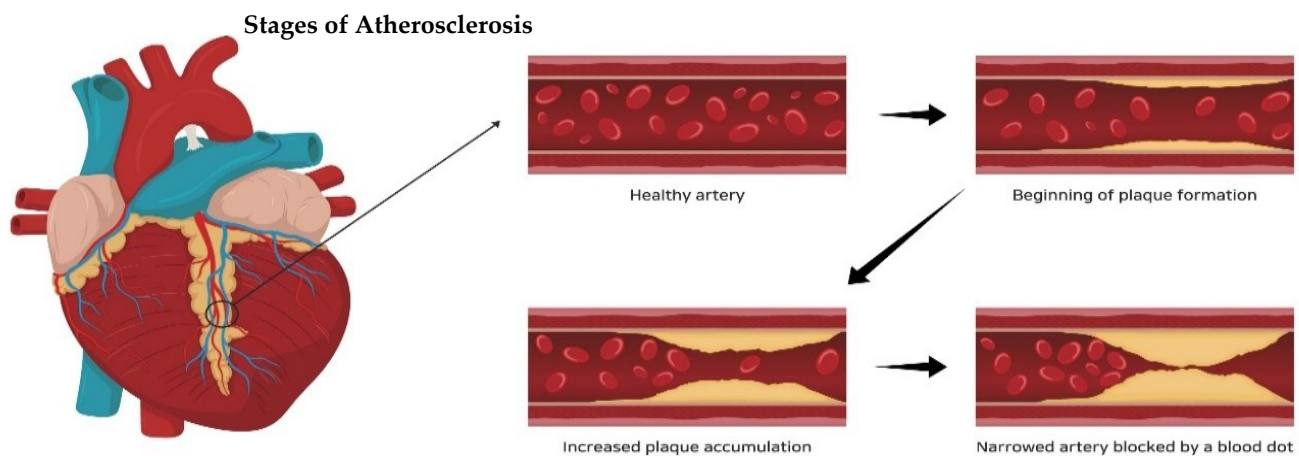
ANGINA AND HEART ATTACK

The arteries that nourish the heart muscle itself are the coronary arteries. But if these arteries become narrowed, not enough oxygen and nutrients are supplied to the heart, and not enough carbon dioxide and waste products are excreted it causes tight, heavy chest pain and happens usually following some exertion or after taking a meal. This is called Angina and can last 30-60 seconds. When the heart is not getting enough blood, your body sets off warning signals that the heart is at risk of damage. Angina is the specific type of pain you experience when the heart is in trouble. The pain generally recedes when the person rests. But it is a forewarning of events to come.

If the blood flow through the coronary arteries becomes entirely blocked or limited enough so that it does not reach a part of the heart, then a heart attack occurs. This refers to the formation of infarcts (areas of local tissue decay or death) in the myocardium (heart muscle). A heart attack does not always kill, but, whether it is mild or severe, a heart attack always produces some irreparable damage to the heart. The problem may not be in the heart, but in the arteries which nourish it. The arteries have hardened, and when cholesterol and other materials flow through them, a clot (also called a thrombus) may occur. The hardened walls do not flex to let the clot pass through.

Lack of oxygen and nutrients can also cause spasm of the coronary arteries, resulting in a heart attack. Then there is high blood pressure (called hypertension) which also prepares the way for a heart attack. When the heart pumps blood, the blood flows through the body at a fairly rapid speed. The muscular contractions of the heart produce a certain amount of pressure which produces this pumping action throughout the body, but sometimes the pressure builds up too high because the arteries are too narrow.

Angina then is when you feel there is not enough oxygen



(<https://www.vascularcures.org/atherosclerosis>)

coming to the heart, and a heart attack is when there is actual damage to the heart.

Caffeine is addictive and many people cannot start their day without coffee or tea containing caffeine, however, it greatly increases the incidence of coronary heart disease.

Today there is a widespread movement to improve one's health by changing the diet. For example: reducing the intake of fats, especially animal fats, in order to reduce the blood cholesterol and the dangers of atherosclerosis.

"Nut foods are coming largely into use to take the place of flesh meats. . . . When properly prepared, olives, like nuts, supply the place of butter and flesh meats. The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 298

"The Creator of man has arranged the living machinery of our bodies. Every function is wonderfully and wisely made. And God has pledged Himself to keep this machinery in healthful action if the human agent will obey His laws, and co-operate with God. Every law governing the human machinery is to be considered just as truly divine in origin, in character, and in importance, as the word of God. Every careless, inattentive action, any abuse put upon the Lord's wonderful mechanism, by disregarding his specified laws in human habitation, is a violation of God's law. We may behold and admire the work of God in the natural world, but human habitation is the most wonderful." –*Counsels for the Church*, p. 215

"Bad circulation causes the blood to become impure, induces congestion of the brain and lungs, and causes diseases of the heart, the liver, and the lungs." –*The Health Reformer*, August 1, 1868

Perfect health depends upon perfect circulation. "The more active the circulation the more free will be the blood from obstructions and impurities. The blood nourishes the body. The health of the body depends upon the healthful circulation of the blood. . . . At every pulsation of the heart, the blood should be propelled to the extremities quickly and easily in order to have health." –*Ibid.*, May 1, 1873

HEALTH TIPS

Here are some health guidelines that you should try to follow to reduce the risk of having cardiovascular disease of any kind.

1. Eat high-fiber foods that are low in fat and cholesterol. Primarily eat fruits, vegetables, and grains. Dark green leafy vegetables are important. Wheat bran, and other particulate fibers are not as effective as those in fruits, vegetables, and legumes.

2. Eat foods rich in vitamin E. This includes nuts, seeds, and whole grains.
3. Only use cold-pressed vegetable oils (soy, corn, wheat germ, flaxseed). Never heat these oils; place them on your food at the table.
4. Avoid refined sugar.
5. Do not eat animal protein;
6. Do not eat processed, dairy, white flour, spiced, or fried foods. Avoid pies, ice cream, excess salt, egg yolks, sugar, coffee, colas, nicotine, and alcohol.
7. Garlic eaten with foods tends to reduce the likelihood of cholesterol clogging arteries.
8. Eat no free oils or trans fats.
9. Eggplant tends to lower cholesterol levels.
10. Both peanut oil and coconut oil increase the risk of atherosclerosis.
11. Reduce stress and avoid situations causing it.
12. Get regular moderate exercise. Walking every day is the best.
13. A strict vegan diet is a good way to avoid artery problems.
14. Overweight people should reduce their weight. Even 20% or more above ideal weight carries a significantly increased risk of atherosclerosis. Ideal weight is a BMI of 18.5–24.5.
15. Do not smoke or use nicotine in any other form. Avoid second-hand smoke.
16. Eliminate all environmental sources of metal poisoning, such as aluminum or copper cooking utensils and contaminated water, etc.
17. Do not eat large evening meals. Best: Only eat plain fruit and plain bread for supper, and do this several hours before bedtime.
18. Chromium (found in brewer's yeast, whole grains, and supplements) added to the diet lowers cholesterol. Vitamin D can elevate blood cholesterol.
19. Keep the extremities warm to maintain good circulation in them. Do not wear constrictive clothing (belts, garters, girdles, tight hosiery, etc.)
20. Avoid constipation, which weakens the liver and kidneys and sludges the blood.
21. Drink enough water
22. Periodically check your blood pressure.

By Daniel Kimeu





THE STUDY OF DANIEL CHAPTER EIGHT AND NINE

Making it plain upon Tables

Preface

Before beginning this study, I felt impressed to point out the importance of the study of prophecies, in particular the end time prophecies and the need to make it plain upon tables. As says the word of God: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Proverbs 29:18

In looking at the full spectrum, I saw that throughout the ages, God's people have had the gift of Spirit of Prophecy. Christ himself prophesied. In prophetic tones, He spoke for example, of Jerusalem's destruction. Said He: "When you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) ..." Mark 13:14. It is interesting to note that He recognized and confirmed Daniel's prophetic calling, as well as his prophecy. Forty years later, in AD 70, we saw the fulfillment of this prophecy. Jerusalem was desolated by the Roman army under Titus. According to history, a lone unknown man, while not a prophet, sounded an alarm for seven years, for people to get out before the impending crisis—those who heeded, escaped the abomination of desolation. We too are called to warn the world to enable those who will, to escape the wrath to come.

This is a two-fold prophecy. Says the Pen of inspiration, E.G. White, an inspired eighteenth-century teacher and writer: "The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city, we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law." *—The Great Controversy*, p. 35–37. How necessary it is for a people today, an end time people, to study and bring this last message of mercy to the world to the nominal churches—to the ones who erroneously teach it.

The Spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. It is given in this manner: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that He saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things

which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:1–3. While John was considered a prophet, we are no less called to bring the prophetic word as teachers. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers..." 1 Corinthians 12:28

Dear Reader, today the Lord is calling for a revival of a greater study of Bible prophecies, a clarion call to take it out of the bin of obscurity and place it on the table of present truth; a call to take it from a mere mental assent; finally, a call to leave off the basic principles... "this we will do" (Hebrews 6:1–3), as there are far-reaching, weightier prophetic truths in the word of God waiting to be had, waiting to be studied and understood so that they can effectively warn the world of the looming final crisis. Today we are almost at the end of all things, the "toes" of the remaining prophecies, preceding our Lord's imminent return. According to the word of God, "there should be time no longer." Revelation 10:6. Affirms E.G. White in relation to time: "This time which the angel declares with a solemn oath is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842–1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844." *—Manuscript 59, 1900*

This time prophecy has been on the table of present truth for one hundred and seventy-nine years now and no one knows when it will close, as truly "the time is at hand". Can we afford not to be standing in our lot, at this appointed time?

"And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Habakkuk 2:2

This line of scripture was the driving force of our early advent pioneers in the mid-eighteen hundreds; then, like Daniel, they stood in their lot. They laid aside every weight, earnestly studying these prophecies and so, on seeing their urgency, followed the dictates of conscience, of obedience

and principle, in a certain sense, “run that readeth it.” Like them, our current aged teachers of the present truth have been sounding it but are no longer able to do so in all its dimensions, or to go from coast to coast. And since there is no frontier and it is of a worldwide nature, sighers and criers are needed to stand in our lot. The question today is, who will answer the call to continue to sound this everlasting gospel, which hinges on many prophesies? Who will place this mighty cleaver of truth, back on the table of present truth?

Oh, that it carries with it the key to man’s eternal destiny! Think about what is before us! Recognize what is on the table that must be made plain. For example: Revelation 13, a most profound revelation of a rising power; the prophetic third angel of Revelation 14:9–12; the two thousand three-hundred-day prophecy as found in the book of Daniel. These are only some that need teachers who understand and can explain their true meaning and chronological order, comparing scripture with scripture, using history to support their position. The Holy Spirit is ready to fully empower a people, like in the days of our early advent believers with this more-sure word of prophecy.

Why the call? It is to clear away the many erroneous applications, or ones taken out of context; for example, the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel chapter 9, as taught by some nominal Protestant Churches. In one case, the “Rapture theorists misinterpret it to support their unscriptural teaching, so that according to them, those that are “left behind” after the “secret rapture”, will have an opportunity to purify themselves during the seven-year tribulation which they claim ends its fulfillment in the seventieth week of Daniel’s 490 years. Whereas it does not fit the specification; whereas its fulfillment has long been met. Upon our study, you will clearly see that it cannot be.

It must be taught even to those of the Jewish economy, whom God is seeking to give the irrefutable truth of Christ’s anointing, where again the overwhelming evidence unquestionably shows Him as fulfilling all the specifications as found in Daniel 9:24–27. Thus, countering the censure placed by the early writers of the Talmud, the central text of Rabbinic Judaism, that an anathema, as it were, a curse be on anyone who turns the pages to read Daniel 9:24–27. (See Talmudic Law, p. 978, Section 2, line 28)

One more will suffice as to why it must be sounded. Unfortunately, many believe that the book of Daniel is still closed based on one line of scripture: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end. . .” (Daniel 12:4). Not understanding the meaning of “time of the end” they themselves close this book. Therefore, it must be shown that the book of Daniel is now an unsealed book. Of course this pertains as well to the book of Revelation. While undeniably, the word of God states that the words

and the book is “shut up and sealed to the time of the end,” time must be taken into consideration.

How do we, therefore, counteract their argument as to the time of the end? What does “the time of the end” really mean? Can it harmonize with scripture? Let us take a moment and turn to Revelation 10:1–2. “And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, And cried with a loud voice. . . and. . . seven thunders uttered their voices.”

Says Ellen G. White: “After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel regarding the little book: ‘Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered’ (Revelation 10:4). These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days, John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel’s prophecies have their proper place in the first, second and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time. The books of Daniel and the Revelation are one. One is a prophecy and the other a revelation. . .” —*Manuscript Releases Volume 1*, p. 99

Early Adventist writers therefore believed that the above line of scripture alludes to the book of Daniel. According to one of them, Uriah Smith, an early Adventist pioneer of the 1840 says: “. . .it infers the book of Daniel.” He continues: “We have seen that the prophecy, especially the prophetic periods of Daniel, were not to be opened until the time of the end. If this is the book which the angel had in his hand open, it follows that he proclaims his message after the time when the book should be opened, or somewhere this side of the commencement of the time of the end. . . the book of Daniel itself furnishes data from which this can be done.

He continues: “In Daniel 11:30, the papal power is brought to view. In verse 35 we read, ‘Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and make them white, even to the time of the end.’ Here is the period of the supremacy of the little horn, during which time the saints, times, and laws were to be given into his hand, and from him suffer fearful persecutions. This is declared to reach to the time of the end. This period ended A.D. 1798, when the 1260 years of papal supremacy expired. There the time of the end began, and the book was opened. Since that time, many have run to and fro, and knowledge on these prophetic subjects has marvellously increased.” —Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 520

Truly with the foregoing explanation it is reasonable to conclude that the open book in Revelation 10:2 refers to the time when the book of Daniel was to be opened, thereby

signifying that 1798 commenced the time of the end.

Says the word of God: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children, for ever. . ." Deuteronomy 29:29

Concludes Ellen G. White: "In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel." *—The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 585

"Many have entertained the idea that the book of Revelation is a sealed book, and they will not devote the time and study to its mysteries. They say that they are to keep looking to the glories of salvation, and that the mysteries revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos are worthy of less consideration than these.

"But God does not so regard the book. . . . The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe. . . . He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. In this book are depicted scenes that are now in the past, and some of eternal interest taking place around us; other of its prophecies will not receive their complete fulfilment until the close of time. . ." *—The Review and Herald*, August 31, 1897

Without further ado, we will study two chapters, Daniel chapters 8 and 9. Note, the first two prophetic chapters of Daniel, chapters 2 and 7, to a very large degree, parallel chapter 8, which continues to show God's purpose and design, using different figures. And like a mosaic, He opens to view more and more, giving us the full insight of final events in the last days as well as confirming the players. We will therefore focus on chapter 8 and 9, the burden of the study being chapter 9.

So, set in these two chapters is a most compelling, most convincing, as it were, irrefutable prophecy as given to Daniel the prophet in B.C. 538 in the form of a vision. It opens to view events of large-scale proportions prophesied to take place within a space of time, "in the days appointed," in the latter days.

This prophecy, spoken in figurative language, comprises of a ram, a he goat, a little horn, and 2300 days. While it is prophetic in nature, its literal predictions have been most accurately fulfilled. Whereas there remains a small segment yet to be fulfilled, it will most certainly happen. As we study and follow the waymarks of this notable word of God, we will see that it weaves into it the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms, opening also to view a cunning power, usurping its baneful human authority; it tells of the allotted time given for a people, the Jewish nation, to determine their destiny; most remarkably, it points out with weighted evidence, the overwhelming fulfillment of the exact time of Christ's baptism and passion; it stretches its far-reaching arm of

prophecy to the Gentiles as it winds its way to the long predicted year of fulfillment, where there will be "time no longer"—that is, no more prophetic time!

A Two-fold Prophecy

In these two chapters of Daniel, we have herewith a two-fold prophecy. Chapter 8 primarily deals with warring worldly factions, so to speak, worldly kingdoms, paralleling Chapters 2 and 7, whereas chapter 9 begins with a most sublime prayer, followed by the longest and most profound prophetic timetable that has no parallel, and to my knowledge was never opened to view until the mid 1800s, when God raised up William Miller, a humble farmer, turned minister. As well, in His wisdom, God gave talents to men to make prophetic charts to make it even more plain upon tables. And so, today we have this more sure word of prophecy in all its clarity.

The above viewpoints form the framework of the prophecy, of which we will study in more detail below. Truly an incredible prophecy! With this backdrop we go to the study at hand, a entirely looking through the lens of Daniel, the Prophet, as he tells of what he saw and heard in his inspired vision. We now read the running narrative from the word of God.

The Narrative

In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ullai. Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." Daniel 8:1-9



Beasts in Prophecy

We will not have to figure out the above representations as there are keys to Bible symbolism. Example: Beast, Horns, Heads, Kingdoms, Kings, all denote Kingdoms. We have a good example in verses 20 and 21: "And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." Daniel 8:19-22

We see a similar explanation in Daniel 7:17: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." These explanations put to rest any private interpretation or human devising.

The Ram: BC 538-331

Since we are already aware that the ram represents Medo-Persia, there is no need to explain again. We will briefly look at its career: "... a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last." Daniel 8:3. It is a known fact that "the kingdom was composed of two nationalities, the Medes and the Persians. . . . Of these horns it is said that the higher came up last, . . . it attained the higher eminence, becoming a dominant influence in the nation." -Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* p. 108

"I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will and became great." Daniel 8:4

The character of this beast is one of cruelty and like the prophecy states, "he did whatever he wanted according to his will." It was this power, though inferior in wealth, who totally defeated and overthrew golden Babylon in a strategic manner. Cyrus and his inferior army diverted the riverbed, surrounding what seemed the most impenetrable, as it were, impregnable fortress, then went through the two-leaved gate and overthrew the then-ruling power, taking all her provinces.

Isaiah prophesied: "Thus, saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut.. "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob, my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect I

have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Isaiah 45:1-4

"The power exercised by every ruler on the earth is Heaven-imparted. . . . To each the word of the divine Watcher is 'I girded thee, though thou hast not know Me.'" -*Prophets and Kings*, p. 502

To be sure, history attests to the fact that from BC 538-331, Medo-Persia reigned supreme; but it was not to last, as prophecy dictates. A greater and more powerful figure, called to the world stage, will take the reign starting from BC 331-168.

The He-goat: BC 331-168

This empire reigned from BC 331-168. The prophecy states: "And as I was considering, behold, an he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven." Daniel 8:5-8



Notice it starts off with: "And as I was considering...." We must also consider Daniel's reaction in all of this. Daniel momentarily was thinking deeply at what he was witnessing but suddenly he saw an even greater sight—a "he-goat," coming from the west of the face of the whole earth" with remarkable speed and anger. Who is this beast a figure of? No doubt, Alexander the Great—the first king of the Grecian empire whom prophecy identified as "The Notable Horn." (Not to be confused with "the little horn"). Daniel saw him coming from the West. It is interesting that geography shows that Greece lies west of Persia, all showing that the Grecian empire is the power in question.

This Grecian empire, the third-world empire, under the command of Alexander the Great, subjected, and vanquished the Medo-Persian empire, defeating it on the plains of Arbela. Amazingly and paralleling Daniel chapter 2's fighting style, he used unconventional weaponry, made of brass, designed to create a blinding effect upon his enemies as per one of his strategies.

It is a well known fact that Alexander the great was a warrior

of warriors. Says one early historian: "He was an expert in the combination of various arms; he taught the world the advantages of campaigning in winter, the value of pressing pursuit to the utmost, and the principle of 'march divided, fight united'. . . His speed of movement was extraordinary." –*The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 6, p. 425–426

In keeping with the prophecy: "when he was strong," that is, when he was still a young man, his horn, as it were, his power was broken. Unfortunately, while he was an expert conqueror, he could not conquer his own alcoholic intemperance. History states that he drank from the Herculean cup filled with alcohol and that eleven days later this 32-year-old king, full of the vigor of youth, died. The prophecy states that "the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. His empire became divided into four divisions among his four leading generals, namely: Seleucus having Syria and the entire east; Ptolemy—Egypt, Lydia, Arabia, and Palestine; Cassandrea—Macedonia and Greece in the west and parts of Asia; and, Lysimachus—Thrace and parts of Asia. In a matter of time the kingdom became weakened by intrigues leaving the door open for the next player in the prophetic field.

The Little Horn: BC 168–AD 476

"Continues the prophecy: '...and out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceedingly great, towards the south and towards the east, and towards the pleasant land.' Daniel 8:9. Notice that the he-goat was great, but this figure was 'exceedingly great.' It had dominance over the entire region! Who is he? Certain individuals connect this character to Antiochus Epiphanes, an 8th Syrian king from the Seleucus horn of the goat. Smith argues: 'Antiochus, was simply one of the twenty-six kings who constituted the Syrian horn of the goat. He was, therefore, for the time being, that horn. Hence, he could not at the same time be a separate and independent power, or another and remarkable horn, as was the little horn.' '...If Antiochus Epiphanes does not fulfill the specification of the prophecy, the application cannot be made to him.'" –

Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 156



Smith remarks: "The field of vision here is substantially the same as that covered by Nebuchadnezzar's image of Daniel 2, and the vision of Daniel 7. In both these. . . we have found that the power which succeeded Grecia as the fourth power was Rome. The only natural inference would be that the little horn, the power which in this vision succeeds Grecia as an 'exceeding great' kingdom is also Rome. . ." He continues: "The little horn comes forth from one of the horns of the goat. . . In 168 B.C., Rome had conquered Macedonia, and made that country a part of its empire. –*Ibid.*, p. 158. True to

prophecy "...and out of one of them came forth a little horn."

Continues Smith: "Rome meets all the specifications of the prophecy. No other power does meet them. Hence Rome, and no other, is the power in question. The inspired descriptions given in the Word of God of the character of this system are fully met, and the prophecies concerning it have been most strikingly and accurately fulfilled in history." – *Ibid.*, p. 162. Concludes Smith: "This describes in a few words the work and career of the papacy. The truth is by it hideously caricatured, loaded with traditions, turned into mummery and superstition, cast down and obscured. Of this ecclesiastical power it is declared that it has 'practiced'. . . to carry out its own ends and aggrandize its own power." – *Ibid.*, p. 161

The Little Horn Magnified Himself

"And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down. And a host was given to him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced and prospered." Daniel 8:10–12

A Two-Phased Rome

Pagans ruled Rome. Arianism became rampant. However, after these Barbarians, the bane of Rome, lost their power over to the Roman Empire, Rome became the "seat, the capital of all nations." Says Julian: "If Rome is the queen of cities, why should not her pastor be the king of Bishops? Why should not the Roman Church be the mother of Christendom? Why should not all nations be her children, and her authority be her sovereign law?" –J.H. d'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1, p. 8

To this the memorable Emperor Justinian, after winning the war of the Italian campaign, and after giving a crushing defeat to Arianism by general Belisarius, under Emperor Justinian, He, Justinian then decreed that the Papacy be the head of the Church, which took effect in AD 538–1798 until Pope Pius 6th was taken captive in 1798.

Papal Rome usurped her authority. In the fulness of time, history's ledgers attest to the fact that this later power, Papal Rome, "magnified himself (See Daniel 7: 25. Namely: "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.") that is, for 1260 years this system reigned supreme, thus fulfilling the prophecy. Without doubt we can see that the prophetic description, and design are met.

This concludes part one of our study.

Rose Powell



The theme of the Canadian Field Conference was “Looking unto Jesus.” In these times we live, there is so much turmoil, distress and false doctrines, and more than ever, we need to keep our eyes on Jesus. Over 150 believers gathered together to praise the Lord and pray together. We will now read a brief summary of the messages brought out at the conference.

The conference began with an address from the Canadian Field President, Nicholas Anca, who spoke about the Life of Jesus. When we look to Jesus it helps us to take our eyes off ourselves and thus we are transformed into His Image. When the Apostle Paul met Jesus on the way to Damascus, his first question was, “Who are you?” Then when Jesus informed Paul who He was, Paul’s next question was, “what wilt thou have me to do?” Acts 9:6. Although we read in the Bible that Jesus is a Prophet, Priest and King, the real question is, what is He to you. The human tendency is to look to man for help, but men disappoint us. John the Baptist introduced Jesus as, “The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.” We need to do likewise and introduce Jesus to others. The best Bible Study you can give is to tell others what Jesus has done for you in your life

Brother Joseph Sukanob, who is originally from the Philippines, and has come to help the missionary work in Canada, shared a message on Christ as a Child. Jesus was once a child and He set an example for all children to follow. They are also to be taught to look to Jesus.

From the early life of Jesus we learn of health reform. Jesus not only ate well, but he kept busy working in the carpenter shop. This helped his physical and mental health.

Jesus grew in Wisdom even though He never went to the school of the Rabbis. And thus, all children and youth should make an effort to develop their minds and gain wisdom. The main book that Jesus learned from was the Bible. Yet, Jesus still respected His parents and kept the laws of the household—as all children and young people should do today. Look to Jesus, from childhood to adulthood. This is our goal. Jesus will soon return.

For the Divine Service on Sabbath, Brother Petkov spoke about the theme, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

We have a race to run and we need direction, therefore we are to look to Jesus. We do not run with uncertainty. We not only look to Jesus, beyond the finish line, but we need to have Jesus run with us, directing and guiding us in the proper direction.

In 1844 Jesus moved from the Holy Place in the Heavenly Sanctuary into the Most Holy Place. Jesus is moving and we must follow Him. He knows you, and is willing to run with you. We must follow Jesus and find the narrow road because the end of the world is near; perilous times are coming. We are encouraged to “run for our lives.” Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your heart (Romans 3:7–8).

Brother Morris Lowe shared a message about Jesus as a Teacher. Teachers have a powerful influence on students lives, whether good or bad. There is a teacher, however, the best teacher that mankind will ever know. Nicodemus was so impressed that he waited for a one-on-one class with Him. “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” John 3:13. You may be a pastor, a teacher, a regular church attendee, but if you are not born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus did not understand, but after his conversation with Jesus, he recognized that Jesus was a teacher sent from God. Christ did not depend on anyone for knowledge. “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:3 He came to this dark world to reveal the character of the Father and to teach men the way of salvation. The passing grade in order to receive the reward of eternal life is 100%. In the new earth we will continue learning in the kingdom of God, throughout eternity. We will be taught by God. Our lifework today is to prepare for heaven. The education we begin here will never end. It will go on throughout eternity.

The subject of Jesus as Lord and Saviour was presented by Evald Pedersen. It is not enough to just believe that there is one God, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19. There are many religions in the world, however, it is not enough to just have just believes there is a God. We need a faith that will save us from sin. Our goal is to have our names written in heaven. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. Brother Pedersen then related the story in the Bible of the lame man who was begging outside the temple and Peter healed in the name of Jesus (Acts 3:12-26). We do not know why the Lord allowed the man to be crippled for 40 years. We may never know, but it was all in God's plan. This miracle led many to hear and believe the truth of Jesus, thus leading to their salvation. Many believers were added to the church and the work of the Lord went forward. Unfortunately, the Jewish leaders refused to accept Jesus even after this miracle and caused much trouble for the disciples. It took courage to be a believer under persecution at that time, and there were many who had the courage and their faith in Jesus grew daily. We need to have the faith in Jesus at all times regardless of the circumstances.

Brother Elder Hernandez spoke about Jesus as a Healer. He mentioned the wonders of the physical body which God has made for us. We need to take good care of our body. We also need to exercise our brain every day by learning something new, thus creating new nerve connections. Exercise also makes a chemical that makes you more willing to learn.

We are created in the image of God. Psalm 139:16-17. Every detail of the body was made with great care. In order to remain healthy, we need to pray, and also improve our way of thinking. In this world all our physical, moral and intellectual faculties have been affected by sin. We need healing, in every way. We are to look to Jesus for true healing of mind, body and spirit and He will heal us.

Brother Errol Fletcher spoke about the sanctification that comes

from looking to Jesus. Jeremiah wrote that man cannot change. He asked, can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? (Jeremiah 13:23). He then added, "then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." With man it is impossible, but with God it is possible. Jesus said, "without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. What we need is a new heart and Jesus promised to give you one (Ezekiel 36:26-27). When you accept Christ, you become a new creation. How do you know you have been born again? Paul wrote in Galatians 5:22-23, that by their fruits you shall know them. If we are His, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. As you continue to admire Jesus, you will reflect Him more day by day.

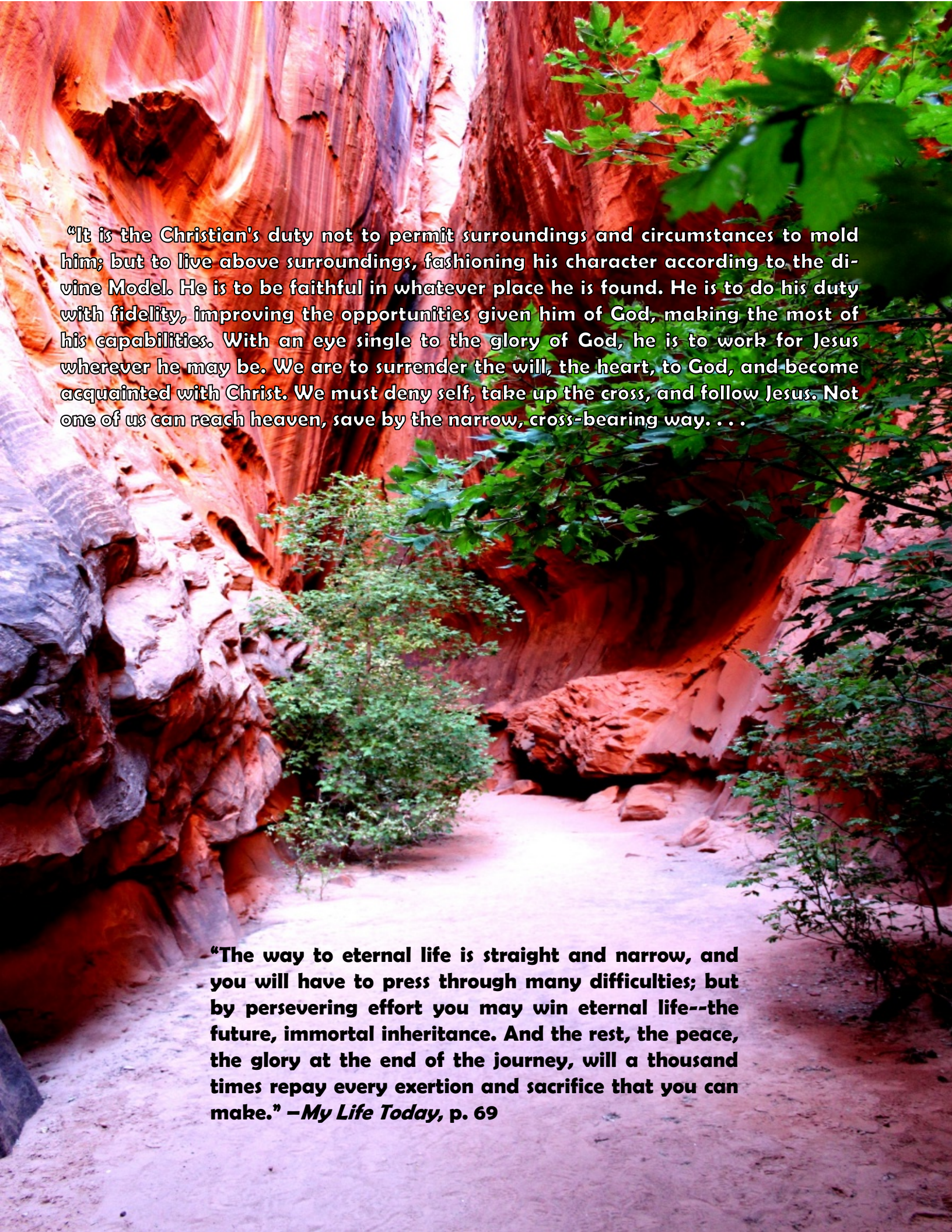
For the final message Brother Petkov encouraged us to go forward and not look back. Lot's wife looked back and she lost her life. We are to escape and not remain in the valley. Jesus is all to us. He is our Saviour, our Healer, our sanctifier, the Alpha and Omega.

When the Jewish leaders brought Jesus a coin asking Him if they should pay tribute to Caesar (Matthew 22:17-21) Jesus asked them whose image was on the coin. Since it had Caesar's image, His response was to give to then to Caesar what was His.

Whose image do we bear? That is what the final judgement is all about. If you bear the image of the world, then you will receive the reward of the world. "What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth--these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity." -*Maranatha*, p. 240

May we all look to Jesus so that our characters will bear His image when He comes in the clouds of glory. Amen



A photograph of a narrow, winding path through a canyon. The walls are made of reddish-brown sandstone, showing various textures and shadows. Green foliage, including bushes and trees, is scattered along the path, particularly on the right side. The path leads into the distance, where a bright light source is visible at the end of the canyon.

"It is the Christian's duty not to permit surroundings and circumstances to mold him; but to live above surroundings, fashioning his character according to the divine Model. He is to be faithful in whatever place he is found. He is to do his duty with fidelity, improving the opportunities given him of God, making the most of his capabilities. With an eye single to the glory of God, he is to work for Jesus wherever he may be. We are to surrender the will, the heart, to God, and become acquainted with Christ. We must deny self, take up the cross, and follow Jesus. Not one of us can reach heaven, save by the narrow, cross-bearing way. . . ."

"The way to eternal life is straight and narrow, and you will have to press through many difficulties; but by persevering effort you may win eternal life--the future, immortal inheritance. And the rest, the peace, the glory at the end of the journey, will a thousand times repay every exertion and sacrifice that you can make." – *My Life Today*, p. 69