

The Reformation 

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The Upper Room



Rose Carol Dawn Glen John Chris Brenda Roy



And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared there make ready for us Mark 14:15

Conference in Perth, Australia



The Assyrian Gilgamesh Epic Part I

The Crude Antediluvian World

by Idel Suárez, Jr., Ph.D.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." **Genesis 6:5.**

One of the most fascinating archeological discoveries in the 1800's was the discovery of eleven clay tablets of the Gilgamesh Epic. Of particular interest to Jews and Christians is tablet XI, which gives an account of Noah's ark and the deluge. Originally written in cuneiform, an ancient script, the tablets have been translated into English. Although the actual clay tablets unearthed date to the year 700 B.C., they are believed to be a copy of an older document dating back to the twentieth or eighteenth century B.C. which antedates the book of Genesis by several centuries (1). It stands as another written testimony validating the existence of an ancient Oral Bible known among the ancients yet concisely summarized in Genesis by Moses around 1500 B.C.

Its Origin

The Gilgamesh Epic clay tablets were originally housed in the palace library of King Assurbanipal, the last great king of the Assyrian Empire and the brother of Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar's father. King Assurbanipal was a formidable general and a collector of notable literary and historical records. He gave strict orders to his servants and scribes "to search the archives of the ancient seats of learning in Babylon, Uruk, and Nippur, and to copy and translate" "those texts which were in older Sumerian language of Mesopotamia" "into the contemporary Akkadian Semitic" language (2).

In 609 B.C., the united forces of the Babylonians and Medes under Nabopolassar attacked, conquered, and destroyed Nineveh (3). As foretold by the prophets **Isaiah (10:12,16)**, **Nahum (3:7)**, and **Zephaniah (2:13)**, the allied Babylonian forces devastated the city by fire. The palace library perished with its keepers and deteriorated under its broken walls. Hence, the new Babylonian empire was born.

Its Discovery

Our story on the discovery of the Gilgamesh Epic starts in 1839, when a young Englishman named Sir Austen Henry Layard was enroute to Ceylon but stopped in Mesopotamia upon admiring the Assyrian Mounds. His delay of days became weeks, and eventually turned into years, as he and his subsequent colleagues unearthed the ancient cities of Nineveh and Nimrud. Among his remarkable finds was the ancient palace library of King Assurbanipal at Nineveh. A great part of his significant excavations make up the present day Assyrian collection at the British Museum. Over 25,000 broken clay tablets were unearthed and brought back to the British Museum. In the subsequent excavation of 1853, Rassam, Layard's collaborator and successor at Nineveh, unearthed part of the palace library and discovered the tablets of the Gilgamesh Epic (2).

The Gilgamesh Epic was later rediscovered at the British Museum by George Smith in 1872. He was able to decipher the cuneiform text, or wedge-shaped characters, into English. He later returned to Nineveh and found the missing clay fragments of the text and thus, composed the most complete

version published of the whole Gilgamesh Epic. Regrettably, George Smith contracted a disease and died of malnutrition at the young age of 36 years old (2)

The "mutilated condition" of the Gilgamesh Epic "makes us wonder that they could ever have been deciphered, but as duplicate copies of some portions exist, the work has been rendered possible" (3).

Its Present Location and Content

The Gilgamesh Epic consists of eleven clay tablets. I saw the original eleventh clay tablet in April of 1995 while touring the British Museum in London, England. Its composition is written in Akkadian cuneiform on baked clay. The height of the tablet XI which contains the flood episode is 15.5 centimeters or approximately 6 inches. It was labeled "the Flood Tablet."

The following caption appeared next to the Assyrian version of the Flood:

"This is perhaps the most famous of all cuneiform tablets. It is the eleventh tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic, and describes how the gods send a flood to destroy the world. Like Noah, Ut-Napishtim was forewarned and built an ark to house and preserve living things. After the flood he sent out birds to look for dry land (4)."

The British Museum guide book elaborates further, saying:

"He [Ut-Napishtim] does this and so escapes a prodigious storm leading to a flood which destroys all the rest of mankind. The storm ends on the seventh day, and on the twelfth day land emerges from the waters. In due course the boat comes to rest on Mount Nisir (in Kurdistan) and Ut-Napishtim sends out in turn a dove, a swallow and a raven, only the raven not returning. Finally, Ut-Napishtim emerges from the boat, and offers a sacrifice to the gods" (1).

With the exception of the eleventh tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic, the real protagonist is Gilgamesh. The entire story deals with Gilgamesh's search for immortality. The tablets I through X describe Gilgamesh living in an age of city-states, superhuman giants, priest-kings, polytheism, hunting, strong drinks, meat-based diets, harlots, wars, and a culture of violence.

Although many have already attempted to draw parallels between the Gilgamesh epic and Genesis, a vast majority of the parallelisms cited concentrate mostly on clay tablet XI which deals with the actual episode of the flood and Noah's ark. Such reviews ignore the content in the earlier 10 tablets. They are simply dismissed as having no similarity with the Holy Scriptures or as being merely another pagan novel.

Herein, an in-depth overview and parallelism will be drawn between those overlooked ten clay tablets and the account of the antediluvian world in Genesis. The key phrase which sets the background and tone of the first ten clay tablets of the Gilgamesh Epic appears on line six of the first clay tablet. It says, "He brought [a] report of before the Flood" (5). Those same three last words, "before the Flood", were cited by Jesus as validating the story of the antediluvian world which appears in Genesis. Jesus said, "for as in the days that were before the flood." **Matthew 24:38**. What was it like before the flood?

An Era of City-States

The Gilgamesh Epic speaks not of countries nor provinces as much as of city states. Tablet I of the Gilgamesh Epic describes the city of Uruk, which existed "before the Flood." The city had walls, "outer" and "inner" walls. The city also had a "pure sanctuary." "Go up and walk on the walls of Uruk, inspect the base terrace, examine the brickwork: Is not its brickwork of burnt brick?" (5).

The description of Uruk agrees with the brief narrative of city-states in the antediluvian world. Men like Cain founded evil city-states. "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." **Genesis 4:17.**

Many city-states sprang up after the flood and the dispersion from the Tower of Babel. City-states were also common during Greek affluent era and were known as "polis." The middle ages had its own city-states like Venice, Genova, Geneva, Hamburg, etc. Among all city-states known none have been so powerful as Babel, Babylon, and Rome.

An Era of Giants

The epic then introduces a giant named Gilgamesh. Tablet I of the Gilgamesh Epic states, "Two-thirds of him is god, [one-third of him is human]. The form of his body... like a wild ox" (5).

Gilgamesh, like the Genesis antediluvians, was probably an offspring of the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men."

The Bible says, "that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.... There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." **Genesis 6:2.**

The sons of God were the male descendants of Seth, the noble and faithful race of Adam. The daughters of men were the female descendants of Cain, Seth's older evil brother. These were godless, mundane, and sensual women. Their offspring became proud, violent, and corrupt like the world described in the Gilgamesh Epic before the flood. Thus, Gilgamesh is described as being "two-thirds... god" and one-third human. He was the product of godly forefathers who lost their devotion by uniting with ungodly and evil Cainites.

The same occurs today when godly young people unite their interests, life, and posterity with ungodly spouses. The believer grows cold and eventually gives up his or her faith. Their children follow the path of least resistance in the company of unrepentant sinners. They lose all fear of God and become ruthless, mockers of religion, and sensual.

Gilgamesh was known as being "mighty" and renown in the epic. Tablet I states, "In Uruk [there lives] Gilgamesh. [No one is there more mighty] than he... [mi]ghty is his strength!" (5). Genesis also speaks of the antediluvians as "mighty men which were of old, men of renown" just like Gilgamesh. **Genesis 6:4.**

An Era of Violence and Manslaughter

Tablet I of the Gilgamesh Epic then describes the reigning violence, "The onslaught of his weapons verily has no equal.... Gilgamesh leaves not the son to [his] father... Gilgamesh leaves not a maid to [her mother]" (5).

Gilgamesh was known proverbially for his revengeful spirit and slaughter of men and their families. Tablet I speaks of his "onslaught... weapons." Weapons are used in war and crime. Such was the atmosphere of the antediluvian world as attested by both the Gilgamesh Epic and Genesis. The cruelty was such that even the sons and daughters of the opposers were murdered. The epic says that he left not a son to his father, nor a maid or daughter to her mother. The description seems to mirror a genocide culture.

The above setting is very similar to the one described in the book of Genesis. The scriptures state that the antediluvian world was an era of giants, corruption, and violence.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.... And the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." **Genesis 6:5,11,12.**

Men like Lamech, a descendent of Cain, sought unjust revenge, premeditated murder. Lamech was willing to pursue vengeance up to 70 times 7.

"And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." **Genesis 4:23,24.**

What a contrast between the prevalent viewpoint of Lamech and that of Jesus Christ! Jesus told Peter that he should forgive his brother or sister, neighbor or enemy, up to 70 times 7. Such is the spirit of the gospel and the power of a renovated Christian heart!

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." **Matthew 18:21,22.**

An Era of Hunters

There seems to have been two major diets adopted by the antediluvian world: vegetarian and omnivorous. Tablet I speaks of both "a hunter" and "a trapping man", and of those who "feed on grass." Thus, the epic indirectly testifies that faulty eating is correlated with faulty behavior. Science has found evidence that eating habits and foods have the ability to influence human behavior for the better or for the worse. Violence begets violence. The hormones of the animals slaughtered and eaten reign in their new host. The temperament of one is passed on to the other. The diseases of one are passed on as a legacy to the other. The feeder inherits the qualities of the flesh of slain animals.

Today, much is reported by the mass media regarding the growing fear of Mad Cow disease. Cows, fed the flesh of dead cows, are at risk of developing an irreversible neurological disorder. Humans

who consume infected meat can develop a human form of Mad Cow disease known as Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. "More than 80 people have died in Britain and two in France from this fatal human equivalent" of Mad Cow disease. "The incubation period is believed to be up to 25 years, and so health officials have warned that the disease's toll may rise sharply in years to come" (6).

Men like *Jabal*, Lamech's son, were cattle ranchers and glutton eaters of flesh. Although God had not given any permission to eat flesh before the flood, this Cainite generation adopted a meat-based diet contrary to God's original menu for the human race.

"And Adah bare *Jabal*: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." **Genesis 4:20**. Although the text does not explicitly state that the Cainites ate flesh foods, ranchers do not keep cattle but for meat or dairy purposes.

Thus, the Genesis account correlates with the Gilgamesh Epic on the meat-based dietary habits of the generation before the flood. Genesis says they were cattle ranchers and the Gilgamesh epic says they were "hunters" and "trappers". Tablet I of the Gilgamesh Epic also speaks about "*Sumuqan*" who was the god of cattle (5). The antediluvians or Cainites ate both the meat of game and domesticated animals.

The other major dietary pattern was vegetarian. The faithful descendants of *Seth* for nearly 1,500 years maintained a plant-based diet as originally prescribed by God during the week of Creation. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat [food]." **Genesis 1:29**.

The Gilgamesh Epic mentions in Tablet I "*Nisaba*" who was the Assyrian "goddess of grain" (5). It also makes numerous references to "*Enkidu*" who "like the gazelles he feeds on grass" (5). Such epic references parallel the Genesis plant-based diet of the descendants of *Seth*, the faithful sons and daughters of God.

An Era of Harlotry and Polygamy

The Gilgamesh Epic vividly describes scenes of prostitution. Women lived as harlots and allured savage men into their sensual traps. Tablet I says that Gilgamesh spoke to the hunter and advised him to hire a harlot at the city of *Uruk*.

"Gilgamesh says to him, [to] the hunter: 'Go, my hunter, take with thee a harlot-lass.... As soon as he sees her, he will draw near to her...'" (5).

The vegetarian *Enkidu* of the epic is allured by the harlot and loses his strength. In a way, the tale of *Enkidu* with the harlot corresponds to an antediluvian *Samson* and *Delilah* novel. The mighty man is overtaken by the weak but beautiful harlot. *Samson* has his long locks shorn and he loses his strength. Similarly, *Enkidu* is said to be "endowed with head hair like a woman. The locks of his hair sprout like *Nisaba*"--the goddess of grain (5). But after uniting with the harlot, *Enkidu's* "body became taut, His knees were motionless... *Enkidu* had to slacken his pace--it was not as before" (5),

The story of *Enkidu* and the harlot personifies how an entire generation of faithful vegetarians and descendants of *Seth* were overtaken by passion. In those ungodly unions, the faithful abandoned their faith and godly lifestyle. They lost their spiritual strength and moral might.

The Genesis account makes mention of harlotry before the flood. Women like Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, were pleasure seekers and harlots. Women like Adah and Zillah lived in polygamous relationships.

"And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain... and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah." **Genesis 4:22.** Naamah [Strong's no. 5279] comes from the Hebrew root word "naam" [Strong's no. 5277] which means "pleasure." The Hebrew pronunciation of "naamah" is very similar to the word "naalah" [Strong's no. 5275] which had the connotation "to refuse to marry" (7). So Naamah may have lived a life of harlotry and pleasure-seeking like many women of Gilgamesh's time.

Lamech, in Genesis, is the first to have taken multiple wives. He was the father of polygamy. "And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah." **Genesis 4:19.**

Adah [Strong's no. 5711] literally means in Hebrew "ornament" (7). With polygamy, women are reduced to mere ornaments valued only for their external beauty, used at will and discarded by sensual men. Their self-worth is degraded and individuality suppressed. Envy and jealousy and strife are a natural unavoidable outcome of polygamy.

The name Zillah [Strong's no. 6741] is a feminine rendition of the Hebrew word "tsale" [Strong's no. 6738] meaning "shadow" both literally and figuratively (7). Zillah apparently was merely a shadow of Adah. She may have felt the discrimination and inequality from Lamech's favoritism of Adah—perhaps like Leah who was centuries later overshadowed by Rachel in their polygamous relationship with Jacob.

An Era of Drunkenness and Dancing

Tablet II of the Gilgamesh Epic tells of how the harlot introduces Enkidu to hunting, wild feasting, and strong drinks. He is taught the age-old cliché, "let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die." **Isaiah 22:13.**

The second clay tablet says, "Nothing does Enkidu know of eating food; to drink strong drink He has not been taught. Saying to Enkidu: 'Eat the food Enkidu, As is life's due; Drink the strong drink, as is the custom of the land.' Enkidu ate the food, Until he was sated; Of strong drink he drank Seven goblets... He took his weapon to chase lions... He caught wolves, He captured lions" (5).

The chaste and vegetarian Enkidu first became a fornicator and then a drunker, hunter, and meat-eater. His life illustrates a grand implicit principle of Genesis, one sin leads to another. Sin has the characteristic of entangling its prey into a mud of immorality and degeneration—a quick sand of moral degradation. Solomon said, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." **Proverbs 5:22.**

Although Genesis does not explicitly cite drunkenness as one of the sins of the antediluvian age, it does state that Noah became drunk after the flood. Noah had escaped the flood but one of the sins that brought the flood overtook him, namely drunkenness. In his drunkenness, he unclothed himself and behaved shamefully before his offspring. Thus, sensuality and drunkenness act as catalysts to each other. They coexist in Genesis as they coexisted in the Gilgamesh Epic.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his brethren without." **Genesis 9:20-22.**

An additional sad fact of alcohol abuse is that it always affects more than one person. Families are adversely affected by the irrational behavior of their loved ones under the influence of alcohol. Noah's drunkenness and shameful nakedness set the stage for Ham and Canaan's rebellion and parental disobedience from which the modern world has not been able to free itself.

Alcohol is a toxin which provides empty calories. It is a narcotic drug which slows the nervous system, clouds the mind, reduces reaction time, reddens the eyes, alters respiration, and unleashes all the natural immoral inhibitions of man. Of all drugs sold in the market place, collectively they do not account for more disease, divorce, accidents, abuse, violence, and ecological disasters as those due to the influence of alcohol. In the United States alone, half of all fatal automobile accidents are due to drunk driving.

Jesus also tells us that drunkenness was prevalent before the flood and undoubtably was one of the causes of the moral depravity of that era. He says, the antediluvians were "drinking" right up to the last day when the flood waters came and destroyed the old world. "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and flood came, and destroyed them all." **Luke 17:27.**

The End of An Era

Jesus declared that the antediluvian world was absorbed in gluttony, drunkenness, and sensuality. "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." **Matthew 24:38,39.**

Human worth had reached an all time low. Fidelity seemed to be avoided at all cost. People sought revenge for the most minute wrong-doing. Entire families were slaughtered. Villages were wiped out. Humanity was given over to drunkenness, gluttony, feasting, orgies, dancing, and harlotry. It was an era which lost all fear and reverence for life, health, humanity, and God.

Ironically, the first **ten** tablets of the Gilgamesh Epic retell of the transgression of God's **ten** moral commandments which appear in Exodus 20. The eleventh tablet outlines the supernatural consequence for transgressing the ten commandments.

In a way, our modern civilization is reliving that ancient past recounted in the Gilgamesh Epic and in Genesis. A simple review of the news or of TV programming will confirm the degeneration of the present age. What will become of the next generation?

Jesus said, "for as in the days that were before the flood," so shall it be when the Son of Man shall return to earth. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.... And [they] knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." **Genesis 24:37-39.**

Thus, the characteristics of the present age which mirror the antediluvian world are signs of the

coming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The alarming reality is that the past lost generation "knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." They were living in willful ignorance and willful rebellion. When they awoke from their spiritual and moral slumber, it was too late.

Both the Gilgamesh Epic and Genesis attest that the ancient world was swallowed up by a flood. Saint Peter tells us that this time there will be an atomic flood of fire with the return of Jesus and His heavenly host.

"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [lifestyle] and godliness?" **II Peter 3:6-7,10-11.**

On which side will you find yourself when He returns? In the ark of salvation with the sons of God or in the waters of damnation with the mighty men of sin? The choice is yours.

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[Gilgamesh.I]

Purity and innocence and conformity to Christ's character will make heaven enjoyable. All the faculties will be strengthened, all in harmony. Perfect bliss can only dwell in the heart where Christ reigns supreme.

TMK 95

CHOOSE YE THIS DAY...

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15.

Life involves many choices, for God has created man with the ability to make choices. He has the ability to reason so that he can see beyond the present moment and get an idea of what the consequences of his actions will lead to. There are often two voices calling to us, the voice of God, through the working of the Holy Spirit and a voice that is contrary to the will of God. For many - to choose the Lord's way appears difficult and tedious. We are not promised an easy road. It is a strait gate that we must enter and a narrow road that we must travel if we are to reach the goal of eternity. If we seek to know the will of God and listen to His voice He will reveal to us the way to go and we must then choose to travel the way He has laid open before us.

Unfortunately in this day and age few people want to hear God's voice anymore. They invent many methods in order to block God out of their lives. Some turn to worldly entertainments, TV, worldly music, the theatre, parties and other places of social entertainment where the angels refuse to tread. In these places you will not hear God's voice speaking to you, but this is what many of these people want. Others make themselves extremely busy so that they don't have time to find out what God is asking of them. They work from morning until night, just dropping to bed at a late hour from sheer exhaustion. Still others will create false theories that are contrary to Biblical truth, believing and teaching them as fact, such as the Evolutionary Theory with the Big Bang that created the earth and the universe. They want to block God out of the picture. Others will follow these fables taught by modern day scientists - the "wise" men of the earth so they don't have to believe in God either. While still others turn to drugs and alcohol numbing their brains, giving them a false view of reality.

Why do people invent ways to block

God out of their lives? One reason is that they don't like the sound of their conscience rebuking them when they give into, and indulge, their darling sins. And a second reason is fear. They are afraid of what God may ask them to do. He will most certainly ask them to give up their sinful habits - which they feel will lead to a very boring life (although they are greatly mistaken). But God may also ask them to perform a certain duty or send them on a mission that they don't want to go on.

Christians sometimes also seek for ways to ignore the voice of God. They claim to serve the Lord because they fear of burning in hell fire, but when God calls them to duty they choose not to obey, rather going their own way.

TO FOLLOW THE LORD OR NOT?

Some have a life-long struggle as to whether they should serve God or not. They love the world and it is so hard to separate from the world. Some even may have become church members because they realize that this is the only way to salvation, but they are still having a secret love of the world. Eventually their secret sins will be revealed and they will have to choose one way or the other. The Lord will not leave people in the valley of decision forever.

Joshua chose to follow the Lord. He mentioned to Israel in his final message to the nation that the choice belongs to the individual (Joshua 24:15 — quoted above). The command to serve the Lord involves a choice. "Any service that is not voluntary is useless. God sets before men life and death and urges them to choose life, but He does not interfere with their contrary choice, nor does He protect them from its natural results. Joshua resolved to follow the Lord despite what others did. Sometimes the choice to follow God becomes a singular act. . . those who are bound for heaven must be willing, despite all opposition, to do as

the *best* do and not as the *most* do. Joshua had been remarkably true to God all his life. He was resolved to remain faithful to the last. His last appeal was for the people to follow his example of consecration, and the dignity and simplicity of his life added powerfully to the weight of his words." 2BC, p. 296.3

Job's friend encourages us to choose the good. "Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good." Job 34:4. Elihu here wants to discover the real truth from among all the conflicting opinions that have been spoken about among his friends. In the end the Lord reveals the truth to them.

THE LORD CHOOSES US FOR SALVATION.

The Lord chooses all of us to be saved..." For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:6,8.

The Lord wants everyone to be saved "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Ezk. 18:32. When we fall or make a misstep He is there to pick us up and set us on our way again. "For the just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again." Pro. 24:16. Israel fell many times but when they turned back to the Lord, He was there for them. "Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." Zech. 1:17. "And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem *again*." Zech. 2:12. The Lord has great patience and comes to us over and over again. Yet there is a limit to the mercy of God, and my prayer is that none of us have crossed that line yet.

WE MUST CHOOSE LIFE

The Father in Heaven in conjunction with Jesus made a choice. The first choice they made for mankind was to put into operation the plan of salvation. What will we choose in return?

"God has made one great condescension to save erring, lost man; He yielded His dearly Beloved from His bosom to suffer indignity, scorn, and hate, to die an ignominious death upon the cross. If anyone will be His disciple now, he must live a self-denying life. His will must die. The Plan of Salvation is laid. Now man must condescend, now man must yield. His life must be a continual yielding. God does not deviate or change from His plan at all to save any. The great condescension has been made. Now it all lies with man, whether he will accept the plan God has laid down, whether he will yield his will to the will of God. God does not change now to accommodate man. He is left now to choose life or death. If he chooses life, he chooses the cross, the suffering, self-denying life of Christ, and he must not go murmuring along at the ruggedness of the way." 21MR, p. 253. Does this mean that the way of the Christian is beset with only sorrow and sadness? Even though the way is rugged, the road is narrow and steep, the Lord has promised to be with us and we can have peace and joy by keeping our eyes fixed upon the goal.

It is not an initiation process that we are put through before being granted eternal life. It is dying to self. Sin is a deadly poison and it takes a lot of purging to get rid of it. The longer it has remained in the body, the more difficult it is to cleanse the soul temple. God is willing to change man instantaneously, the delay falls upon us. "Can we not understand that the most costly thing in the world is *sin*? It is at the expense of purity of conscience, at the cost of losing the favour of God and separating the soul from Him and at last losing heaven. The sign of grieving the Holy Spirit of God and walking contrary to Him has cost many a one the loss of his soul." FW, p. 17. "God would not compel any to be saved. Jesus has made the great sacrifice, and if any man will freely, gladly accept it: if he will choose life, he can have it. But his life must be one of continual yielding." SG, Vol. 2, p. 278. Jesus wants heaven to be a happy place again and the only way for this to

be possible is to bring people to heaven that have put sin out of their lives. It is a difficult struggle to get rid of the old sinful nature and live a new life in Christ, but the struggle is worth it when we see the end result. There will be no sin in heaven.

"The path of life is beset with perils. . . A constant battle must be kept up with the selfishness and corruption of the human heart. Often the wicked seem to be prospered in their way; but those who forget God, even for an hour or a moment, are in a dangerous path. They may not realize its perils, but ere they are aware, habit, like an iron band, holds them in subjection to the evil with which they have tampered. God despises their course, and unless they turn from their evil ways, His blessing cannot attend them. Life and death are set before every worker, and the strongest motives are presented to induce them to choose life by obedience to God's law." MC, p. 59.

SPIRITUAL CHOICES WITHIN THE CHURCH.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen **you**, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that **whatsoever** ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:16. Jesus chose 12 disciples while on this earth. While all may choose to follow Christ, it is He who chooses and qualifies men to occupy positions of responsibility and leadership. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. . . But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will, . . . And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:7,11,28.

The Lord chooses some for leaders, ministers, canvassers and other offices for which He has given talents. It is our duty to ask the Lord what He would have us to do and then to not hesitate to perform that which is asked of us. We must never become negligent of our duties nor should we try to do duties that are someone else's. We may not have the talent for someone else's job.

"But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not." Phil. 1:22. Here Paul is faced with a dilemma. He knows what he wants. He would like to have his life come to an end and to rest from his labours until Jesus returns, but on the other hand he knows that the believers in the church may need his counsel and encouragement. What is best? Sometimes we are honestly and sincerely following the Lord and we are perplexed as to which choice the Lord wants us to make. First of all we must know how to listen to the voice of God and secondly must be willing to do what God asks. Are not Christians often in this dilemma, as Paul was, that if it were left to themselves they would not know which to choose, life or death? But God, who knows the end from the beginning leads, as we would choose to be led if we could see as He sees. Therefore we must seek to do what God wants us to do, and not what we may want to do. We must pray as did Jesus, "Not my will, but thine be done."

All throughout His life on earth, Jesus sought to do the Father's will, not His own. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 6:38.

DIFFICULT TASKS

Sometimes the Lord gives us tasks that seem daunting. We feel as though there is no way we can accomplish them and ask, "Are you sure God?" I am sure Abraham felt this way when he was asked to leave his family and friends behind in Ur and go to this strange new country and also when asked to sacrifice his son. Yet, he never swerved from his duty, as difficult as it was. The Lord chose Abraham for a special work. He separated Abraham from his kindred and friends in order to preserve the truth in his life and family. "Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees and gavest him the name of Abraham." Neh.9:7

Sister White often felt overwhelmed in the beginning of her ministry and she asked that this responsibility be taken away and given to another. It was not done, and the Lord sustained her.

Both Jeremiah and Moses did not feel equal to the task the Lord had put before them. Jeremiah pointed out that

he was just a child and there was no way anyone would listen to him. Moses reminded God that he had not been in Egypt for 40 years and had forgotten much of the language. They weren't telling God anything He didn't already know and He still chose to send these men, and they went obediently, trusting God to be with them. We must have the desire to do God's will as Isaiah did. When the Lord told him of the work that needed to be done, Isaiah simply answered, "Here am I, send me." Isa.6:8.

God has chosen us for something, what is it? As difficult as it may seem, we must not hesitate to perform our duty. Jeremiah was told that he was called to be a prophet before he was born. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou earnest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." Jer. 1:5.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed in agony. Three times He asked His Father that if it was possible that this cup be taken away, then please take it - however He finished by saying, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matthew 26:39.

No more difficult task will ever be given to any human being than was given to Jesus. If you ever feel overwhelmed by the duty you have been asked to do and feel that it is too hard, remember what Jesus went through in Gethsemane. He suffered more than any human being will ever suffer. The beautiful part is that He has been there. He understands and He has promised to be with us until the end of this world's history. We don't have to walk alone. It is important then that we always pray, asking for God's will to be done in our lives, and we must be willing to go where He wants us to go and do what He wants us to do.

God needs minutemen who are willing to go to the ends of the earth for Him, should He ask.

There was a prophet in the old testament who came and gave a message to Jeroboam. (1 Kings 13:1-32) God told him not to eat or drink anything until he had completed his mission and arrived back home again. A false prophet met him on his homeward journey and informed him that the Lord had told him that He had

changed His mind, and that the Lord had instructed him to bring this prophet into his house and feed him. The true prophet believed him and what a sad end he had to his life. He was no match for the lion he met the next morning on the road towards his home. He should have done God's will. If we hear someone telling us something that is exactly the opposite to what God has told us, we had better check to make sure the person is genuine otherwise continue doing what God had told you in the first place.

DIET

Does diet have anything to do in aid of making the right choice? Some feel that it does not matter what you eat as it will not affect your thinking and discernment of good and evil, however this is not true. "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse evil, and choose the good." Isaiah 7:15. Yes it most certainly does. When Jesus was on the cross they offered him vinegar on a sponge to drink. This is often given in mercy to the suffering one to help numb the pain. This also numbs the brain and dulls the senses. Jesus would have nothing of that. He knew that He needed a clear mind at this most crucial time in the Plan of Salvation. He decided to bear the pain and maintain a clear mind. Yes, it is very important to keep a clear mind by eating only the best foods, so that we can clearly discern the way of the Lord and make the right choices.

REFUSING GOD'S WAY

Sometimes Christians will shy away from doing God's will. They ask in a genuine manner what God would have them to do, but they don't like the answer they have been given, so therefore they decide it could not have been the voice of God and they go their own way - sometimes with unfortunate consequences. It is often easier to have others make decisions for us rather than for us to make our own, but we must make the choices and decisions for our selves. I am reminded of a young person I knew many years ago who was unsure as to whether he should enter the canvassing field of labour and become a missionary for the Lord. He felt impressed in that direction and inquired of an elderly, faithful person in the church as to whether he should or should not. This person answered the young person by

telling him that they can't make the decision for him. This was a decision between that young person and God. If he was impressed to go, then he must obey that voice as the call of God. This young person wanted someone else to make the decision. Sad to say that this young person did not decide to become a worker for the Lord and today is no longer in the church and almost an Atheist. This person should have done God's will immediately when he felt the impression.

I have also known ministers and workers who were asked by the church to go to certain places but chose not to. I remember one particular minister who was asked to go to a certain area, but he chose not to go and went to another city instead. Today he is no longer in full time ministry and his family is not faithful to the truth. Would it have been different if he had chosen to go where he was asked, rather than the city of his own choosing? I am not God, so I cannot say, however I do know that there is a blessing involved if you choose to do God's will. There have been others who have been asked to go to different places, but have refused, making one kind of excuse or another and now are having difficulties with the church. How sad to see these things happen. It is very dangerous to choose another way than the way God has asked us to go.

Some are afraid to ask God for fear that they will not like the answer - so they don't ask, however it is dangerous to go against God's will. If God has given us a duty to do, He will not leave us alone to struggle on. He has promised to be with us until the end.

It is a very serious mistake to choose NOT to do God's will. Sometimes it seems that God has more mercy than at other times, but He knows the heart of every individual and He will judge righteously. When Jonah was called to go to Nineveh, he didn't like the mission. He set out to go in the opposite direction. He chose to not do God's will, however God in His mercy sent a great fish, which spewed Jonah on the land beside Nineveh. He gave Jonah a second chance and so Jonah reluctantly went. He did not want to run from God any more. What a blessed result came from Jonah's preaching.

Other times if people flatly refuse to do God's will, His spirit will depart from them and their lives will come to confusion. I am reminded of Hazen Foss and William Foy who lived over 100 years ago. They absolutely refused to give the message to the people that the Lord gave them. Finally the Lord took the message from them and gave it to Ellen Harmon, who was only a 17-year-old frail young girl at that time. Ellen was at first fearful of preaching the message, but God in His mercy showed her what the consequences would be if she refused. She dared not disobey God and do her own will. She chose to do God's will and to leave the results in the hands of the Lord.

Unfortunately many will clearly refuse until it is too late. "Therefore will I number you with the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not." Isa. 65:12. There will be a time when some will call on God but He will not answer. The fault does not lie with God, but rather the wrong choice that they have made previously. "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD." Pro. 1:29. "When they had hearts soft enough to be impressionable, they refused to permit the Spirit of God to work upon them. Now their hearts have become hardened and their characters fixed. Now it is too late. Any simulated repentance is only a desire to escape the dreadful results of their sins. Even if these men were granted another opportunity, it would produce no change. Real forgiveness is not a mere excusing of sin, but a cleansing of the sinner. Without a genuine surrender to the instruction and control of the Holy Spirit and an earnest desire to be changed, no sinner can be saved." 3BC, p. 951. Many don't want the knowledge of the Lord because it would interfere with their enjoyment of their sin. It would mean a change in their life, therefore they do what they can to avoid such knowledge. Now they would like to avoid the consequences of their choice, but it is too late.

IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE:

How long will life continue on planet earth? Only God knows, but if we are spiritually awake, we will see the signs of the times fulfilling before our very

eyes and we will not be like the Ten Virgins, falling asleep when there is a great need for preparation. Unfortunately many will wake up and it will be too late.

"Then I saw Jesus lay off his priestly attire, and clothe Himself with His most kingly robes. Upon His head were many crowns, a crown within a crown. Surrounded by the angelic host, He left heaven. The plagues were falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some were denouncing God and cursing Him. Others rushed to the people of God and begged to be taught how they might escape His judgements. But the saints had nothing for them. The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonizing prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given. The sweet voice of mercy was no more to invite them. When the saints, and all heaven, were interested for their salvation, they had no interest for themselves. Life and death had been set before them. *Many desired life, but made no effort to obtain it. They did not choose life*, and now there was no atoning blood to cleanse the guilty, no compassionate Saviour to plead for them and cry, "Spare, spare the sinner a little longer." All heaven had united with Jesus, as they heard the fearful words, "It is done. It is finished." The plan of salvation had been accomplished, but few had chosen to accept it. And as mercy's sweet voice died away, fear and horror seized the wicked. With terrible distinctness they heard the words, "Too late! Too late!" EW, p. 281.

Yes, "Many desire life, but do not choose it. They love the world, its fashion, its pleasure, and they plainly show they have not chosen eternal life. Their treasure is here. This world is their home. The lives of those who choose life and salvation will be marked with their choice. Their conduct will say plainly that they are seeking a better country, even a heavenly, a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." 7MR, p. 216.

"Even many professed Christians seem to have no earnest desire for this heavenly knowledge, and remain in willing ignorance of this divine grace which it is their privilege to obtain. . . All can choose life if they will. They can resist sin, take pleasure in the ways of righteousness and true holiness, and

be rewarded with eternal life in God's everlasting kingdom." SA, p. 79.

"Some Sabbath keepers so earnestly desire to have friendship with the world, that they mangle their feelings and make wretched work of following Christ. They desire the approval of God and the friendship of the world too. Such I saw would certainly lose heaven. They do not enjoy this world, therefore they lose both. . . For a life of humble obedience here, God will grant the rich reward hereafter. He will accept of nothing but entire consecration." RH, 11-26-61.

And we have to trust the Lord that if we choose to follow Him, whatever He may ask, He will be with us and all will work out for the best. He will lead us in the paths of righteousness. The Lord never leads anyone into error or into false religious movements. "What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." Psalm 25:12. If we choose to follow the Lord, He will teach us and guide us.

"Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways." Pro. 3:31. Never let your friends or family members cause you to choose the wrong way. Choose for yourself the way of the Lord and He will bless you. Often those who are in the way of death, may seem to prosper and we are tempted to follow them, however we must never envy them. Think of what lies at the end of the road. And we have to choose today because very soon momentous events will break out on this earth and we do not want to be caught on the wrong side because we delayed our choice. But God does not force us - the choice is ours. Where we end up will be completely dependent on the choice we made. God will help us, but the choice is ours to make.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"
Deut. 30:19.

"My brother, my sister, today the Spirit invites you to come to Jesus. . . "Look unto me, and be ye saved," is God's gracious invitation. Will you not choose life, eternal life."
RH, 02-15-12

Wendy Eaton

PROPENSITY

In the letter to Brother Baker, sister White used the word "propensity" which has confused many.

"Be careful, exceeding careful as to how you dwell upon the humanity of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin... He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity." Manuscript Releases 13, page 18.

According to the dictionary, the word "propensity" means tendency and leaning.

We also must check how sister White used this word in other testimonies to find out her understanding of this word.

"If you allow yourself to become a talebearer, you will not be welcome in any family, because of your propensity to report every transaction that may occur." Spalding and Morgan Collection.

"Satan know that it cannot be, and for this reason he brings his temptations to bear upon men upon the point of appetite, that he may bring them into bondage to this propensity and thus work their ruin." Mind, Character and Personality Book 1, pg 76.

"You are watching with keen business eye the best chance to secure a bargain. This scheming propensity has become second nature with you, and you do not see and realize the evil of encouraging it." The Publishing Ministry pg. 330.

"Judas was naturally avaricious, and he had fostered this evil propensity until it had

become the ruling motive in his life." Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 3 chapter 4.

"It only increased your money-loving propensity, and was an additional weight to sink you to perdition." Test. Vol. 2 page 240.

"Sister R., your brain is wearied and taxed by reading. You should deny your propensity for crowding your mind with everything it can devour." Test. Vol 2. page 434.

"Brother "B" has cultivated an almost ungovernable propensity for sight-seeing and trips of pleasure." Test. Vol. 3 page 26.

"He cares only to indulge his scandal-loving propensity." Test. Vol. 5 page 57.

"We need not retain one sinful propensity... as we partake of divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character and we are made a living power for good." The Faith I live By, page 23.

"This propensity for speech-making frequently dampens a religious interest that might have produced great results." Gospel Workers (1892) Chapter 1

"The higher, nobler powers of his being have been brought very much into subjection to this close, selfish propensity." Mind, Character and Personality, Chapter 63.

"He must train his mind to good works. He must brace against his propensity to acquire." Mind, Character and Personality, Chapter 63.

In these above quoted testimonies, sister White used the word "propensity" as a habit or fault in the character which can be overcome and put away.

But then sister White wrote more than 400 testimonies about the sinful flesh which Jesus took upon Himself.

"Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, clothing His divinity with humanity." ST 4/11/95

"Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. It was not indwelling sin that caused him to yield; for God made him pure and upright; in His own image. He was faultless as the angels before the throne. There were in him no corrupt principles, no tendencies to evil but when Christ came to meet the temptations of Satan, He bore 'the likeness of sinful flesh'" S.T. 10/17/1900

Jesus did not come as Adam before his fall but as human beings after 4000 years of practicing sin.

"Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. 1:3.

The Seed of David did not have holy flesh, but sinful flesh and nature.

Yet we understand that Jesus did not have sinful habits that He had to overcome, yet He was tempted by His sinful flesh. He did not yield to the temptations. His flesh felt hunger in the wilderness after fasting for 40 days but he did not yield to the temptation that came from within Him. He overcame His appetite which have caused many others to fall.

We can overcome and put away the sinful propensities but we cannot get rid of our sinful flesh. It continues to tempt us as it did with Jesus.

May the Lord help us to understand the nature of Christ during His humanity and look to Him as our example, how to overcome sin and temptations.

AMEN.

Timo Martin

THE POWER OF PRAYER

I got up early one morning, rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish, I had no time to pray.

Problems just tumbled around me, heavier came each task;
"Why doesn't GOD help me?" I wondered; He answered, "You didn't ask."

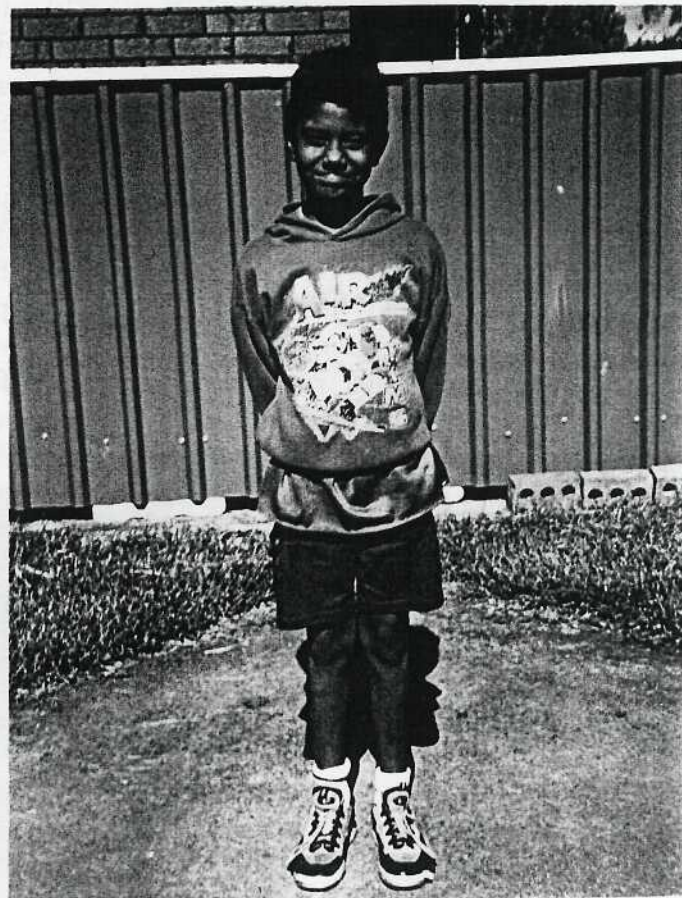
I wanted to see joy and beauty; the day toiled on gray and bleak.
I wondered why GOD didn't show me; He said, "You didn't seek."

I tried to come into GOD's Presence, used all my keys at the lock.
Gently and lovingly HE chided, "My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning, paused before entering the day,
I had so much to accomplish, I had to take time to pray.

Author Unknown

Submitted by: Kathleen Ross



Joshua from Australia



PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

Paul counsels us to "Pray without Ceasing", in 1 Thess. 5:17. Sister White says that if we go one hour without prayer, we will fall into sin. How is this possible? Are we to stay on our knees 24 hours of the day? It is most certainly possible to be in communion with our heavenly Father without ceasing. We can talk to Him as we perform our daily duties maintaining the connection with heaven. We can also sing songs as we are out and about. Songs are prayers in themselves.

"There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. . . . In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God, and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes." SC, p. 99.

"We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand. We may commune with God in our hearts; we may walk in companionship with Christ. When engaged in our daily labour, we may breathe out our heart's desire, inaudible to any human ear; but that word

cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard." GW, p. 258.

"It is not always necessary to bow upon your knees in order to pray. Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking, and when you are busy with your daily labour." MH, p. 510,511.

However we must never neglect private and public prayers. These are different kinds of prayers when all distractions are put aside and we are alone with the Lord. During these times does it matter what position we are in? Yes, very much so. Here are a few quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy.

"Why not pray as if you had a conscience void of offence, and could come to the throne of grace in humility, yet with holy boldness, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting? Do not bow down and cover your faces as if there were something that you desired to conceal; but lift up your eyes toward the

heavenly sanctuary, where Christ your Mediator stands before the Father to present your prayers, mingled with His own merit and spotless righteousness, as fragrant incense." CT, p. 241. "And let not those who kneel around the family altar put their faces in their hands close down to the chair when they address God. Let them lift up their heads and with holy awe speak to their heavenly Father, uttering their words in tones that can be heard." 6T, p. 381.

"Both in public and in private worship, it is our privilege to bow on our knees before the Lord when we offer our petitions to Him. Jesus, our example, "kneeled down, and prayed." Of His disciples it is recorded that they, too "Kneeled down, and prayed." Paul declared, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." In confessing before God the sins of Israel, Ezra knelt. Daniel "kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God." GW, p. 178.

"Your knees are to bow three times a day in heartfelt prayer." 6T, p. 298.

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." Psalm 95:6. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph 3:14. "To bow down when in prayer to God is the proper attitude to occupy. . . . Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God." 2 SM, p. 312.

"I received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? One who has been educated for about five years in Battle Creek was asked to lead in prayer before Sister White should speak to the people. But as I beheld him standing upright upon his feet while his lips were about to open in prayer to God, my soul was stirred within me to give him an open rebuke. Calling him by name, I said, 'Get down upon your knees.' This is the proper position always." 2 SM, p. 311.

"Is it possible that with all the light that God has

given to His people on the subject of reverence, that ministers, principals, and teachers in our schools, by precept and example, teach young men to stand erect in devotion as did the Pharisees? Shall we look upon this as significant of their self-sufficiency and self-importance? Are these traits to become conspicuous?

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:9-12). Mark you, it was the self-righteous Pharisee who was not in a position of humility and reverence before God; but standing in his haughty self-sufficiency, he told the Lord all his good deeds. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself (Luke 18:11); and his prayer reached no higher than himself.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would

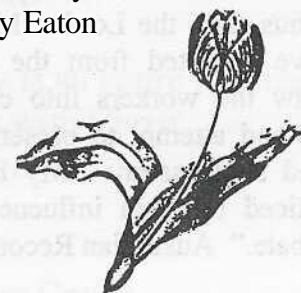
not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18:13,14).

"We hope that our brethren will not manifest less reverence and awe as they approach the only true and living God than the heathen manifest for their idol deities, or these people will be our judges in the day of final decision. I would speak to all who occupy the place of teachers in our schools. Men and women, do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God. Mistrust your own strength. Depend not in it; but often bow down on your knees before God, and worship Him...

"And when you assemble to worship God, be sure and bow your knees before Him." 2 SM, p. 313,314.

AMEN.

Compiled by
Wendy Eaton





FALSE DOCTRINES

Since the beginning Satan has tried to introduce heresies into the church of God. Then we can expect also today to see false doctrines being presented to us as truth. Unfortunately many do not discern the errors in these theories but believe them and are confused to the point even to lose their faith.

Sister White gave many warnings and counsels in regards to these heresies that will be presented to us.

"Heresies are now arising among the people of God, and they will continue to arise. As we near the end of time, falsehood will be so mingled with truth, that only those who have guidance of the Holy Spirit will be able to distinguish truth from error." Manuscript releases #7 p. 359

"We are warned that heresy of every kind will be brought in among the people of God in these last days. One heresy leads to many other heresies in the explanation of the Word of God and in departing from the Lord's design and plans." Manuscript Releases #760 page 14.

"These teachers spoken by Christ will come in sheep's clothing, and will delude the people with their heresies, and this we shall see more and more as we draw nearer the end. Consequently it is of the great necessity that we search the Scriptures for ourselves, and learn their contents." Manuscript releases #3 page 89.

"In these last days many influences will arise to draw the worker from standing firmly for a 'Thus saith the Lord'. Men who themselves have departed from the faith, will seek to draw the workers into controversy, by this method attempt to present heresies that will lead souls astray. My brethren, do not be enticed by such influences. Engage in no debate." Australian Record Dec. 30. 1907

"The time has come when we cannot depend upon the doctrines which comes to our ears, unless we see that it harmonizes with the Word of God. There are dangerous heresies that will be presented as Bible doctrines; and we are to become acquainted with the Bible so that we may know how to meet them. The faith of every individual will be tested, and everyone will pass through a trial of close criticism." Evangelism p. 590, 591

"The Scriptures pointing forward to this time declare that Satan will work with all power and 'with all deceivableness' of unrighteousness." 2 Tess. 2: 9,10 His working is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, and delusions of these last days. Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ" C.O.L. p. 414

Clear are the warnings that the Spirit of Prophecy has given us. Multitudes will be deceived by these heresies. What can we do to escape these deceptions?

The first thing is Bible study. We must be well rooted and grounded in the message. The second thing is presence of the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit's guidance we will be confused. The greatest intellect cannot figure out the truth alone.

Next comes the obedience to the truth and finally the love of the truth.

Apostle Paul gives us a warning that all who do not love the truth will believe a lie.

Sometimes for the fear that someone may be offended we dare not correct them from the errors they believe. But the fear of God will not permit us to do that. Jesus spake the truth and many were offended and left Him.

Sister White counsels us to do painstaking efforts to fasten the minds of the people to the truth.

"There must be painstaking effort to fasten the minds of all to the solid arguments of the truth; for everyone will be tested, and those who are rooted and grounded in the work of God will be unmoved by the heresies that will arise on all sides; but if any neglect to obtain the necessary preparation, they will be swept away by errors that have the appearance of truth." Evang. P. 365

God is allowing those errors to arise for a specific purpose. These heresies instead of destroying the church will do the opposite; they will purify the church.

"My prayer is: Purify Thy church, O God.... God is shifting His people. He will have a

clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means to keep the church pure." Test. Vol. 1 p. 99

"God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat." Test. Vol. 5 pg. 707

May the Lord help us to escape these heresies. Many will be shaken out by them, but the honest seekers of the truth will not be deceived.

As the church we must have a clear sound in our trumpet. Our publications must prepare the people to meet these heresies and remain firm in the truth. AMEN

Timo Martin

THE JOURNEY



The journey is an entire lifetime-
Let us walk with Christ
Hand in hand
Together

The road is long and difficult
Let us not look behind us
But look to Jesus
On Calvary

The way is paved with obstacles
Let us not dare go alone
For without Him
We are lost

The path is straight and narrow
Let us place our will in His
So that we may overcome
In His strength

The sojourn is not forever
Let us keep our eyes on the goal
And trust the Heavenly guide
Who will never let us down

The battle is almost over
Let us take the amour of God
And with the sword of the spirit
Conquer sin

The race is not to the swift-
Let us not delay
But press onwards
For the crown

The journey is an entire lifetime-
Let us walk with Christ
Hand in hand
Together

WAITING, WATCHING AND GAZING

2 Thess. 3:5. "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." Luke 12:37. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching..."

We as a people of God have a lot to say about "the waiting and watching time." We often talk about it in our sermons, and exhortations; advice, warnings, preparations, and trying to do what we think is proper or required in our earnest, yet wavering minds. Furthermore, we even sing about it in our hymns and spiritual songs and music. Then, too, we see it often written in the Gospel, testimonies, and periodicals. Our Prayer Week has greater emphasis on it year-by-year. Our ordinary conversation seems to point to heavenly and eternal things... watching and waiting.

We profess to believe we are actually living in that time and have been for many years. Our labouring pioneers and hardy forefathers have been "waiting, and watching" also... and we are in the same position today.

Well, this is all, as a matter of fact, very well and fine; but, what is it to watch? Is it just to stand passively and squarely and look up to the clouds of heaven? Is it to sit with our uncertain gaze directed outward, as one would follow the hands around the dial of his vigilant clock or watch? Is it to sit at the window and searchingly gaze at passersby as the pass by your house, as is the custom in many countries?

No! No! it is more than this! In Matthew 24:42, we are admonished to watch in reference to the Lord's coming... "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour you Lord doth come." In the very next verse, we have the illustration of the careless "goodman", allowing the thief to break into his house. He should have watched, but failed. But, this means more, or that we can comprehend, than simply keeping a "sharp lookout" for the thief.

It means "advance work"... doing something "before" the thief comes, making preparation beforehand. So it is in watching for the coming of the Lord. It is doing something in reference to that coming "before" it takes place. It is giving the preparatory warning and heeding it; the warning of the third angel's message, and the two preceding, and

accessory or additional messages. Rev. 14: 7-11; Rev. 18:1, 2, 4; Luke 12:37, in speaking of this time, it says, "blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching."

An illustration is used here in Luke also. It is a circumstance attaching to an Oriental wedding, Lk 12:37. "I tell you the truth, He will dress himself to serve, and make them to recline at the table, and will come forth to serve them." Peter, always asking questions, wanted to know of Jesus, the scope of the parable, to whom it referred... unto "us", the twelve, or "even to all"? (v. 41). The Lord applied it to those servants of His who shall be present at His coming; "It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready..." (v. 38). He said, further, "Blessed is that servant when His Lord when He cometh shall find so 'doing'." (v. 43), i.e. giving the "household meat in due season." (v. 42). Watchfulness is essential to accomplish what God would have His people do." (CH 560).

So, we find the warning, or admonition to "watch" in Matthew, and the "blessing of watching". In Luke we have reference to "doing something". What, then, is this "watching-doing"? Watching is the "gathering out" from the family of Adam, the "household" of the kingdom, and warning, instructing, and disciplining it for the coming of its King! To watch, then, is to "work"; and to such as "look" (watch), for him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Heb. 9:28). A little period of watching remains. (2T 192).

So, it seems very clear from the scriptures that to those only who watch, (work) for Him, will the Saviour appear, as a Saviour to bring them salvation. My brother, my sister... myself, what are we doing? Are we looking for the Lord in the right way? Are we giving meat (soul food), substance, meaning, gist to the true "household of the kingdom", or just dreamily gazing into the sun-sweetened air?

"The Christian's watch-word is, "Watch, pray, and work." (GW 257). Watchfulness is the true life of faith. (5T 235). AMEN.

John Theodorou
Athens, Greece

PLANS



How can I make plans for the New Year? Jesus made no plans for Himself; He surrendered Himself to God, and day by day God unfolded His work before Him. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He has sent." So we should surrender ourselves and our plans to God day by day; and day by day God will unfold His plans of work for us. We do not know which will prosper, this or that; but God has foreknowledge, and wisdom and understanding to guide us.

Our Heavenly Guide will give us our marching orders as we need them. We would become confused if we had to organize and plan all the various complicated turns that our paths take; so God reserves all the instructions, and rolls them out as needed and used.

If we do our part, if we take the first step under His direction, then strength and direction will be given us for the next. "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before

them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

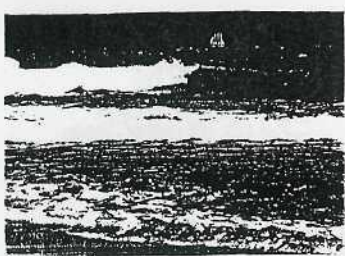
If we knew God's strategy beforehand, in our human ignorance we might betray the secret into the enemy ranks. Therefore God, as a wise Commander, guards these important moves. Our part is simply to trust and obey. Our part is to submit to the rigid training and discipline that is required of a member of God's Heavenly Army. We must put and keep our hearts in order, in subjection to His authority.

Don't think this is easy! It is not simple for a proud, independent, rebellious human heart to become submissive, willing and obedient. It requires daily death, ceaseless turmoil, and unyielding determination. But at the same time there is a wonderful sense of rest, because our Heavenly Shepherd jealously cares for, feeds, waters and houses His sheep. AMEN

Kathleen Ross
Alberta, Canada



Baptism in Australia



The Pink Beach

Walking one Sabbath morning on the island road, I came to a little path leading to a very beautiful beach beside a luxury resort. The beach was separated from the hotel by a rock formation high enough to serve as a wall. At the other end of the beach there was a rocky cliff, having little caves and openings to pass through to another beach.

It was almost midmorning; still a bit too cool for people to swim, so I was all by myself and enjoyed the quiet hours, soaking in the loveliness of the scenery before me. All around was so fresh, crisp-cut in sharp lines by the crystal clear air, while the golden ball of the higher and higher rising sun bathed everything in its warming rays.

It was sheer delight to stroll on the beach while no other steps have yet marked the virgin sand. All was still smooth and untouched from the last tide that had erased every trace from the day before.

Walking thus along, I rejoiced greatly in being on this beautiful spot. Gazing at the endless vast sea I observed with untiring admiration the restless waves hastening to the shore, finally rolling gently along the beach, leaving for a brief moment a silvery film of

glistening water on the surface before being absorbed into the sand.

Some dainty, long-legged shorebirds adorned the scene, as they swiftly and silently snapped tiny crustaceans from the edge of the water for breakfast. It was a most inspiring sight - the blue ocean on the one side, palms, sand and beautiful rocks on the other, so that I uttered constant praises to the Lord on high, who made these wonderful things. Everything looked perfect, pristine, satisfying the eye, elevating soul and spirit, invigorating my entire being.

And I imagined Jesus (if He would now live on this earth) walking along here after a night of prayer, as He would take off His sandals to enjoy the softness of the sand and the glory of the scene, to refresh His careworn soul before facing the burdens of the day.

Then I wanted to take a closer look at the sand. Bermuda is famous for its pink-colored beaches, and I desired to examine the myriads of tiny, crushed corals, which give the beaches their lovely pink. As I stooped down, letting my fingers move through the sand, I saw a sharp-edged piece of glass sticking out, and next to

it another and another. I thought it foolish and strange that someone would discard a broken bottle on a beach, where people walk barefoot, and a little child may happily throw itself in the sand and fall right on this spot and hurt itself.

Then, as I looked around, I suddenly saw broken pieces of glass sticking out everywhere. And the more I stirred the sand, the more there appeared. I was shocked, to say the least, and extremely saddened by what I had discovered. I could not understand why some mischievous people would do such a thing, and all at once the serenity and beauty of the place was terribly marred and spoiled. This made a deep and lasting impression on me for a long time and reminded me that the work of evil is everywhere you go, being the result of sin that is destroying man and nature.

Then I thought about Jesus how He would hurt His tender feet there - and suddenly it flashed into my mind how often we are hurting Jesus with our sins and rebellion, piercing Him thus just as with real, sharp-edged pieces of glass!

Let us now take a look at this beach in a different way for an object lesson. What happens when Jesus is taking a closer

look at us, and His hand stirs up the settled routine of life, to try our patience, faith and self-control? Some unpleasant situation or a serious problem suddenly confronts us, a most unpleasant incident disrupts our complacency, or some highly offensive words are being hurled at us, hurting darling pride - the list is endless for all kinds of disturbing incidents. Think now and earnestly examine yourself, how you normally react to any sort of disruption. Do you remain calm and controlled, or do you let yourself get upset all over and allow your countenance to change to express anxiety or sudden anger?

We speak here about ordinary daily matters which might happen any day, anytime, not about tragic events, but which shape and affect us just as well. So, as Jesus stirs His hand in our life, like I stirred the sand, the trouble spots in our character are being uncovered, sticking out in sharp contrast to the character of Christ in bolstering rebellion to show Jesus our hot displeasure.

Resistance and resentment rises up from deep within, the emotions are astir for the old man is still alive, and self, the unyielding king - braces itself in determined obstinacy against the challenging annoyance. Self will not bend, but stubbornly justifies itself,

that it is right and all else is wrong, and fortifies itself with an outbreak of ill temper to fight its case.

However, by responding with such resistance we do not realize how much harm we do to ourselves. How entirely we misunderstand and misconceive the purpose of Jesus, who desires to cleanse us from all iniquity and every stain of sin, so that His likeness might be restored in us. And to accomplish this, He has to teach us lessons in every day circumstances, in trials, temptations, in situations, which challenge our endurance and faith, that we may learn from them to develop a character that will be fit for heaven.

Most of all Jesus Himself personally is by this process our very refuge and strength, for He is our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary where we may boldly enter by faith to "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16. How encouraging! But what are His children doing instead? They are impatient, ill-tempered, fault-finding, judging, criticizing, selfish, proud, and upset about any little thing, blind to their real condition, dull of hearing and deaf to correction. Making it thus all very difficult for themselves and wear out God's forbearance and patience. "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast

wearied Me with thine iniquities." Isa. 43:24.

When we are like this we bring shame to His name, giving Satan occasion to accuse us by pointing his finger to ridicule Christianity, and charging God that He is not able to save His children. Is this what we are to offer our Lord and Saviour for all His love and incredible sacrifice for us? Our sins have pierced the tender feet and loving hands of Jesus on the cross of Calvary. He suffered for our sake an agony and soul anguish that no human mind is able to comprehend. He paid the penalty for sin that we would deserve, in order to bring eternal salvation to lost mankind; salvation from the slavery of sin to destroy the works of the devil. We are Jesus' rightful property, purchased with a price at an infinite cost. We are not our own. 1.Cor, 6:19,20. And what do we give in return for all this? We wound the soul of Jesus and grieve His Holy Spirit every time we rebel and transgress. We cannot afford this, salvation had cost too much!

We have no right to be obstinate, selfish, impatient, unkind, unloving, etc. these are the traits of the enemy of Christ, and Jesus says we cannot serve two masters. Matt.6:24. We must decide whom we want to serve and overcome by faith all that what is contrary and offensive to God's character, if we desire to be saved. When

anyone is being tempted to say, "this is the way I am, I cannot change myself," he is believing a lie from the enemy who wants just this one thing: that you consider yourself a hopeless case, that it is impossible for you to overcome your unholy temper and so on. Satan wants you to remain just as you are to be lost at the end. It is very true you cannot change yourself in your own power, for this very reason we have accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ, were baptized and became children of the living God. But what we forget is that our life here until Jesus returns, is a daily battle against our old nature, that strives against the spiritual nature. The solution to the old man in us is that he must decrease and Jesus and His Spirit increase in us. There is the source of strength to overcome, and we receive the power through His Word, that we may read it. Eat it as Jesus said, (John 6:53-56), and apply it to our daily life. The promises of God are for us, and it is our privilege to prove them. The condition for fulfillment is our daily submission to God's will, obedience to His word, and faith that He will perform what He says.

You need to come to terms with yourself, that you have to make a change; it cannot continue that you experience mostly defeats and are unable to master the annoyances which come along the way, without being overtaken by

unsubdued emotions. Examine yourself and dare to acknowledge that you are miserable, wretched, blind and naked (Rev. 3:17), and have nothing to cover your bareness. Accept this condition and see how it really is with you, then will you cry out like Paul when he said, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom.7:24. And fall with a broken heart and a contrite spirit at the feet of Jesus, confessing your utter helplessness. You must indeed tremble for your condition. In doing this you make all heaven rejoice, and honor Jesus your King, for now you desire His righteousness to cover you and His power to change you as you yield yourself to Him. The word of God encourages us to do this very thing: "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.

Now you look to Jesus Christ our High Priest and perfect Redeemer, who when He walked on earth was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin, (Hebr.4:15), and is able to succor them that are tempted, and able to save to the uttermost. Heb.2:18; 7:25.

Believing these promises, you bring them to Jesus in humble prayer, and ask Him for help against your shortcomings and character defects. Tell Him of all your troubles, how

unable you are and how impossible it is for you to hold back your biting tongue, your irritated temper, your murmuring and complaints at the slightest occasion and how unhappy you are about all this. Tell Jesus how you hate being that way and how distressed you are because of this, and how very sorry you are that you have disappointed and hurt Him all these times. Tell Him that you do not want to be like this at all, but that you are so helpless and miserable.

Pour out all your grievances, cry, weep and spare no words to say everything that burdens your heart. Lay it all at the feet of Jesus and ask Him to take away these unholy traits, that He may uproot the very nature of sin in you and implant His nature and virtues that you may live a victorious life to glorify His name.

O what delight will such prayer be in the ears of Jesus, who looks with tender compassion at you, and has been waiting all along to hear this very thing from your lips! Be sure that such a prayer will be answered in a most wonderful way. It shall become a reality what God says in His word in Jeremiah 33:3, "Call upon Me, and I will answer thee, and shew you great and mighty things which thou knowest not."

All your wretchedness He will turn into joy, your weakness into strength, as a new power controls your feelings, actions

and reason. You walk in the Spirit and when temptation arises you are alert, watchful and immediately perceive the danger. And instead of resisting and resenting a problem you go on your knees, and yield there any ill feeling that may come up and hand them over to Jesus to give you victory instead. Through daily prayer you submit to God's will, and armor yourself with the divine armor of Ephesians 6:10-18.

Thus you will be prepared to meet the foe and any unsettling situation in perfect calmness. Thus you grow in grace and develop the character sanctified by obedience, self-denial and faith. Jesus in you increases, and ego, the tyrant SELF who tormented you all these years decreases and dies out, as you die daily to self crucifying the flesh and its works.

Jesus is removing the sharp, rough spots of your character one by one and the fruits of His Spirit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance are being seen (Gal.5:22,23). The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that "when the character of Jesus is perfectly reproduced in His people, he will come to claim them as His own." *Sons and Daughters of God*, pg. 32. Shall we not hasten to develop this Christ-like character, so that Jesus can at last come and take us home with Him to heaven? And what will this be, standing with Jesus on the glorious sea of glass, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb (Rev. 15:3,2), the song of personal experience and victory of deliverance from sin!

There Jesus shall look with immeasurable joy upon His precious children who have overcome every defect and

sin, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. He shall raise His loving arms and shout through the heavens and the universe to proclaim His ownership of the redeemed: "Behold, I and the children of man, which God had given Me!" Heb.2: 13.

Be not discouraged or disheartened at any backsliding and weakness! Look constantly forward and upward and say like Paul in Philippians 3:12: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after... this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to the things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." With this in mind you are destined to win the prize - Jesus and eternal life! By Edda Tedford,

Kelowna, B.C.



Some members and visitors in Finland.

GOD RAISES A MAN TO MEET A SPIRITUAL CRISIS

"From the time of Jeroboam's death to Elijah's appearance before Ahab the people of Israel suffered a steady spiritual decline. Ruled by men who did not fear Jehovah and who encouraged strange forms of worship, the large number of the people rapidly lost sight of their duty to serve the living God and adopted many of the practices of idolatry." PK 109

Did you notice the italicized words above? When was it that the Lord raised up Elijah the Prophet? What were the leaders of that particular bit of history teaching the people who professed ancient Adventism?

Now many might be surprised to find out that being guilty of idolatry doesn't necessarily mean that a person has to carve some figure out of wood or stone and then bow down to it, although it certainly could.

Lets see what Webster Collegiate Dictionary has to say about an idol: 1. A representation or symbol of an object of worship; broadly, a false god. 2 a) a likeness of something b) pretender, imposter 3. form or appearance visible but without substance 4. an object of extreme devotion. 5. a false conception, fallacy.

Therefore brothers and sisters, to be an idol worshiper can be someone who dedicates to his ideas, job, hobby, likes, food, family, children, wife, church, more than to Jehovah, the real One who can understand you and listen to us and help us find eternity.

It also is very interesting that it is at this time that we are told that God would send one last time the Elijah message which will have the same effect it had many years ago. We are told that in the earth's last moments the church of God will appear as about to fall but it will not fall. This statement, should give us much courage and confidence in our Lord's ability to save us, but must also be a warning to all - that times are going to get very tough and that only through God's help and plan - not man's - do we have actually any hope of salvation.

In the days of Elijah there is a parallel to this event. In the time of this great apostasy by Israel the tribe of Judah (make a note that this is the tribe of Jesus) had a king who did serve God. King Asa had stood firm during his reign and led his people away from idolatry and false worship.

Many years after King Asa began to reign, his kingdom was invaded with the threat of extermination by Zerah the Ethiopian. As a matter of fact, this warrior brought with him a host of a thousand thousand and three hundred (300) chariots. 2 Chronicles 14:9. So Zerah had an army of at least 1,000,000 soldiers and 300 chariots.

This army could have easily wiped out the tribe of Judah and King Asa knew it. So this tribe of Jesus (Judah) appeared as about to fall.

The thing that we should take note of concerning King Asa is that during the years of prosperity this godly King did not use his time in idle amusement and pleasure but spent the greater part of his time preparing for just an emergency as he now faced.

He used the time of peace to train an army for the conflict, which was now before him. He bent his energies in educating his people in the faith of the true God and encouraged them as their leader to put their trust and faith explicitly in Him (Jesus). And now the test of battle and trial of faith were physically before them.

Because the king and his people had remained faithful to the Lord in times of peace, they could now, with confidence, call upon Him in this time of crisis.

The odds were definitely against them by all appearance, their army, though well trained was much smaller than their opponents, but the kingdom of Judah (Jesus) could rightfully claim the Lord's promises of protection and this they did. Their prayer, we are told, God has given to every Christian as well.

"The prayer of Asa is one that every Christian may fittingly offer. We fight in a warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12. In life's conflict we must meet evil agencies that have arrayed themselves against the right. Our hope is not in man, but in the living God. With full assurance of faith we may expect that He will write His omnipotence with the efforts of human instrumentalities, for the glory of HIS name. Clad with the armor of His righteousness, we may gain the victory over every foe." PK 111.

Brothers and sisters, the God of Asa is the true God. We can have confidence in Him as long as we are truly cooperating with Him. In fact, that is the only way we can claim the promises of God, is if we are willing to obey what He asks of us.

The very good news is that we have to fight a battle in which we will win! Not, we can win, not, we might win, but we WILL win! This is tremendous news and we need to invest our total beings in the reality of this eternal promise.

Just as the Lord answered the prayer of this righteous king (Asa) for the salvation of his people against a humanly unconquerable enemy in ancient times, so today He will answer the same prayer against the same odds during these last days of this earth.

It was through the influence of a weak and wicked ruler (Ahab) and a woman in spiritual power (a position over that of man) Jezebel, that a gross spiritual crisis had come to the majority in Israel of the Ancient Israel movement. These two rulers had brought the spiritual worth of Israel so low that only the message of the prophet Elijah could bring revival and reformation. It was their only chance for salvation and salvation would only come in the truest sense to those who accepted the message, no matter how severe it seemed, with the whole heart.

"Alas, how had the glory of Israel departed! Never before had the chosen people of God fallen so low in apostasy... Nothing short of the miracle working power of God could preserve the nation from the utter destruction. Israel had VOLUNTARILY separated herself from Jehovah, yet the Lord in compassion still yearned after those who had been led into sin and He was about to send them one of the mightiest of His prophets,

though many were to be led back to allegiance to the God of their fathers. PK116 (emphasis supplied)

It's amazing to me that the vast majority, not excluding many who claim to continue in the historical paths don't seem to realize that the Elijah message, with all its seeming harshness is the chosen method of redemption at certain levels of apostasy and it is the message that will bring salvation for those fallen ones who truly want it.

Our need to be honest with the Elijah message is paramount if we will ever have any hope for salvation.

First of all we should admit or perhaps discover that it is God who is calling for the Elijah message and not men who have nothing better to do than go around shouting at everybody. We must understand that it is God's plan to use men (women) to give this message, men of His own choosing and we must understand that nobody, including the men God raises up, finds the job agreeable in the feeling department any more than did the prophet whose name the message bears.

It would be to the advantage of all if we understood as well that the job is so disagreeable that God has a hard time finding anyone who will do it and that is why there have been so few throughout the earth's history who have taken on the task and why it is true today.

And then after we have properly analyzed these truths we must ask God to give us the conviction and the courage to support the message and the messengers that God Himself, the God who knows the end from the beginning, has raised up to bring salvation to all who will have it. AMEN

To be continued...
Alin Emanuel
Finland

Joy in the Holy Spirit is health-giving, life-giving joy. In giving us His Spirit, God gives us Himself, making Himself a fountain of divine influences, to give health and life to the world. 7T 273

DO YOU SEE (UNDERSTAND)?

Uncertain Economy

The second week of March saw a fall of 800 points in the Dow Jones industrial average, and an even more precipitous fall in the Nasdaq. Weak economies in Europe and especially Japan have caused many analysts to wonder if in fact a worldwide economic slowdown may be on its way.

In addition, the continuing power crisis in the western United States has caused many to wonder if the shortages and gas lines of thirty years ago may be returning. The March 19, 2001 broadcast of the CBS Evening News reported that a number of major analysts believe the coming energy crisis will in fact be worse than the 1970's.

Inspired Commentary

Long ago the modern prophet foresaw the unstable times we are now entering. Test. vol. 9, p. 13 states, "There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis."

Prophets and Kings, p. 537, states, "Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis."

Disease in Animals

The March 12, 2001 cover of Newsweek magazine featured an article titled, "The Slow, Deadly Spread of Mad Cow Disease: How it Could Become an Epidemic". Describing this disease as "A killer in our midst", p. 54, the report declares "mad cow is the creepiest in a family of disorders that can make Ebola (of "Hot Zone" fame) look like chicken pox." The symptoms this produces can range from dementia to paralysis.

The protein molecules causing these diseases, according to the article, are "tough enough to survive harsh solvents and extreme temperatures. You can freeze them, boil them, soak them in formaldehyde or carbolic acid or chloroform, and most will emerge no less deadly than they were." Says French physician Frederic Saldmann, "We have no idea how many deaths we're going to see in the coming years" from mad cow disease. "We've been checkmated."

Beyond this, the spread of "foot and mouth disease", which destroys livestock but supposedly has no effect on humans, has resulted in cumbersome laws regulating travel into the United States from Europe and South America, so as to prevent the disease from affecting livestock in the U.S.

Inspired Commentary

Who can any longer doubt the accuracy of the following inspired predictions?

Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 366 states, "Disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men. The time is near, when because of the iniquity of the fallen race, the whole animal creation will groan under the diseases that curse the earth."

Ibid, p. 411. "There is no safety in the eating of the flesh of dead animals, and in a short time the milk of the cows will also be excluded from the diet of God's commandment-keeping people. In a short time it will not be safe to use anything that comes from the animal creation.

Cloning Update

According to the March 10, 2001 issue of U.S. News & World Report, "A human is likely to be cloned, and soon. Is it worth the risk?" p. 42. According to this report, a conference on human cloning was held during the first week of March, organized by an Italian fertility doctor and the manager of a Kentucky fertility clinic. The article reports, "They plan to clone a human within two years, and many scientists don't doubt that they'll succeed." P. 43. The article details many of the perils of cloning, the defects often experienced by recently cloned animals, and how such defects in cloned humans could quickly destroy interest in the idea. Appropriately, the article begins with the brief sentence, "prepare for disaster", p. 42.

Inspired Commentary

Disaster indeed! Again we recall the words of inspiration regarding such experiments by the antediluvians.

Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 3, p. 64. "But if there was one sin above another, which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. God proposed to destroy by a flood that powerful, long-lived race that had corrupted their ways before Him."

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." Luke 17:26.

More School Violence

"What is going on in our schools? What is happening to our children?" asked Dan Rather at the top of the March 7th broadcast of the CBS Evening News. Reporters and viewers alike were stunned yet again as 15 students were shot at Santana High School near San Diego, California on the morning of March 5th.

During the following two days at least 20 other such shootings were either attempted or at least partially succeeded, including one at a Catholic high school in Pennsylvania.

There have been 22 such shootings since the infamous day at Columbine High School in April of 1999, with 39 having died in such massacres. A poll taken for ABC's Good Morning America was reported on March 14, indicating that at least 39 percent of American high school students believe a shooting was possible at the school they attend.

Inspired Commentary

Yet again we see the evidence that "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. Luke 17:26. In Noah's days we read that "the earth was filled with violence". Gen. 6:11.

An inspired comment on this passage states, "The land was filled with violence. War, crime, murder, was the order of the day. Just so it will be before Christ's second coming." SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1090.

May the God of heaven help us all to see the urgency of the times and be faithful to the Lord's counsel.

AMEN.

Alin Emanuel Sirbu

A TRUE FRIEND



"I'm sure glad I'm not Leo!" Rob could tell it was going to be a rough day for Leo. The second their teacher turned her back, the boy sitting behind Leo had reached down and grabbed Leo's books. Rob helped pass the books to the back of the room where they were hidden in the wastebasket under the pencil sharpener.

Leo was always getting picked on. It had been going on ever since he moved to town early the year before. Not that he was so different from everyone else. He had a funny, whiney voice, and he wasn't very coordinated, but he was a fairly good student and was always friendly. Maybe his problem was that he tried *too* hard to be friendly. "Doesn't he ever keep quiet?" Rob had asked one of his friends. "He always acts like he's my best buddy."

"Ow!" cried Leo. All the boys and girls near the back of the room tried to hold back giggles. Tim was an expert at shooting paper clips.

"What's going on here?" demanded Mrs. Wilson. The giggles stopped.

"Someone hit me with something," said Leo. "They got me right here in the back. It hurts."

Rob rolled his eyes in impatience. If Leo would not make such a -big deal out of it, no one would pick on him. Half the fun was seeing him get all riled up. Rob didn't listen to Mrs. Wilson's stern lecture. He

had heard the speech before. Rob knew it wasn't right to give Leo such a bad time. When he was feeling guiltiest about it he would pretend not to notice when his friends played tricks on Leo. But it was strange how it made everyone else feel like part of a close group when they all ganged up on one person. Anytime you wanted someone on your side or wanted to get a laugh, all you had to do was pick on Leo. Besides, Rob was going to be very careful that he didn't get singled out like Leo.

As Rob left class, he saw some friends huddled together in the middle of the hall. Rob leaned his head in to catch what they were saying. "Let's throw him in the girls' bathroom," said one. Even Rob smiled at the thought. The four of them pushed through the crowded hall to catch up with Leo. Just as he passed the girls' bathroom, three pairs of arms grabbed him. Rob held back nervously.

"Hey! Stop it!" yelled Leo. But before he could say any more he was shoved backward through the door. Rob could hear some girls' screams and the hallway filled with laughter.

Rob was still smiling when Leo reappeared all flustered. Leo began to gather up his books with covers scuffed up from being thrown around. Rob wondered how it must feel to be in Leo's place. Leo was almost crying, but he refused to let anyone see him in tears. The hall was nearly empty when Leo got his things back in order. He looked around as if searching for

someone he could at least talk to. Then he shuffled slowly down the hall.

It began to bother Rob. Even in bed that night he lay awake thinking about Leo. "He must spend his whole life hating every new day that he wakes up," thought Rob. "I wish I were bigger and stronger or more popular. Then I could watch out for people like Leo. It would be so much easier on everyone."

Turning over on his back, he prayed out loud. "Dear God, please watch over Leo. You are strong enough to keep him from any more trouble. And find a friend for him. Amen."

The next day Rob saw Leo standing in the hall trying to get his jacket zipper unstuck. When he finally worked it free he looked up and saw Rob staring at him. He automatically backed against the wall and covered his books with both hands. "Hi," he said uncertainly.

Rob was about to answer when he saw his friends bounding down the stairway.

"Hey, Rob!" They shouted. "Looks like you found Leo. Have you ever seen anyone who was more of a loser than Leo?"

Rob panicked. "No," he said, smiling at them. "I'll see you guys later, I have to get to class early." He had to leave fast. He could not stand to see what Leo's hopeful eyes looked like now. It didn't make him feel any better when he had to walk by Leo's table at lunchtime. Leo sat alone in the centre of the

lunchroom. Nobody would even sit at the same table. Leo ate a sandwich hurriedly and threw the rest of his lunch away. Then he disappeared back into the hall.

Rob did not feel much like going to prayer meeting at church that night. He was disappointed that God wasn't answering his prayer. Even worse, he was disappointed at himself. He sat glumly in the pew next to his parents. It didn't feel right to sing, so he drummed his fingers gently on the hymnal during the hymn.

He did feel like listening. Somehow it seemed easier to do when darkness was all that showed through the side windows of the church and his mind was not filled with thoughts of what he was going to do that day as it usually was on Sabbath morning.

The pastor read a familiar Bible passage. He then told about how Jesus was captured and how Peter struck out with his sword. Rob always felt bad at hearing those verses. He wished Jesus had let Peter help. With God's help it would have been so easy to wipe out all their enemies.

But the sermon was saying something different. Jesus didn't come to beat up people. He didn't come to save himself, or even to save someone like Leo from being picked on. In a way, Rob thought, Jesus was a lot like Leo. In fact He was picked on much worse. They shoved Him around and laughed at Him. They even killed Him.

"He did it for you," the pastor was saying. Jesus was the one who was picked on so the rest of us could live. All the sins of the world were heaped on Him.

"My prayer wasn't such a good one," thought Rob. "It was like Peter trying to fight with his sword. If we can be big and powerful we are willing to help Jesus crush the bad guys. But Jesus knew that only His suffering would make up for our wrongs. Then we make Him pay the price all alone."

Rob remembered Leo's pleading, hopeful eyes that never found anything but tormentors. He was paying the price for everyone else's good time. Jesus' eyes must have looked the same, especially when His disciples denied they even knew Him.

Wasn't there some Bible verse that said if you help the least of God's children you were helping Him? At the end of the sermon, while they were gathering the offering, Rob decided there was only one thing to do. Maybe he was crazy for trying it, but he was feeling that a lot had been done for him and he had not shown much gratitude. It was time he did something in return.

At school the next day, Rob waited by the lunchroom door. His brown bag was growing limp and wet from his sweating palms. He had told his friends that morning what he thought he should do. To his surprise, one of his friends agreed that Leo deserved a break. His other friends said nothing. But Rob could tell by their silence that they were wondering if it would be safe. Would they start getting picked on too?

Then he saw Leo walking alone. Leo stayed close to the wall, especially when he heard a group of boys laughing behind him. Rob took a deep breath. "Leo," he called.

Leo stopped and looked around quickly. "Oh, hi, Rob," he said, a little uncertainly. He was not sure what to expect. He looked around for the others wondering what trick they were going to pull on him this time. But this time no one was there to mistreat him.

"Why don't you sit with us today?" said Rob. "We're over by the window."

"Are you sure?" Leo still was not sure that Rob was being genuine in his offer of friendship.

"Yes, of course, I am really sorry for the way you have been treated lately and I wanted to be a friend to you. Come on."

Leo went happily with Rob to the table by the window. Rob could not help but notice the empty table they passed. All 10 chairs were still neatly arranged, pushed up against a shiny tabletop streaked with dry cleanser. It was Leo's old table. "An empty table never looked so good," thought Rob as they walked right by it.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:" Isaiah 53:4.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40,

You went through a lot for me, Jesus. Your love for me must be stronger than anything I can understand. I want to thank you. I need to thank you, in ways that show. Help me to be a friend to those who have no friends so that they can find a true friend in you.



FOOD COMBINING, CONTINUED

Just what is food combining? The term "food combining" refers to those combinations of foods which are compatible with each other in digestive chemistry. In other words, our foods are made up of different characteristics such as starch, protein, sugar, etc., and our digestive systems have been organized so that we require different enzymes and stomach conditions for digesting each of the above. For example, nuts and seeds, which are protein foods, require an acid environment for their digestion. The stomach, of course, cannot possibly be acid and alkaline at the same time, and consequently you end up with the food fermenting.

What happens to the foods we eat? One of three things can happen to our food at digestion: 1) they can digest and be assimilated for body use; 2) they can ferment such as in the case of undigested sugars as in fruits and starches; or 3) they can putrefy, or rot, as in the case of undigested proteins.

When number one takes place everything is in good order, the food is digested and assimilated without any problems. But when numbers two and three happen (which is the majority of the time) it is because people have combined foods that are not compatible for proper digestion. (Or, I can add, they have overloaded their stomachs.)

The reason why foods ferment or putrefy in the stomach instead of digesting is because they stay there too long. It is warm and moist in the stomach. Bacteria will do what nature intended them to do—break down unused organic matter. If food stays in the stomach without being digested, it is not being used and will be acted upon by bacteria; hence it will ferment or putrefy.

When it comes right down to the basics of food combining there are several different schools of thought and it can be confusing as we study the different methods. But the simple basics never change. Ideas and

theories may abound that come from the world, but God's principles always remain the same. A right understanding comes from God who is the Source of all wisdom.

It's important that one puts some serious effort into studying food combining - learning to avoid the many complicated mixtures that we are in the habit of eating. The more that is learned about healthful living, the more it will be realized that it is not necessary to cook much and that it is especially important not to have many combinations if we want good health.

"All mixed and complicated foods are injurious to the health of human beings. Dumb animals would never eat such a mixture as is often placed in the human stomach... The amount of cooking done is not at all necessary, neither should there be any poverty stricken diet, either in quality or quantity, but the richness of the food and complicated mixtures are destroying."
Unpublished Testimonies, Nov. 5, 1896, pp. 46, 47

God created the stomach to be the site of constant chemical activity for very good reasons. And if the laws of physiology are applied correctly in the area of digestion, then the digestive processes are kept quiet, harmonious and peaceful.

In observing the animals in their own natural habitat it is seen that they eat very simply and combine their food only very minimally. Also, no animal in nature eats, at any one time, the variety of foods that most people are accustomed to eating at a conventional meal. God's way, through nature, demands simplicity for mankind as well as the animal kingdom. AMEN

(Next time there will follow a few important food combining rules to remember.)

Sister Kathleen Ross

Radicchio



You've heard people say "rah-DEE-key-oh," but you've never been sure which designer green they were taking about... Lettuce tell you.

Looks like

- Radicchio resembles a small head of cabbage, except the leaves have a lettuce-like texture.
- Usually the leaves are ruby-colored and white-veined. But you will find a color range from purple to red in the leaves-sometimes even green.

Buying Know-how

- Imported radicchio is generally available year-round. The Ontario seasons runs from August through October.
- Look for a firm, unblemished white core at the base, free of holes.
- Radicchio comes in tight or loose heads, it doesn't matter, but make sure the leaves are plump, not dried out, and with no signs of browning.

Tastes like

- Radicchio is a member of the chicory family and tastes like it. It has a slightly bitter, peppery taste with a slight crunch.

- It tastes

very similar to Belgian endive, but the texture is not as crisp. In fact, you can substitute Belgian endive for radicchio in most recipes.

Nutrient City

Half a cup of shredded raw radicchio contains only five measly calories. It is high in beta carotene and vitamin C, along with folic acid and potassium. It also contains calcium and iron. Like most bitter greens, it's considered a blood tonic.

In salads

- Radicchio offers color contrast with a slightly bitter crunch. It accents such sweet greens as Boston, Bibb or looseleaf lettuce but also pairs well with Belgian endive, arugula and spinach. It can handle a robust dressing such as blue or goat cheese dressing.
- Make a warm, Italian-style salad by dressing torn leaves of radicchio with extra virgin olive oil and salt.
- Radicchio's flavors intensify with cooking. Don't just wilt the leaves, allow them to cook for 15-25 minutes to caramelize the exterior leaves creating a creamy, piquant interior.
- When grilling, cut radicchio heads in quarters, slicing through the heart to keep sections from falling apart. Brush with oil and cook.
- Consider tossing spaghetti with shredded radicchio sautéed with olive oil and lots of garlic. Season with salt and a splash of lemon juice.



HIGH HEELS BAD FOR KNEES



Some women who want to add a bit of height and walk comfortably opt for wide heels. But comfort is the problem: Because they can be suffered for longer, such shoes are just likely to cause knee arthritis, scientists report in *The Lancet* medical journal this week.

"It takes a long time to feel the effects of knee osteoarthritis - and once you do, it's too late," said Dr. Casey Kerrigan, lead researcher of the study and associate professor at Harvard Medical School's department of physical medicine and rehabilitation.

"I liken it to smoking. One cigarette is not painful but (repeated), over a lifetime, it is. Wide heeled shoes feels comfortable, so women wear them all day long," Kerrigan said. "They are better for your feet than stiletto heels but just as bad for your knees."

In the study, researchers had 20 women wear two pairs of shoes with three-inch heels, one with a narrow heel and the other with a thick one. They compared the pressure put on the women's knees by both types of shoes. The women also walked barefoot to provide a reading of normal pressure.

The scientists found both types of heels applied equal amounts of pressure to the knees. Compared with walking barefoot, they increased pressure on the inside of the knee by 26 per cent.

Increased pressure on the knee eventually leads to arthritis, experts say.

The idea that high heels are bad for your health isn't new. Scientists have warned women for years they contribute to problems ranging from corns and calluses to hammer toes, tendinitis, knee pain, sprained ankles and back problems.

Kerrigan agrees wider shoes do feel more comfortable - they spread the shock absorption on the foot and usually have more room for toes but "Heels are bad, whether they are thin or wide.

Her recommendation? "Simple and unpopular... wear no heels at all."

"Selfishness is the strongest and most general of human impulses, the struggle of the soul between sympathy and covetousness is an unequal contest; for while selfishness is the strongest passion, love and benevolence are too often the weakest, and as a rule the evil gains the victory. Therefore in our labours and gifts for God's cause, it is unsafe to be controlled by feeling or impulse. To give or to labour when our sympathies are moved, and to withhold our gifts or service when the emotions are not stirred, is an unwise and dangerous course. If we are controlled by impulse or mere human sympathy, then a few instances where our efforts for others are repaid by ingratitude, or where our gifts are abused or squandered, will be sufficient to freeze up the springs of beneficence. Christians should act from fixed principle, following the Saviour's example of self-denial and self-sacrifice." Sis. E.G. White, Dec. 7, 1886.



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Sing Unto the Lord a New Song



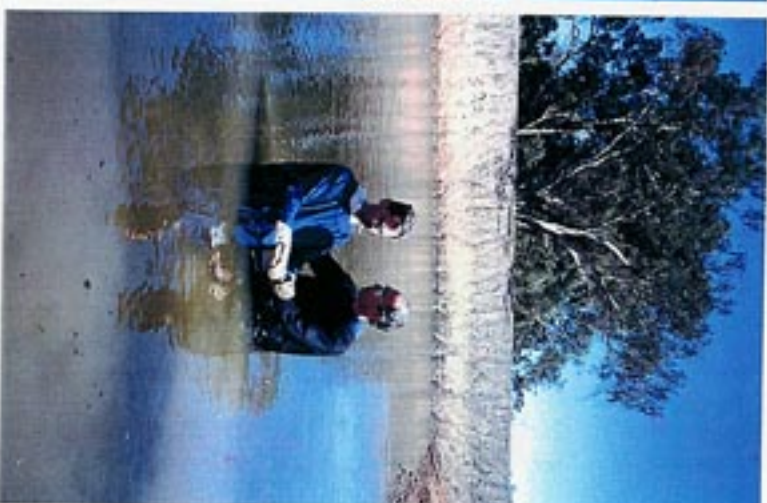
Roy



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Clara



Glen

Baptism of four dear souls in Perth, Australia