

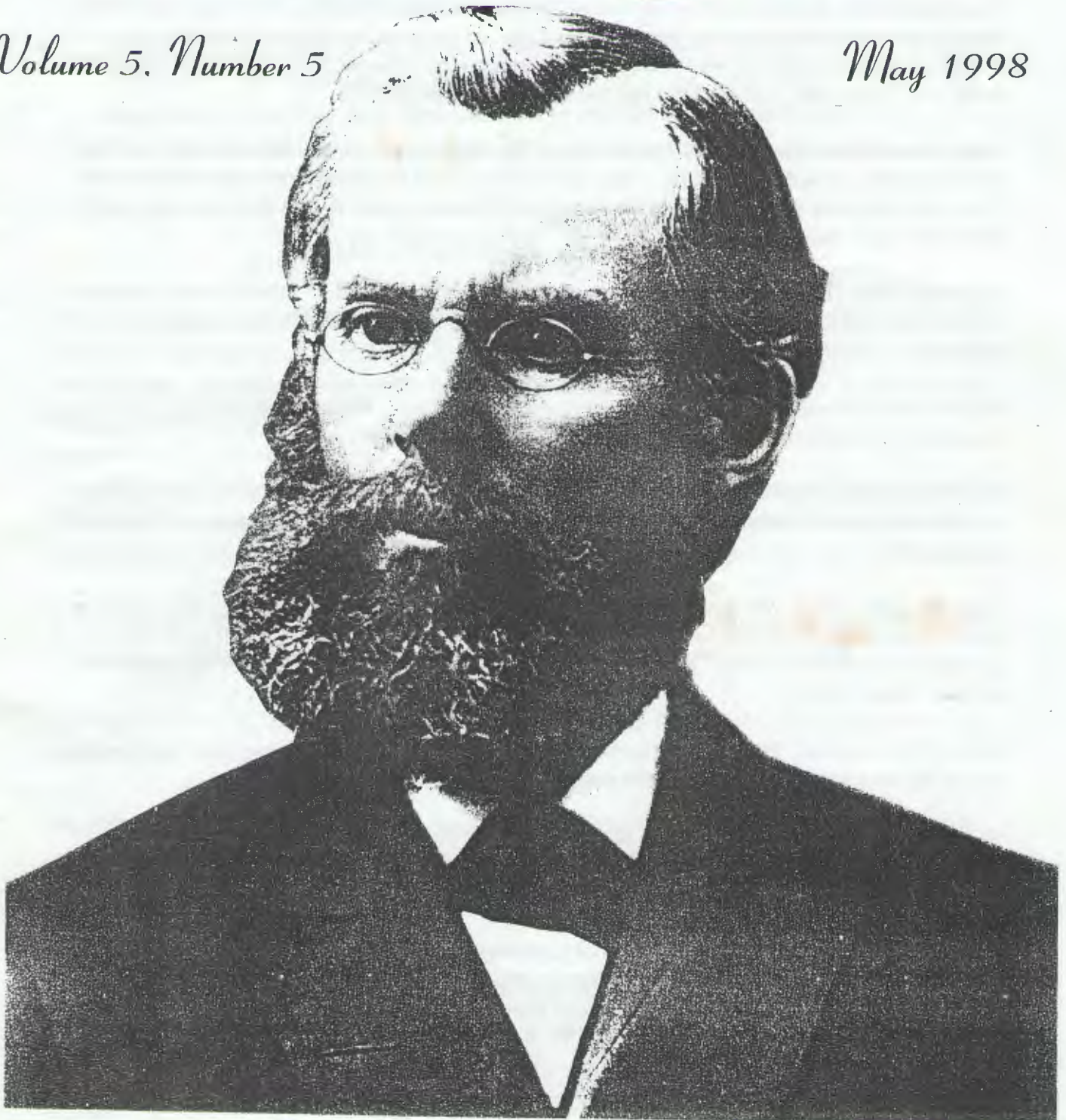
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John Nevin Andrews



"If Thou Wilt Enter Into Life, Keep the Commandments"

Matthew 19:17

Jesus made it clear that the condition for eternal life is commandment keeping. Yet, many believe that keeping the commandments is not necessary, and that we are saved by faith and by grace only. If it were so, then we could remove the commandments from the Bible and Jesus would have answered to the rich, young man, "only believe and you will have eternal life".

Many misunderstand the words of Apostle Paul: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8. First we must understand from what we are saved. "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21.

And what is sin? The answer is: "Transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. When we are saved we do not break the law anymore. When someone asks you, "are you saved?", that means "are you sinless?".

Anyone who commits sin deserves death. "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. Anyone who does not sin has not earned eternal life but yet will receive it as a gift from God.

Those who have committed even one sin deserve death as a punishment; but yet by the grace of God we can be forgiven. The blood of Christ can atone our past sins. We are saved by grace from the condemnation.

Grace is a gift of God. We can do nothing to earn it. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit. We ourselves cannot produce it. What is then our part in salvation? Solomon writes to us, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13.

In Rev. 22:14 we read, "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."

So important is commandment keeping that Jesus said, "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body should be cast into hell." Matt. 5:29.

Many who have neglected to obey the law of God thinking that they are saved by grace alone will realize their mistake one day. "Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together... The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the Decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire... It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements." GC 639.

Jesus spoke a parable of a hidden treasure. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in the field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all he hath, and buyeth that field." Matt. 13:44.

The hidden treasure is Jesus Christ and His righteousness. The man did not have enough money to buy the treasure. But, after buying the field he received the treasure free. If he had not bought the field he would not have gotten the treasure. We also must buy the field and it takes all that we have; then the gift of God is given us free. This is where many fail. They are not willing to sell all they have to buy the field, therefore they do not receive the gift of God, the treasure.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:33.

"Men may have excellent gifts, good ability, splendid qualifications; but one defect, one secret sin indulged, will prove to the character what the worm-eaten plank does to the ship--utter disaster and ruin!" Test. Vol. 4: 90.

"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Rom. 7:12.

Jesus said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Many professed Christians try to keep the commandments of God but they fail time and time again. Their experience is written in Romans 7:19, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." As a remedy to this failure we need faith in Christ and this will save us from sin.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12.

To preach the law without Christ is useless. As a doctor telling his patient that he has a mortal sickness but does not prescribe medication will not do much good. Sister White writes, "As a people, we have preached the law until we are dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God." Advent Review and Herald, March 11, 1890.

In order to keep the commandments we need grace and faith in God and then we can move mountains and nothing shall be impossible to us.

By these mediums the law can be kept and eternal life secured as a gift of God which He has promised to all who buy the field and fulfil the "whole duty of man".

AMEN.

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FALLING AND RISING

**“For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.”
Proverbs 24:16.**

This verse has brought much comfort for the struggling Christian who is discouraged by his failures in his struggles against sin. We can read of many experiences where God’s people have gone through times in their lives when they have severely disappointed themselves. There is the case of Jacob. All throughout his life he envied his brother because his father favoured his brother. He knew that the birthright was his but he harboured a fear that his father might give it to Esau. All this while, I am sure, he never dreamed that this envy would lead to the great deception that he committed against his father. After he fled from home, travelling those many lonely miles, I am sure he spent a lot of time thinking of how foolish he had been. He should have trusted God to make things work out as He had promised. Yes, Jacob fell, but in his lowest point, God did not forsake him. He was there to lift him up – to encourage him and let him know there is forgiveness to the repentant sinner.

King David also terribly regretted the slaying of his faithful soldier, Uriah, in order to marry his wife. He never thought that his first glance at this woman would lead to murder. How disappointed he was with himself when Nathan the prophet came to point out his sin. He had much time to think about it as he fled the wrath of his son, Absalom. Those weary miles that he travelled only reminded him that it was his sin that had led him to this point. Could God forgive such a terrible sin as this? Yes, David found repentance through the grace and merit of the blood of Christ. The Lord was there when David came to Him in humble penitence.

Peter was devastated with the thought that he had denied his Lord and Master. After Jesus gave him that look, which he never forgot for the rest of his life, his heart was broken. How could he have done such a foolish, cruel and mean deed against his beloved Master? Just a few hours earlier he had stated that he would go to prison and death with Jesus and now. . . here he was, in the Garden of Gethsemane, crying tears of remorse and regret. How could he have done such a terrible deed? Could Jesus ever forgive him? That look that Jesus gave him in the judgement hall told it all. It was not a look of anger or revenge but a look of disappointment and a look of love. Yes, Jesus loved him still even after he had committed such a terrible sin. This is what melted Peter’s heart. Ever after Peter was a bold missionary for the truth.

These three men mentioned above were all good, spiritual men. They loved the Lord and wanted to serve Him with all their hearts, yet they all met with a terrible fall. They did not give up in discouragement but found healing in Jesus. The Lord allowed these circumstances to come about to show them their plague spots in their characters. He allowed Bathseba to be seen bathing by King David to show David his weakness. He also allowed Peter to be ridiculed in the judgement hall to show him that, while he would be strong to face open opposition he shrank under ridicule. Also Jacob had to learn to trust in God to bring about His plans. He was trusting in his own works too much.

I am sure that some of us in our Christian walk have gone through times when we have disappointed ourselves. We have wondered, “Why on earth, did I do that?”. Some have given up in discouragement, but others have found their way to the cross and found healing in Jesus. Those that give up in discouragement are those that are unable to forgive themselves. They have listened to one of Satan’s strongest temptations – “you have gone too far to be forgiven and you may as well give up.”

“If you are conscious of your sins, do not devote all your powers to mourning over them, but look and live. Jesus is our only Saviour; and although millions who need to be healed will reject His offered mercy, not one who trusts in His merits will be left to perish. While we realize our helpless condition without Christ, we must not be discouraged; we must rely upon a crucified and risen Saviour. Poor, sin-sick, discouraged soul, look and live. Jesus has pledged His word; He will save all who come unto Him.

“Come to Jesus, and receive rest and peace. You may have the blessing even now. Satan suggests that you are helpless, and cannot bless yourself. It is true; you are helpless. But lift up Jesus before him: “I have a risen Saviour. In Him I trust, and He will never suffer me to be confounded. In His name I triumph. He is my righteousness and my crown of rejoicing.” Let no one here feel that his case is hopeless, for it is not. You may see that you are sinful and undone, but it is just on this account that you need a Saviour. If you have sins to confess, lose no time. These moments are golden. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9). Those who hunger

and thirst after righteousness will be filled, for Jesus has promised it. Precious Saviour! His arms are open to receive us, and His great heart of love is waiting to bless us." *Faith and Works*, p. 37, 38

"Christ delights to take apparently hopeless material, those whom Satan has debased and through whom he has worked, and make them the subjects of His grace. He rejoices to deliver them from suffering and from the wrath that is to fall upon the disobedient. *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 308

"Rejoice not against me. O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me." Micah 7:8. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand." Psalm 37:24. The Bible is full of promises to those who have fallen from grace. There is healing in Jesus.

Does that mean we can continue in sin and come for forgiveness whenever we feel we have had enough? John encouraged the opposite, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. . . ." 1 John 2:1. It is preferable not to sin but if we sin, there is a way out, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

If we rise up in fresh hope after our failure and lay hold on the strength of Christ, so freely offered to us, then we are classed among the just men and the Lord will complete the work in us that He has already begun. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6. The desire to become righteous and the strength to carry out the desire both come from Jesus so no one needs to despair, however weak he may think himself to be, as long as he is willing to be made willing to do right.

The righteous man is not without the possibility of sin, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23, but when he makes a mistake he takes immediate steps to rectify the error. "When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God." *Messages to Young People*, p. 338. The Bible does not say that a Christian cannot sin, but if we are born from above, we will not sin; we will not continue in a lifestyle of sin. There is actually two words in the Greek language for sin (see 1 John 5:16-18). One is the sin unto death – when a person falls but won't humble himself to admit he has fallen. The other is when the fall happens but there is conviction from the Holy Spirit and a turning back to God.

"It is not God's plan to place His servants where they cannot be tempted, nor is it His plan to thrust them in the midst of temptation, where, when they yield, He must forgive and then permit them to continue in sin. Rather, it is His desire so to reclaim them that they can win the battle against sin here and now." *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, p. 524

We are told not to be afraid because Jesus promised us that, "For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee." Isaiah 41:13.

David rejoiced in the Lord when he found healing. "I waited patiently for the LORD: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." Psalm 40:1-3. God gave David a new reason for praising his Heavenly Father. He found that God's arm is long enough to reach down into the horrible pit and deliver him. Every attempt to deliver himself drives him only deeper. A saved soul is the best argument for Christianity. Many will accept Christ when they see what He has done for others.

If we have found this peace and forgiveness, we may come "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16. "Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world. God longs to breathe into prostrate humanity the breath of life. And He will not permit any soul to be disappointed who is sincere in his longing for something higher and nobler than anything the world can offer." *Prophets and Kings*, p. 377,378.

"All who enter the City of God will enter through the strait gate – by agonizing effort; for "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." Revelation 21:27. But none who have fallen need give up in despair. Aged men, once honored of God, may have defiled their souls, sacrificing virtue on the altar of lust; but if they repent, forsake sin, and turn to God, there is still hope for them. . . . God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. 'I will heal their backsliding,' He declares; 'I will love them freely.' Hosea 14:4" *Prophets and Kings*, p. 84

HELPING OTHERS

If we want to help others, we must first help ourselves. We have often heard it said in the Christian world that, "God will do it all for you." This has caused many Christians to become lazy in their spiritual life. We are expected to do something ourselves. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matthew 16:24. Jesus will help us to lift our cross if it is unusually heavy but we must take the initiative and begin the process by making the decision to pick it up. "Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD: shall they fall, and not arise? Shall he turn away, and not return?" Jeremiah 8:4. Man must help himself. If a man falls physically – will he not help himself up? Will he sit on the pavement, waiting for a passer-by to give him a hand up? No, he will certainly make every effort to try and get up. We too must make an effort to get up in our spiritual life and Jesus will provide the strength. We cannot get up spiritually without His aid but we must try, we must put forth persevering effort.

"We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labor, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. We are to set the Lord ever before us. With clean hands, with pure hearts, we are to seek to honour God in all our ways. Help has been provided for us in Him who is mighty to save. The spirit of truth and light will quicken and renew us by its mysterious workings; for all our spiritual improvement comes from God, not from ourselves. The true worker will have divine power to aid him, but the idler will not be sustained by the Spirit of God.

"In one way we are thrown upon our own energies; we are to strive earnestly to be zealous and to repent, to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts from every defilement; we are to reach the highest standard, believing that God will help us in our efforts. We must seek if we would find, and seek in faith; we must knock, that the door may be opened unto us. The Bible teaches that everything regarding our salvation depends upon our own course of action. . . ." *Faith and Works*, p. 48

Then after we have picked ourselves up we are encouraged to help others. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves." Romans 15:1. Those who are spiritually strong should not only stand firm for themselves but should also help others to stand. These strong are well able, and duty bound, to bear with loving patience, the infirmities of those who are not as strong. "It is always humiliating to have one's errors pointed out. None should make the experience more bitter by needless censure. No one was ever reclaimed by reproach; but many have thus been repelled and have been led to steel their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins.

"The apostle Paul found it necessary to reprove wrong, but how carefully he sought to show that he was a friend to the erring! How anxiously he explained to them the reason of his action! He made them understand that it cost him pain to give them pain. He showed his confidence and sympathy toward the ones who were struggling to overcome." *Ministry of Healing*, p. 166

"No soul who believes in Christ, though his faith may be weak, and his steps wavering as those of a little child, is to be lightly esteemed. By all that has given us advantage over another, - be it education and refinement, nobility of character, Christian training, religious experience, - we are in debt to those less favored; and, so far as lies in our power, we are to minister unto them. If we are strong, we are to stay up the hands of the weak." *Desire of Ages*, p. 440

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10. Two workmen engaged in a co-operative effort can do double the work of a single person. Jesus sent out His disciples two by two so that they could encourage each other. The companionship and mutual joy in seeing the results from their missionary endeavour, proved a double blessing – to the receiver and the giver. Co-operation is invaluable and conversely isolation is often dangerous.

"He who created all, cares for all. Even those who have fallen the lowest are not beyond the reach of His love and pity. If we are truly His disciples, we shall manifest the same spirit. . . Often the hearts of men will harden under rebuke, but they cannot withstand the love expressed toward them in Christ. We should bid the sinner not to feel himself an outcast from God. Bid the sinner look to Christ, who alone can heal the soul leprous with sin. Reveal to the desperate, discouraged sufferer that he is a prisoner of hope. Let your message be: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 279.

FALL AND NEVER RISE

Is it possible to fall and never rise again? Do we not serve an ever-loving God who will pick up the downtrodden?

"They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth even they shall fall, and never rise up again." Amos 8:14. In this verse reference is made to the idol worship of the golden calf that Jereboam had set up when the nation of Israel was divided after the death of Solomon. Jereboam set up one calf at Bethel and one in the north at Dan. This sin of Jereboam was a "sin unto death." He knew better, yet fearing to have his subjects travel to Jerusalem three times a year he decided to take matters in his own hands and set up his own gods. He should have put his trust in God. Had not God promised him the ten northern tribes through His faithful prophet? Surely God could keep the kingdom together also. This kind of idolatry and open rebellion was a "sin unto death." Those who commit this type of sin will fall and never rise.

Can someone today commit this type of sin also? Yes! It is called "the sin against the Holy Spirit." "What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which has been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 634.

God forbid that we should commit this sin. We would fall and never rise again.

WICKED TRY TO MAKE US FALL

The verse at the beginning has a dual meaning. Not only can it be taken to mean the fall into sin, but also the word "to fall" can be taken to mean, "to suffer some calamity." The wicked men often waste their efforts in trying to overthrow the righteous. Many times as they try to bring them into poverty and distress, God intervenes to save them. If the wicked would meet the same type of distress, they would be overthrown and not rise again, whereas the righteous have the Lord to pick them up. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all." Psalm 34:19. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken: cast down, but not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 5:8,9. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fires, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isaiah 43:2

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." 2 Peter 1:10. This does not mean that you will never fall into sin, but that you will not fall from God's calling and election. We may sin but we shall triumph over sin and not utterly fall from grace and forfeit the salvation so freely provided for us, as long as we fulfill the conditions laid out in 1 John 3:6-9. (Confession and repentance – and a turning away from sin). And as we come nearer to God we will be turning our backs on the things of this world as well as turning away from our sinful tendencies. We must be climbing our spiritual ladder step-by-step, day-by-day coming closer in likeness to our Maker.

"Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Luke 20:18. This is the fall that we all must make. It entails a full surrender to God – letting God have His own way in our lives. And if we allow God to have His way in our lives He will lead us in such a way that will bring us to the perfection spoken about in Matthew 5:48. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." We have a high standard to reach before we can stand before God in the judgement and we must in no way lower that standard to suit our sinful weaknesses. Through all the trials we face, all the disappointments and discouragements we meet, God has a lesson for us. He is trying to show us the plague spots in our characters so that we will be aware of them and we can surrender them to Him. Through His strength we can be overcomers and be ready for the Latter Rain. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:1 This is the standard that is placed before us, for us to reach, in order to receive the seal of God and be ready for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Wendy Eaton

THE HUMBLE MINISTER

By Ellen G. White

“We need canvassers, evangelists, ministers, who have received the Holy Spirit, and who are partakers of the divine nature. We need workers who are able to talk with God, and then with the people. I am alarmed as I see how many obstructions are coming to divert men from evangelistic work, and thus hinder the work of God. . . . I warn those who should be in the canvassing work, circulating the books so much needed everywhere, to be careful not to turn from the work that the Lord has called them to. Let not the men that God has called to do gospel work become entangled with business perplexities. Let them keep their souls in the atmosphere most favorable to spirituality. . . . God wants every worker who claims to believe the present truth to consecrate himself, body, soul, and spirit, to the work of seeking to save the perishing soul around him.” *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 23

“Young men and young women who should be engaged in the ministry, in Bible work, and in the canvassing work should not be bound down to mechanical employment.” *Review and Herald*, May 16, 1912.

“Missionaries are wanted everywhere. In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected, not from the floating element in society, not from among men and women who are good for nothing else and have made a success of nothing, but from among those who have good address, tact, keen foresight, and ability. Such are needed to make a success as colporteurs, canvassers, and agents. Men suited to this work undertake it, but some injudicious minister will flatter them that their gift should be employed in the desk instead of simply in the work of the colporteur. Thus the work is belittled. They are influenced to get a license to preach; and the very ones who might have been trained to make good missionaries, to visit families at their homes and talk and pray with them, are caught up to make poor ministers; and the field where so much labor is needed, and where so much good might be accomplished for the cause, is neglected.” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 389, 390.

“The intelligent, God-fearing, truth-loving canvasser should be respected; for he occupies a position equal to that of the gospel minister. Many of our young ministers and those who are fitting for the ministry would, if truly converted, do much good by working in the canvassing field. And by meeting the people and presenting to them our publications they would gain an experience which they cannot gain by simply preaching. As they went from house to house they could converse with the people, carrying with them the fragrance of Christ’s life. In thus endeavoring to bless others they would themselves be blessed; they would obtain an experience in faith; their knowledge of the Scriptures would greatly increase; and they would be constantly learning how to win souls for Christ.

“All our ministers should feel free to carry with them books to dispose of wherever they go. Wherever a minister goes, he can leave a book in the family where he stays, either selling it or giving it to them. Much of this work was done in the early history of the message. Ministers acted as colporteurs, using the means obtained from the sale of the books to help in the advancement of the work in places where help was needed. These can speak intelligently in regard to this method of work; for they have had an experience in this line.

“Let none think that it belittles a minister of the gospel to engage in canvassing work as a means of carrying truth to the people. In doing this work he is laboring in the same manner as did the apostle Paul, who says: “Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews,

and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:18-21. The eloquent Paul, to whom God manifested Himself in a wonderful manner, went from house to house in all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol., 6, pp. 321-322.

"The ministerial evangelist who engages in the canvassing work is performing a service fully as important as that of preaching the gospel before a congregation Sabbath after Sabbath." *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 45

"I sincerely hope that no mind will receive the impression that it belittles a minister of the gospel to canvass. . . . The eloquent Paul, to whom God manifested Himself in a wonderful manner, went from house to house, with all humility of mind and with many tears and temptations.

"I have been shown that the most precious ministry can be done by canvassing, and that by ministers. By doing this work, they will obtain a varied experience and will be doing the very work that the apostle Paul did." *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 317

"But there is another point that I had almost forgotten. It is the influence which the preacher should exert in his ministry. His work is not merely to stand in the desk (or pulpit - as we call it today). It is but just begun there. He should enter the different families, and carry Christ there, carry his sermons there, carry them out in his actions and his words. As he visits a family he should inquire into their condition. Is he the shepherd of the flock? The work of a shepherd is not all done in the desk. He should talk with all the members of the flock, with the parents to learn their standing, and with the children to learn theirs. A minister should feed the flock over which God has made him overseer. It would be agreeable to go into the house and study; but if you do this to the neglect of the work which God has commissioned you to perform, you do wrong. Never enter a family without inviting them together, and bowing down and praying with them before you leave. Inquire into the health of their souls. What does a skillful physician do? He inquires into the particulars of the case, then seeks to administer remedies. Just so the physician of the soul should inquire into the spiritual maladies with which the members of his flock are afflicted, then go to work to administer the proper remedies, and ask the Great Physician to come to his aid. Give them the help that they need. Such ministers will receive all the respect and honour which is due them as ministers of Christ. And in doing for others, their own souls will be kept alive. They must be drawing strength from God in order to impart strength to those to whom they shall minister." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, pp. 618, 619.

"The Lord calls for many more to engage in the canvassing work. . . . The Angel of the covenant is empowering His servants to carry the truth to all parts of the world. He has sent forth His angels with the message of mercy; but, as if they did not speed on their way fast enough to satisfy His heart of yearning love, He lays on every member of His church the responsibility of proclaiming this message. "Let him that heareth say, Come." Every member of the church is to show his loyalty by inviting the thirsty to drink of the water of life. A chain of living witnesses is to carry the invitation to the world. Will you act your part in this great work?" *Colporteur Ministry*, p. 18

"The humble, efficient worker who obediently responds to the call of God may be sure of receiving divine assistance. To feel so great and holy a responsibility is of itself elevating to the character. It calls into action the highest mental qualities, and their continued exercise strengthens and purifies mind and heart. The influence upon one's own life, as well as upon the life of others, is incalculable.

"Careless spectators may not appreciate your work or see its importance. They may think it a losing business, a life of thankless labor and self-sacrifice. But the servant of Jesus sees it in the light shining from the cross. His sacrifices appear small in comparison with those of the blessed Master, and he is glad to follow in His steps. The success of his labor affords him the purest joy and is the richest recompense for a life of patient toil." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 340



Philipp Melanchthon

A faithful companion and intimate friend of Martin Luther

‘At this time, when Luther so much needed the sympathy and counsel of a true friend, God’s providence sent Melanchthon to Wittenberg. Young in years, modest and diffident in his manner, Melanchthon’s sound judgment, extensive knowledge, and winning eloquence, combined with the purity and uprightness of his character, won universal admiration and esteem. The brilliancy of his talents was not more marked than his gentleness of disposition. He soon became an earnest disciple of the gospel, and Luther’s most trusted friend and valued supporter; his gentleness, caution, and exactness serving as a complement to Luther’s courage and energy. Their union in the work added strength to the Reformation and was a source of great encouragement to Luther.’
(GC, 134).

The education of the people of old Israel consisted of the teachings of the past (Deut. 32:7). The generations that followed would remember how God led His people. They received profitable lessons from the teachings that were of great benefit for them. Many Christians commemorated the recent anniversary of Philipp Melanchthon's birthday of February 16, 1497. We would also like to give some special attention to some of the important incidents from the life of this close friend of Martin Luther. We shall focus on the main events of his Christian-religious activities. Some commentators portray him merely as a humanitarian of his time, even though his work was of a much higher standard and more effective.

In the book "History of the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland", by Dr. K.R. Hagenbach (1857) the following paraphrased quotation, clarifies and sheds light upon the life of this man of God:

As a youth of only 21 years of age, Melanchthon had been lecturing rhetoric at Tubingen. Through the influence of his uncle Reuchlin, he was elected to be the Chair of Greek studies at the University of Wittenberg in 1518. Here also he met with marked success. His fame drew students from all corners of Europe, as far as Italy, the citadel of learning, and they flocked to Wittenberg. Often, the celebrated teacher had audiences of two thousand, some of whom had to climb up the windows in order to find a place. It was here where he soon would enter into a close bond of friendship with Martin Luther, a bond that would shine like a brilliant pearl on the wreath of the history of Reformation. If we look back into history to the diversity of the gift of one Spirit at the time of the apostles, where the first fruits of the Spirit manifested themselves in diverse vessels, then one may be tempted to compare Luther with Paul and Melanchthon with John. To draw such a parallel because of the dissimilarity of the ages, would be somewhat risky. Therefore, we are content to state only that Melanchthon in many ways, according to the gifts he had received, amounted to being the perfect complement to Luther. Not only did his gentleness and mild temper subdue Luther's fiery zeal, but it was also his broader and extensive knowledge that stood like a bright beacon at his side.

Let us hear what Luther himself says about his relationship to Melanchthon:

‘I have to pluck up the roots and stumps, hoe away the thorns and briars, fill the pot-holes. I am the rough guy who must prepare and pave the way; but master Philipp neatly and softly comes along, building, planting, sowing and then with gusto waters it all, according to the gifts God had lavished

upon him.'

The Reformer of St. Gallen, Johann Kessler who studied in Wittenberg in 1512, makes the following remarks about Melanchthon's outward appearance: 'He is by figure a short, insignificant man, whom you take when he stands beside Luther for a boy not more than 18 years old. When they work and walk together, Martin towers above him from the shoulders upward, but when it comes to knowledge, art, ingenuity, then he is a giant and a hero, so that one wonders how in so small a body could lay hidden so immense a mountain of wisdom and skill.'" (p. 210-211).

The "Voice of Heilbronn", February 8, 1997 reports about his activities in his later years of life as follows: "Melanchthon became through his extraordinary erudition a man of world-wide renown and distinction. As an expert in Greek he was substantially involved in the translation of the Bible into the German language. In his 63 years of life he produced 2500 writings, wrote about 9500 letters. This enormous task he could only accomplish, because he suffered from troubled sleep. In England and in France his theses circulated rapidly and soon became in arch-catholic Italy a much sought after black market article. These were used as evidence for heresy in procedures of the Inquisition."

How closely Melanchthon was bound up with Luther, sister E.G. White describes in "The Great Controversy": "Luther was not to make his perilous journey alone. Besides the imperial messenger, three of his firmest friends determined to accompany him. Melanchthon earnestly desired to join them. His heart was knit to Luther's, and he yearned to follow him, if need be, to prison or to death. But his entreaties were denied. Should Luther perish, the hopes of the Reformation must center upon his youthful colaborer." (GC, 151).

Many parallels for our spiritual life can be found in nature and in the world of technology today. For instance, we can't imagine a car with just one foot pedal for both the gas and the brake. It would not be possible to drive safely. We need both pedals, one for the brake and one for the gas and they need to be used appropriately. It is the same in our spiritual lives.

Sister White says it so well in "Early Writings":

"I saw that Luther was ardent and zealous, fearless and bold, in reproving sin and advocating the truth. He cared not for wicked men or devils; he knew that he had one with him mightier than they all. Luther possessed zeal, courage, and boldness, and at times was in danger of going to extremes. But God raised up Melanchthon, who was just the opposite in character, to aid Luther in carrying on the work of reformation. Melanchthon was timid, fearful, cautious, and possessed great patience. He was greatly beloved of God. His knowledge of the Scriptures was great, and his judgment and wisdom excellent. His love for the cause of God was equal to Luther's. The hearts of these men the Lord knit together; they were inseparable friends. Luther was a great help to Melanchthon when in danger of being fearful and slow, and Melanchthon in turn was a great help to Luther when in danger of moving too fast. Melanchthon's farseeing caution often averted trouble which would have come upon the cause had the work been left alone to Luther; and oftentimes the work would not have been pushed forward had it been left to Melanchthon alone. I was shown the wisdom of God in choosing these two men to carry on the work of reformation." (EW, 224)

Luther's close relationship to his friend Melanchthon

Much could yet be said about the love, loyalty and heroic courage of faith of these divinely appointed Reformers Luther and Melanchthon. In all the historical writings concerning them, almost the first thing mentioned is what firm, unshakable belief they had in the truthfulness of God's word. Sometimes Luther would search for his friend for three months just because he could not understand a certain word that he had found when studying in the Bible. Luther placed great confidence in Melanchthon and when before the Diet at Worms his life was in great uncertainty, the historian relates about the following: "A reformation was greatly desired, but the Reformer was hated, victory was much longed for, but the battle for it shunned. Luther indeed expected to meet a similar fate as did John Huss. But he went steadfastly forward whatever he would have to face, regardless of the outcome. In departing he embraced his beloved Philipp Melanchthon and said: "If I do not return, then my dear brother, I beseech you do not cease to teach and to keep the faith. Meanwhile work also for me, for I cannot be here; and you will make it even better. There is not much of a loss without me, for you are here. With you the Lord has also a more intelligent fighter." Then he tore himself loose and set out for the road to Worms." (From "The History of the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland", pg. 224, by K.R.Hagenbach, 1857).

Their strength were prayer and the assurance in the salvation in Jesus Christ, as well as their implicit trust and their willing obedience to the word of God.

"From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises. During the struggle at Augsburg, Luther did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favorable to study. In the privacy of his chamber he was heard to pour out his soul before God in words full of adoration, fear, and hope, as when one speaks to a friend. 'I know that Thou art our Father and our God,' he said, 'and that Thou art Thyself endangered with us. All this matter is Thine, and it is only by Thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us, then, O Father!'"

"To Melanchthon, who was crushed under the burden of anxiety and fear, he wrote; 'Grace and peace in Christ -in Christ, I say, not in the world. Amen. I hate with exceeding hatred those extreme cares which consume you. If the cause is unjust, abandon it; if the cause is just, who should we belie the promises of Him who commands us to sleep without fear?... Christ will not be wanting to the work of justice and truth. He lives, He reigns; what fear, then, can we have?'"

"God did listen to the cries of His servants. He gave to princes and ministers grace and courage to maintain the truth against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Saith the Lord: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.' 1.Peter 2:6. The Protestant Reformation had built on Christ, and the gates of hell could not prevail against them." (GC, 210).

Dear readers, believers in the faith and friends of the truth, what a sacred heritage - the Word of God - have these godly, consecrated Reformers bequeathed to us! They believed also strongly in the second coming of Christ, though they were aware that it would not take place in their time.

"Luther declared: 'I persuade myself verily, that the day of judgment will not be absent full three hundred years. God will not, cannot, suffer this wicked world much longer.' The great day is drawing near in which the kingdom of abomination shall be overthrown.

'This aged world is not far from its end,' said Melanchthon. Calvin bids Christians 'not to hesitate, ardently desiring the day of Christ's coming as of all events most auspicious;' and declares that 'the whole family of the faithful will keep in view that day. We must hunger after Christ, we must seek, contemplate,' he says, 'till the dawning of that great day, when our Lord will fully manifest the glory of His kingdom.'" (GC, 303).

May God help us all to be fully prepared for this day, to be able to say with the apostle John: "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20, last part).

S. Schmidt, Germany

Some important dates from the life of Philipp Melanchthon.

Born February 16, 1497 in Bretten, Germany. His true name was Philipp Schwarzerdt.

When his father, George Schwarzerdt an armourer, died, Philipp was attending the Latin School in Pforzheim, where he soon mastered the Greek Classics. His uncle, the humanist John Reuchlin, following a contemporary custom changed his surname Schwarzerdt into the Greek equivalent Melanchthon (black earth).

In 1509, not yet 13 years old, he enrolls at the University of Heidelberg, founded in 1386 where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree.

1512 in Tubingen at the age of 17 he received his Master of Arts degree and lectured there on the Classics.

He revised textbooks and published a volume on Greek Grammar. At the same time he occupied himself with Math, Law and Medicine.

1518 he was elected the chair of Greek studies at the University of Wittenberg. Here he comes in contact with Luther.

As different as they are - Luther impulsive, rash - Melanchthon timid, restrained - they work together for nearly 28 years in Wittenberg.

Melanchthon convinces Luther to translate the Bible and assists him in this grand work.

1546 Luther dies. Melanchthon must now defend the Reformation against Catholic attacks alone.

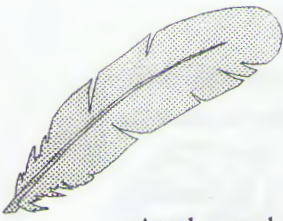
On April 19, 1560 Melanchthon also dies.

He is laid to rest beside Luther at the castle church in Wittenberg.

(From the "Voice of Heilbronn", Weekly Magazine, Aug. 02, 1997).

Does US President Bill Clinton want a National Sunday Law in 1998?

In a startling speech by Bill Clinton in April 1997 that was seen on Australian TV, he called for Sunday to be made an American Family Day, and said that Jews and Seventh-Day Adventists would oppose it. Clinton said that the idea of Sunday as a National Family Day was to bring Americans together, and to make America a religious nation. Also, that he said he would like all Americans to attend church on the Sunday before Christmas this year, and that he would like everyone to keep going next year. Also, that he would like to see legislation in place next year.



A Feather in my Hat! For the Lord

At the end of yearly vacation time of 1997, I thought I would visit an elderly gentleman on the Sabbath afternoon. This man I had met a week previously and I had left him a *Road to Health*. Thinking He would like some literature on prophecy also, I had a copy of *The Great Controversy* to place in his hands. When I arrived at his place, he expressed the fact that he was too old to read anything about Christianity. Feeling sorry for him, I managed to leave at least *Prophets Speak Out* with him, but I still had that copy of *The Great Controversy* in my pocket. I went on my way, having a pleasant Sabbath afternoon walk and thought that somehow I would like to place that book with someone who could benefit from it.

While viewing the picturesque Avon River here in Christ Church, New Zealand, I casually picked up a couple of colourful duck feathers and stuck them into my straw hat that I was carrying along. As it was vacation time, I didn't see many people around--then I saw three teen-age girls up ahead who seemed to be in a joyous mood. One of them, seeing the feathers in my hat said, "Sir, here's another feather for your hat!" So I took my hat off and thanked her for it. I was about to walk away when I remembered the book in my pocket. I turned around and said to the girl, "Here, you gave me something, let me give you something. Here's a book for you to read called *The Great Controversy*, written by an American authoress, Ellen G. White. It will make good vacation reading." And she readily accepted it. I went away rejoicing that the Lord helped me to place the book into the hands of such a young person, hoping that if it's within the Lord's plan, it could be the start of an army of youth that the Lord will raise up in the very last days to proclaim the Three Angel's Message just before the return of our Blessed Lord Jesus. Amen! 1 Cor. 3:6 says, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

The Right Direction

One Friday morning I decided to go into the city to leave literature at certain places where people could pick them up and be blessed. I had the habit of leaving our books and magazines at places like the YMCA Reading Room, the Age Concern Drop-in Centre, Community Law Office, etc. I had put a copy of *Patriarchs and Prophets* in my bag not knowing why as I had mostly message tracts and health magazines to give out--but I soon found out in a wonderful way why I had that larger book.

As I was nearing one of my places to leave literature, I was approached by a man who asked for directions to a certain street. I pointed him in the right direction and he thanked me very much. I was about to leave, I then remembered the book, *Patriarchs and Prophets* that I had casually put in my bag. I asked him if he did much reading. He replied, "Just a little." Then I showed him the book, telling him that it told the story of creation and the times of old Israel. He seemed to be interested in history. I asked him if he would like to buy the book. He said that he had only \$10, so he gave me \$7 for the book and kept only \$3 for his lunch that day. After only a few more words he went happily on his way--thankfully in the right direction. I was happy that he had received a book which could show him the right direction to go in his spiritual life. Ecclesiastes 11:6 says, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."

All the Way from Israel

While placing our literature another time at the YMCA, I had with me a copy of *The Great Controversy*. I didn't know who I could give it to, so I thought that I would just leave it on the reading table with the newspapers and books that were already there. As I was thinking what to do, a young man came into the room and we entered into a conversation. I found out that he had just arrived from Israel the same day. We spoke about many different aspects of Christianity, which he agreed with in principle. I said that the God of heaven could well have brought him all this way just for him to read the book that I had with me. I presented to him the book, for which he thanked me and then we parted. Hopefully, he will accept the Messiah and Redeemer of Israel to which the book points. My prayer is as the Apostle Paul prayed in Romans 10:1: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved."

By Br. Ernest Gale, Christ Church, New Zealand

Truth and Desire

We shall
know
the
truth, and
the
truth
shall
make you
free

Not one of us can claim that we are truly free, for this is a gift from God to man. We are all blinded and in slavery to our own flesh. We desire to do right but we cannot, and we fail miserably. The spirit of the law declares: we must have perfect thoughts even as our Father in heaven has perfect thoughts.

We must always think before we ever speak or act. Some may say that we automatically speak or do some sort of action, but this is not so. In one millionth of a second the message is transmitted from the brain and so we speak or act.

There is only one type of person in the world who has true freedom; and that is the true Christian. This freedom that he has is a gift from God. Now he can finally choose to do what is right or wrong. "Every soul who refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another power." D.A. pg. 466. Indeed, this whole life we live is like a game of chess, in which we play against the mighty power of Satan.. Our own desire for truth (i.e. the strength of it) is what allows us to want to be led to victory over our tempers, selfishness, covetousness, evil passions and worldliness. In this condition we are not able to see the truth, for we are in wretched slavery, chained to our pride and passions. we are not able to see the beauty of truth for our mind is under the control of Satan. We must make

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great effort to understand our situation, for we are actually not following the dictates of our judgment. We in fact obey the will of the prince of darkness. At this time we should stop reading for a while and think on this point.

What then is Truth? "...Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Through the desire for truth we can be saved through Jesus; saved from the slavery of wrongful thoughts, words and actions. The desire for something better is put into us by the Lord. This explains why the whole world is trying to fill up its emptiness through television, sports and other avenues of pleasure that have been invented. "Christ came to break those shackles (chains) of sin slavery from the soul. 'If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets us free from the law of sin and death. 'Rom. 8:2.'" D.A. pg. 466

How shall this desire be encouraged? We have been given the testimony of Jesus, the word of God, prayers, deep soul searching and missionary work. Our desire becomes greater through these tools. We feel ourselves repentant and unworthy as we get glimpses of our wretchedness and misery--the true situation that we are in, in reality. Even when we hear the wrongs of others or wrongs done in the world, our own condition comes up before us as if to crush us. Then finally like Jacob we struggle with God, pleading with the Lord in

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prayer for freedom from our slavery of evil thoughts and passions.

It is of utmost importance for us to understand that we can lose this desire for truth slowly, until it eventually dies. As we reach this point, things are not the same as before, we do not feel this sinfulness of sin so much anymore. Now we know for sure that the Holy Spirit is withdrawing from trying to help us to come to freedom (conversion). We must retrace our steps quickly, or suddenly, we are in outer darkness. This situation creeps upon us as a thief and at last we are forever lost, while still attending church, only waiting to be shaken out. We will use any excuse after this to leave the church voluntarily.

"In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed... True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. The only condition upon which the freedom of man is possible, is that of becoming one with Christ. "The truth shall make you free;" and Christ is the truth. Subjection to God is the restoration to one's self--to the true glory and dignity of man. The divine law, to which we are bought into subjection, is 'The law of liberty' James 2:12." D.A. pg. 466.

AMEN



"Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" John 14:6.

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He hath visited and redeemed His people.¹ And (He) gavest them Bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promised them that they should go in to possess the land which Thou hadst sworn to give them.² And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to Me shall never hunger. And he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever. And the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.³ And looking to heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave... to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.⁴

When the message of the Reformation was presented to me, I thought "A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."⁵ I truly believed the church had not one sinner. After being baptized, I received a survey along with instructions, the Bible Correspondence Course along with enrollment cards, and the encouragement to proclaim, we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.⁶ While administering the survey, I found over fifty persons interested in receiving the Bible course. I was elated. However, not one returned the first lesson. An elder told me that although many may enroll in the course, few will complete it.

I also tried another approach. By using the public transportation system, the enrollment cards would be scattered throughout the city. "And whosoever will, let him take" a card, fill it out, and mail it in.⁷ I have received over two hundred enrollment cards. Three individuals have completed the course, but have not shown any interest in joining the church. Why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away the sins, calling on the name of the Lord.⁸ Was I at fault? Then, the elder told me that although many may complete the course, few will join the church. I wondered, why would anyone not want to join the Body of Christ (See Corinthians 12:27) after receiving the knowledge of the truth?

The elder told me a startling revelation. He said that although someone becomes a member of the church, he or she may not inherit eternal life. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel. Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.⁹ At the time, I did not ask him the reason, because I did not want the answer. I kept all these things, and pondered them. However, it is written, "Let God be true, and every man a liar."¹⁰

Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹¹ When a child is born, "he is a new creature."¹² It has "no knowledge between good and evil."¹³ And "there is none good, but One, that is, God."¹⁴ "Our bodies are built up from what we eat and drink; and as in the natural economy, so in the spiritual economy: it is what we meditate upon that will give tone and strength to our spiritual nature."¹⁵ And as the child "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God,"¹⁶ And... beareth fruit, He (God) purgeth us, that we may bring forth more fruit. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away."¹⁷ "While life moves smoothly with them, (the professed Christian), they may appear to be consistent Christians. But they faint beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ's sake. When the word of God points out some cherished sin, or requires self-denial or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too much effort to make radical change

in their life. They look at the present inconvenience and trial, and forget the eternal realities. Like the disciples who left Jesus, they are ready to say, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"¹⁸ Would this be the reason why many will not join the Reform?

In contrast is the parable of the prodigal son. "Like the elder son in the parable, they (the Jews) had enjoyed special privileges from God. They claimed to be sons in God's house, but they had the spirit of the hireling. They were working, not from love but from hope of reward." "He (the elder son) makes it plain that his own service has been that of a servant rather than a son. When he should have found an abiding joy in his father's presence, his mind has rested upon the profit to accrue from his circumspect life. His words show that it is for this he has forgone the pleasures of sin."¹⁹

Love is the underlying principle of God's government in heaven and earth, and it must be the foundation of the Christian's character. This alone can make and keep him steadfast. This alone can enable him to withstand trial and temptation.

"And love will be revealed in sacrifice. The plan of redemption was laid in sacrifice--a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable, Christ gave all for us, and those who receive Christ will be ready to sacrifice all for the sake of their Redeemer. The thought of his honour and glory will come before anything else."²⁰ Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."²¹ For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision. But faith which worketh by love.²² Love worketh no ill to his neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.²³ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you (See Luke 23:34); That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.²⁴

"There is a high standard to which we are to attain if we would be children of God, noble, pure, holy, and undefiled; and a pruning process is necessary if we would reach this standard. How would this pruning be accomplished if there were no difficulties to meet, no obstacles to surmount, nothing to call out patience and endurance?"²⁵ "God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church."²⁶ "As we near the judgment, all will manifest their true character, and it will be made plain to what company they belong. The sieve is moving. Let us not say: Stay Thy hand, O God. The church must be purged, and it will be."²⁷ Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down. Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.²⁸

Chester Cosby, Detroit.

1.Luke 1:68.

2.Nehemiah 9:15.

3.John 6:35, 51.

4.Matthew 14:19.

5.Ephesians 5:27.

6.John 1:41.

7.Revelation 22:17.

8.Acts 22:16.

9.Romans 9:27.

10.Romans 3:4.

11.Matthew 18:3.

12.2 Corinthians 5:17.

13.Deuteronomy 1:39.

14.Mark 10:18.

15.Steps to Christ

16.2 Peter 3:18.

17.John 15:2.

18.Christ's Object Lessons

19.Christ's Object Lessons

20.Christ's Object Lessons

21.1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

22.Galatians 5:6.

23.Romans 13:10.

24.Matthew 5:43-48.

25.5T, p. 344

26.1T, p. 99

27.1T, p. 100

28.Psalms 144:5.



Current Scene

From *Signs of the Times*, October 1997

Millennial Fever: Is the Year 2000 a Year of Destiny?

"The world will end on January 16, 2000! So heralded a tabloid newspaper published near the end of 1996. The tabloid article claimed that prophecies from six of the world's religions point to that date as the time when all life on earth will be wiped out. But it gave no evidence that there actually are prophecies pointing to that day.

"A prime-time program broadcast on NBC said that a prophecy found in one of the pyramids gives us a little more time: three months and nineteen days, to be exact! The NBC program presented as evidence numerous prophecies, including those of Edgar Cayce and Gordon-Michael Scallion. But its centerpiece was the theory that the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt contains a time line that accurately foretold the dates of the giving of the law to Moses at Mt. Sinai, the birth of Christ, and the beginning of the two world wars of the twentieth century. The program went on to proclaim that the time line, based on the length of two different corridors in the pyramid, indicated the world will end on May 5, 2000.

"Richard W. Noone, another prognosticator, agrees that's a dangerous day. He's written a book that points out that on that day, the sun, the moon, and all the major planets that exert gravitational pull on the earth will be lined up. All that force, he claims, will cause the earth to shift on its axis. If that shift doesn't end the world, it will at least bring on a multitude of catastrophes, including the rapid meltdown of the Arctic and Antarctic ice masses, which will cause many islands to disappear and leave coastal cities several feet under water. 1

The "Sleeping Prophet"

"Spirit medium Edgar Cayce was one of the first to point to the turn of the millennium as a date that would leave our world changed almost beyond recognition. Cayce, who was known by many as "the sleeping prophet," lived in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. Today the Association for Research and Enlightenment of Virginia Beach, Virginia, continues to promulgate his prophecies. His messages used to be studied only by New-Age types, but now they are being popularized on late-night radio programs and in a deluge of pseudo-scientific books.

"Cayce, Nostradamus and many psychic prophets give their messages in the form of oddly-constructed phrases that could be interpreted in a variety of ways. But many interpreters agree that Cayce foresaw drastic changes for our planet and that he predicted these would occur by the year 2000. Like Noone, he spoke of the coming changes in terms of the shifting of earth on its rotational axis, an event that would have ominous consequences in the form of earthquakes, volcanoes, polar ice melt, rising oceans, and a generally bad day for all involved. In fact, Cayce is said to have predicted that before the year 2000 the Great Lakes would empty directly into the Gulf of Mexico and that Los Angeles and San Francisco would be destroyed.

"In the 1960s, Washington Post columnist Ruth Montgomery, who often wrote about America's popular psychic prophet, Jeanne Dixon, joined Cayce's chorus, singing harmony with his vision of the future. Montgomery claimed that people who had died and gone on to another realm were sending messages back to her, warning her that the axis shift would occur at or before the turn of the millennium.

"Cayce's and Montgomery's predictions didn't get a whole lot of attention back when they made them. But as we're nearing the end of the millennium a lot of people are starting to wonder if they just might have some validity. And they've gone looking for corroborative evidence.

"Gordon-Michael Scallion, for instance, has even gone so far as to produce a map of the United States that he believes will be accurate sometime between 1998 and 2001. It shows beach-front

property in Boulder, Colorado, and parts of Nebraska, island communities where California used to be, the Great Lakes merged into one, and all of New Jersey under water.

"The NBC program placed several other pieces of "evidence" alongside the revelation from the Great Pyramid and the various interpretations of Nostradamus. It cited a couple of prophecies, reported to come from the Virgin Mary at Fatima and from an ancient Irish prophet, that foretell that John Paul II is either the last or the next-to-last pope before the coming of the antichrist. It noted also that an interpretation of an ancient Babylonian astrologer's predictions about fire engulfing the earth seems to be related to the astrological signs that will be prevalent in the spring of 2000. And it threw in a seemingly scientific explanation of why cataclysm is likely to occur at precisely that time.

Jesus Promise in Contrast with Psychic Prophecy

Confronted with all of these spiritualistic means of prophesying-what should be our response? Of course, we know that Jesus did promise to return in the future-and the changes He said His coming would bring are even more drastic than the most ominous of the psychic predictions. We know also that many of the signs which Jesus gave that would show His coming to be near have already come true, so now what should we do? "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6: 8. Show that we not only have insight about the time in which we live, but that we are preparing our characters for eternity-because character is the only thing we can take from this world into the next. The time in which we live was compared by Jesus with the time before the Flood-when silently, steadily the end of probation approached and the wicked were rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. Now unfortunately, there are many even professedly christian counterfeit prophecies and counterfeit prophets rising to distract and mislead the unwary. "The psychics have been looking for information in all the wrong places. The way they seized on the arrival of the Hale-Bopp comet to predict imminent disaster is a good illustration both of human nature and of how *not* to handle prophecies of the future. Rather than looking for genuine prophecies based on solid study of prophetic sources that have proven reliable over time, they've gone looking for a seemingly significant date, then started looking for prophecies that point to it.

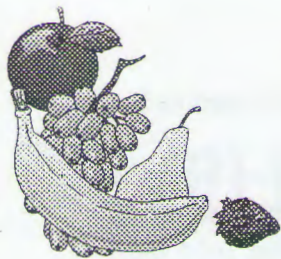
"The biblical books Daniel and Revelation give us good reason to believe that we're living in what the Bible calls "the latter days," the time of the end of the world. But Scripture does not give any special significance to the year 2000. Those who believe it does base their reasoning on the expectation that the turn of the millennium will mark the six-thousandth year since the creation of the earth and that the beginning of the new millennium will mark the end of sin's dominance on our planet.

"Reputable biblical chronologists, however, make it clear that we shouldn't jump so readily to the conclusion that the earth was created exactly 4000 years before the birth of Christ, let alone assume that God will wind up the current era 2000 years after the Nativity. There's no evidence for such a theory in the Bible. And even if there were, it would call for the return of Christ several years before 2000, because Jesus was born in 4 B.C.

"While we can't guarantee that Jesus will return on or before the year 2000, it's clear that He would like to bring all the suffering of this world to an end soon. The Bible clearly indicates that before that happens we can expect tribulation, distress, and troubles on every side. There will be famines, earthquakes, great storms, volcanoes, and multiplied disasters as earth goes through her death throes.

"So, like many of the psychics, the Bible pictures tough times ahead-tough times that culminate in the end of the world. But unlike them, it also offers us hope. Hope because it assures us that our Saviour will not leave us to suffer alone, that He will not abandon us. Hope because it says that in the end we can expect to look up and see Jesus Christ returning as conqueror to take those who have trusted in Him home to live eternally. And hope because then He will set up His glorious kingdom where we will suffer no more. Condensed and modified by Jerry Eaton

1 If you lived through the Grand Alignment of the planets in 1982, which some supposedly scientific doomsayers predicted would pull half of California into the Pacific, you may not find Noone's prognostications too frightening.



HOW NATURAL IS NATURAL?

Where would food marketers be these days without the word “natural”? A lot less rich, for one thing. Marketing professionals have studied the surveys that show anywhere from 60-70 % of Americans perceive natural foods as nutritionally superior to and safer than processed foods. Food manufacturers know that America’s romantic fixation with simpler, less complicated lifestyles is being manifested in changing diets: more whole grains, fresh fruit and vegetables; less salt, sugar, fat, meat and chemical additives. But most of all, they realize that good nutrition – even the semblance of good nutrition – pays. Half the respondents in one poll said they would be willing to pay 10 percent extra for natural food. That can add up to quite a sum.

And so we find modern-day food packages festooned with “natural” claims: “natural ingredients,” “natural flavours,” “natural colors.” Occasionally things get a little out of hand. Sugar is now being promoted as a “natural sweetener.”

If you haven’t already guessed it, the little known truth about the word “natural” is that it is virtually meaningless. The Vermont cheddar in your natural foods store probably has a strong case for a “natural” label, but Kraft is using the same word successfully and without federal challenge to promote Cheez Whiz and Velveeta, two foods that are so highly processed they don’t even meet the federal government’s definition of cheese.

Back in the late 1970’s, attorneys at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the agency that polices advertising claims, tried to nail down a reasonable definition of what constituted a natural food, finally deciding on the twin criteria of minimal processing and lack of artificial additives. But after three years of staff work, FTC’s commissioners abandoned the regulation before it was adopted; claiming the issue was too complex. While even food industry experts did indeed disagree on such crucial questions as how much processing qualifies as “minimal,” many people who were closely involved with the effort believe the rule was dropped for political reasons. Dr. Kate Clancy, a former FTC nutritionist, said, “The people who came to the FTC in 1980 made it clear that they didn’t want to regulate food claims of any kind. To them, any amount of regulation was over regulation.”

Thanks to the FTC cave-in, “natural” and terms such as “organic” and “health food” have no legal meaning, leaving food companies to use them however they wish. FTC chairman James Miller says even Coca-Cola could probably be labeled natural and organic.

The Food and Drug Administration, the arm of the government (in the U.S.A.) that oversees the composition and labeling of foods, also uses little of its formidable clout when it comes to regulating healthful-sounding label claims. FDA’s policy is so generous (“something clearly synthesized in a lab can’t be labeled natural,” one spokesman explained) that in recent years, the agency has taken action against only two products for making an unfounded “natural” claim.

The sad truth is that, at least for the time being, the words “natural” and “organic” are no guarantee that a product has been minimally processed, contains no artificial ingredients, or has indeed been grown organically.

There are efforts underway within segments of the food industry to create more effective self-regulating policies with regard to these terms, but it is always a good idea to check the ingredient list to make sure a food’s lofty image has a firm footing in reality.

EXAMPLES

- 1) Haagen-Dazs ice cream. Its ingredients say cleanness and simplicity: fresh cream, skim milk, pure honey, egg yolk, natural vanilla. But in your dish a half-cup serving translates into a tablespoon-sized dollop of honey and a whopping 17 grams of butterfat. That’s one-

quarter of the amount of fat an average adult should consume in an entire day, according to federal guidelines.

- 2) Granola bars. Nothing says “natural” like granola bars. Unless they’re made by a large company like Quaker, that is. We counted thirty-four ingredients in Quaker’s Chocolate, Graham, and Marshmallow Chewy Granola Bars, including artificial flavors, synthetic color (blue), and no less than seven sweeteners.
- 3) Sometimes manufacturers do create more healthful alternatives, so they say. For example, Nabisco makes a mainstream version of crackers while Health Foods markets a whole foods version under the label of Mi-del. Nabisco uses a mix of enriched bleached flour and whole wheat (graham) flour. Mi-del uses 100 percent whole wheat. Nabisco’s crackers get their sweetness mostly from white sugar, with “corn sweetener” (probably corn syrup) and some honey thrown in to justify the name “Honey Maid.” Mi-del uses honey and unsulfured molasses. Nabisco uses inexpensive artificial flavors. Mi-del uses oil of lemon – the real thing.
- 4) Candy bars are a classic example. The makers of natural candy bars promise high nutrition without guilt. The typical natural candy bar features carob instead of chocolate, and honey or another natural sweetener instead of white sugar. Is the difference really great enough to make candy bars good food? Not likely.

Carob beats out chocolate’s cocoa powder in terms of caffeine content (0 milligrams vs. chocolate’s 6 milligrams per ounce) and fat content (less than .5 grams vs. 3.5 to 5.5 grams in cocoa powder). But by the time manufacturers add enough oil to turn carob powder into carob coating, and mix in all the remaining ingredients, they can end up with candy bars that contain the same degree of fat as their commercial analogs. Also the fat that is added to carob powder is usually palm kernel oil, which is more than 80 percent saturated and thus one of the worst fats you can eat.

There are a few bright spots here and there. There are some companies who make their candy bars with no added sugar, - a fairly common claim among natural candy makers – but they have no sweeteners of any kind. Cashew nuts and crisped rice are the predominant ingredients in one such candy bar called, “Lanzi’s Carob Cashew Nut and Rice Crunch,” followed by carob powder, nonfat milk solids, fractionated palm kernel oil, lecithin, and vanilla, etc.

The problem is that many of the alternative candy bars have the same nutritional drawbacks as conventional ones: lots of sugar and fat.

Nutrition labels are important in helping to keep your diet within a range which is considered healthy. If you’re crazy about granola bars but you’re watching your diet, the data on the label can help you select intelligently from among several brand names.

Scanning the ingredients can give you a good picture of how well a product delivers beneficial nutrients that aren’t required to be listed on the nutrition label. If one cracker contains whole wheat flour and the other uses unbleached white, you can probably count on the whole wheat one to have more nutrition and more fibre even though this information isn’t explicitly given on the label.

So don’t be deceived at first glance when you see the word, “natural” or “organic” on a product. Take time to read the label and see for yourself if the product is truly natural as they claim. This way you can make intelligent decisions concerning the foods you eat.

Information taken from: *Shoppers Guide to Natural Foods*. From the Editors of the East West Journal.



CHILDREN'S CORNER

THE STOLEN BACKPACK



One Sabbath very recently a stranger walked into our church here in Vancouver and sat in the back seat. He sat for about 10 minutes and nobody thought too much about him. People like him have come before. After a short while he left to go downstairs. The speaker saw this and assumed he was using the washroom since it was located in the basement. After a few minutes the man hurried up and out the front door. Nobody thought about him after that.

We went downstairs to eat our lunch and have our afternoon Bible Study. Before the Bible study, my daughter Sharon was unable to locate her backpack. Thinking that she had misplaced it, she didn't give it another thought until it was time to leave. Now it came to our attention that her backpack was gone. There was no other suspect than that poor man who had sat in the back pew for a few minutes. Needless to say, Sharon was devastated. Her backpack was gone. This man had walked downstairs and simply picked it up and swiftly left the church.

What was in her backpack that was so dear to her? Now, my daughter doesn't come to church with only her Bible, purse and lesson. She takes a little more since we spend so long at church; she wants to make sure she has something to do. Inside were 3 small stuffed animals, two rolls of wool (for crafts), her Bible, her portable tape recorder along with 3 Bible tapes, and a good Sabbath book to read. Now it was all gone. Well it could be replaced but it was devastating for a little girl to think that someone would steal her personal belongings like that, and at church too. The first thing we decided to do was to pray for that man. We hoped that he would read the Bible, listen to the Bible tapes and have a change of heart.

We kept him in our prayers for several days, and then in the middle of the week there is a message on our answering machine when we got home. It was a message from a man for Sharon Eaton. The man said he found a few things in some bushes in a schoolyard and one of them was a Bible with the name of Sharon Eaton on the inside. Jerry quickly called the man back and yes, he indeed had found some of her belongings two blocks away from the church. Upon further discussion it turns out that this man had visited our church once in the past summer. Now he said he would come the following Sabbath to return Sharon's things. Sharon was overjoyed.

The following Sabbath we met the man, Doug Drader. He was very happy to return Sharon her: Bible, Bible tapes, wool and religious book. It seems the man who stole the pack rejected the religious material and kept the rest. Sharon was thrilled and very grateful to Doug. Later in the meeting when we were sharing testimonies, Doug stood up and told us that on that particular Sabbath he had been walking along, really wishing he could be a blessing for someone that day. He had tried to do good to so many people in the past and it seems his good works were not always appreciated. Maybe, he thought, God isn't really with me. He really wanted to help someone who would show appreciation and that would be a sign to him that he was really doing God's will. The Lord was leading him. It was at that moment that he saw some wool in the bushes. Upon further investigation he found the other items. He knew that they weren't just thrown away by anyone because a Christian would not simply throw his Bible in the bushes. He saw this as the answer to his prayers so he decided to go home and find the owner as soon as

possible. He opened the phone book and found that there were about 100 Eatons in the book. He faithfully called every one, either speaking to people or leaving messages. Of course sometimes he didn't get an answer at all since nobody was home. After calling all the numbers, he left it to God. Finally, in the afternoon, he knelt down to pray and asked God to put an end to this because he really wanted to find the owner. At that moment my husband, Jerry, called him. Praise the Lord.

Doug came to church and was thankful for the fellowship. He stayed for lunch and joined in the Bible Study. He was thanking the Lord for reminding him that this church was still here in his neighbourhood.

So here we see that the Lord used Sharon's misfortune to bring Doug back to church. The Lord has mysterious ways of reaching people. We just have to remember that He allows bad circumstances sometimes to test us, but will bring good results in the end, if we will only trust in Him. Sharon learned a valuable lesson in this. She can't hold her earthly possessions too dear to her heart because some day she will have to give them all up for the truth. She will lose everything and will, hopefully pray for those who take them away. She will have to learn to say like Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Her faith was strengthened to believe that God is in control even in bad times. We have to trust in Him, and remember to pray for our enemies and for those that revile and persecute us. We have to thank the Lord for the good experiences as well as the bad ones because the bad ones are often allowed to teach us lessons, to refine and purify our characters. So remember – Trust in God.



Brs. Watts and Galiatsatos in Ecuador

OATS



Groats: Whole oat kernels after the inedible outer coating, or hull, is removed.

Steel-cut oats: Groats that are cut but not rolled. They cook in 20-30 min and have a distinctive texture

Old-fashioned oats or rolled oats: These are groats that have been softened by steaming and flattened by rolling. They cook in the microwave or in five minutes on the stove and have a chewy texture.

Quick oats and instant: The only difference between quick oats and rolled oats is that the quick oats have been cut into two or three pieces to shorten cooking time. Instant oats are further processed and rolled even thinner.

Oat bran: The outer coating of the groat, it contains the highest concentration of soluble fibre. Oat bran is sold in many forms, including cold and hot cereal.

Soluble Fibre

- Oats contain both soluble and insoluble fibre.
- The soluble fibre in oats, called beta glucan, is what experts believe is responsible for lowering blood cholesterol levels.

Health Claim

Oatmeal is the winner of the first food-specific health claim approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The claim states, "Soluble fibre from oatmeal, as part of a low saturated fat, low cholesterol diet, may reduce the risk of heart disease."

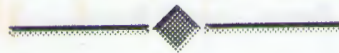
Why oatmeal?

- Three decades of research have revealed that eating oatmeal can help lower blood cholesterol levels.
- In simple terms, the soluble fibre in oats binds some of the cholesterol in your digestive tract. Once it's trapped there, it's eliminated from your body naturally.

- Most people will experience a reduction in blood cholesterol if they eat one and a half cups of cooked oatmeal or one cup cooked oat bran every day.
- Oats contain more protein than any other major grain. They are also high in fibre, low in fat, cholesterol-free and sodium-free.

Culinary ideas

- If you don't like oatmeal, there are still lots of ways to eat oats. Consider oatmeal cookies, squares, dates, muffins, breads, snack bars or fruit crisps.
- You can still use oats or oat bran in many ways. Consider oats instead of bread crumbs in your patties or veggieburgers. Oats not only help to bind the ingredients together but they keep these recipes moist and flavourful.



John Nevins Andrews

John Andrews was the first SDA missionary sent to countries outside of North America. He was born in Poland, Maine in 1829 and died at the age of 54 at Basel, Switzerland. In 1856 he married Angeline and had two children who survived, the other two died in infancy.

At the age of 13 he found the Saviour and enjoyed Bible study more than physical activity. He could read the Bible in seven languages and had memorized the New Testament by heart. At the age of 21 he started his missionary work.

In 1867 he became the president of the General Conference, which position he held for two years, after which he worked as the editor of the Review and Herald.

On September 15, 1876 with his family he sailed to Europe to begin his work in Switzerland, where he worked nine years to the end of his life.

During the civil war in America he went to Washington, D.C. to explain to the government why the members of the SDA church could not participate in the war. As a result the SDA draftees could apply for noncombatant service.

Brother Andrews was honest in accepting the new light. He said, "I would exchange a thousand errors for one truth. He was the one who found from the Bible that Sabbath should be kept from sunset to sunset. He was truly a pioneer in the early days of the Advent movement.

AMEN.

The Unfailing Friend

**One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of Friend!
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end:
They who once His kindness prove
Find it everlasting love!**

**Which of all our friends, to save us,
Could or would have shed their blood?
But our Saviour died to have us
Reconciled in Him to God:
This was boundless love indeed!
Jesus is a friend in need.**

**Could we bear from one another
What He daily bears from us?
Yet this glorious Friend and Brother
Loves us though we treat Him thus:
Though for good we render ill,
He accounts us brethren still.**