

The Reformation Messenger



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International Missionary Society of S.D.A. Church Reform Movement

*"the kingdom of heaven is
like unto a net, that was cast into
the sea, and gathered of every kind:
Which, when it was full, they drew
to shore, and sat down, and gathered
the good into vessels,
but cast the bad away. "*

Mathew 13: 47, 48



We Believe

The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer.

He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.

The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness.

The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.

His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.

Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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In This Issue

| | |
|--|-----------|
| THE MIGHTY SHAKING | 3 |
| ESTHER | 5 |
| WHAT HAPPENED TO GIDEON'S ARMY? | 6 |
| FEAR? OR FAITH! | 10 |
| MARVELOUS ARE THE WAYS OF THE LORD | 11 |
| PRAY MUCH MORE | 14 |
| SAVAGELY DESPERATE TIMES | 16 |
| WRATH OF GOD, PART 2 | 18 |
| NEGLECT NOT YOUR CHURCH | 22 |
| HOW ANTIOXIDANTS MEASURE UP | 23 |
| ANNOUNCEMENT | 24 |
| CHILDRENS CORNER: OLD-FASHIONED PARENTS | 25 |

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THE MIGHTY SHAKING

“The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause.” EW p. 50.

We are not to look to the future for the shaking time, it is going on now. While we are doing outside missionary work, we also have a work to do inside the church. The members need to be established in the truth. Unless they are firmly rooted and grounded in it, they will be blown away as dry leaves.

Of Ancient Israel, only two men of the adults who left Egypt entered the Promised Land. The shaking continued for 40 years. Today we have even a greater danger in neglecting our character development and falling into a lukewarm condition. Satan has much more temptations prepared for us today than ever before.

The leaders of the church have a great responsibility to arouse the people to see the dangers around them and to work out a thorough reformation in their personal lives. If they neglect to do it God will put them aside and choose humble messengers who will finish the work of God on the earth.

Sister White wrote a testimony to the church in Battle Creek, where the General Conference was located:

“October 23, 1879, the Lord gave me a most impressive testimony in regard to the church in Battle Creek... The Lord who knows their spiritual condition declares: They have cherished evil and separated from Me. They have gone astray, every one of them. No one is guiltless. They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and have hewed out to them broken cisterns that can hold no water. Many have corrupted their ways before Me. Envy, hatred of one another, jealousy, evil surmising, emulation, strife, bitterness, is the fruit that they bear. And they will not heed the testimony that I send them.” Test. Vol. 5, p. 63.

Because of this condition among the leaders it is no wonder that nine years later they rejected the message of Christ Righteousness.

When the shaking came in 1914, not even one of them took their stand with the prophesied reformation, but became bitter enemies of the church of God.

The Lord has hidden talent that will be called to the front to finish His work on the earth. Many who have talent, education, and intellect will be put aside because they become self-important and think that the success depends on them.

“Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at

the head of rank and file... In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. There are precious ones now hidden who have not bowed their knee to Baal.” Test. Vol. 5, p. 80.

Sister White repeats the condition required by God for the last finishing work. She says that God is seeking humble men and women to finish His work.

She also mentions that in the time of shaking, “All who had sought positions were never seen any more... God answered by helping them choose leaders of their number who had never sought position.” Spirit of Prophecy Research, p. 3.

Before the final shaking, when the wise and foolish virgins will be separated, the work of sealing takes place. Those who are accepted in the investigative judgment will receive the seal of God in their foreheads. And this takes place during the time of peace. “Then shall two be in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left.” Matt. 24:40-41.

This is not yet the time when God’s people are in the mountains or in the prisons. This is not yet the time of persecution. Jesus said, “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” Matt. 24:44.

We are expecting the Sunday law and the persecution because of it. Then we think that the end is upon us. But in the time of peace when we do our daily normal work, we do not think that now our judgment takes place, but that is the time in reality, when the investigative judgment has turned upon the living and the church of God will be judged first while the outsiders still have a time of mercy.

While all the virgins were sleeping peacefully, their judgment took place and when the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh" was heard, they all woke up, but it was too late for the foolish virgins to get oil. Their time of mercy had ended while they were comfortably sleeping.

All who fail to pass the judgment of God will not receive the seal in their foreheads.

"There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew the Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had no corresponding works... No one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement." Test. Vol. 5, p. 214.

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven." Test. Vol. 5, p. 216.

The result of this mighty shaking is a little remnant, who then will receive the latter rain and finish the work of God on the earth.

As we see the development toward the Sunday law and the crisis in the Middle East as well as other signs of the times being fulfilled, then we need to realize that before these events take place our sealing will be finished.

If you have been careless in the Sabbath keeping,



immediately work out a Sabbath reform in your life. If you have not followed strictly the health message that God has given us, correct this quickly before your sealing takes place.

If you have been unfaithful in tithes and offerings, make restitution with interest for the unpaid tithes. It is not a small sin to rob God. Read Malachi chapter three, again. If you have neglected missionary work, then you have neglected an important part in your character development. While there may still be an opportunity, correct this without delay. Check your prayer life and your Bible reading if they need improvement. An important question is, do you love your enemies,

and do you pray for them?

Paul writes to us, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." 2 Cor. 13:5.

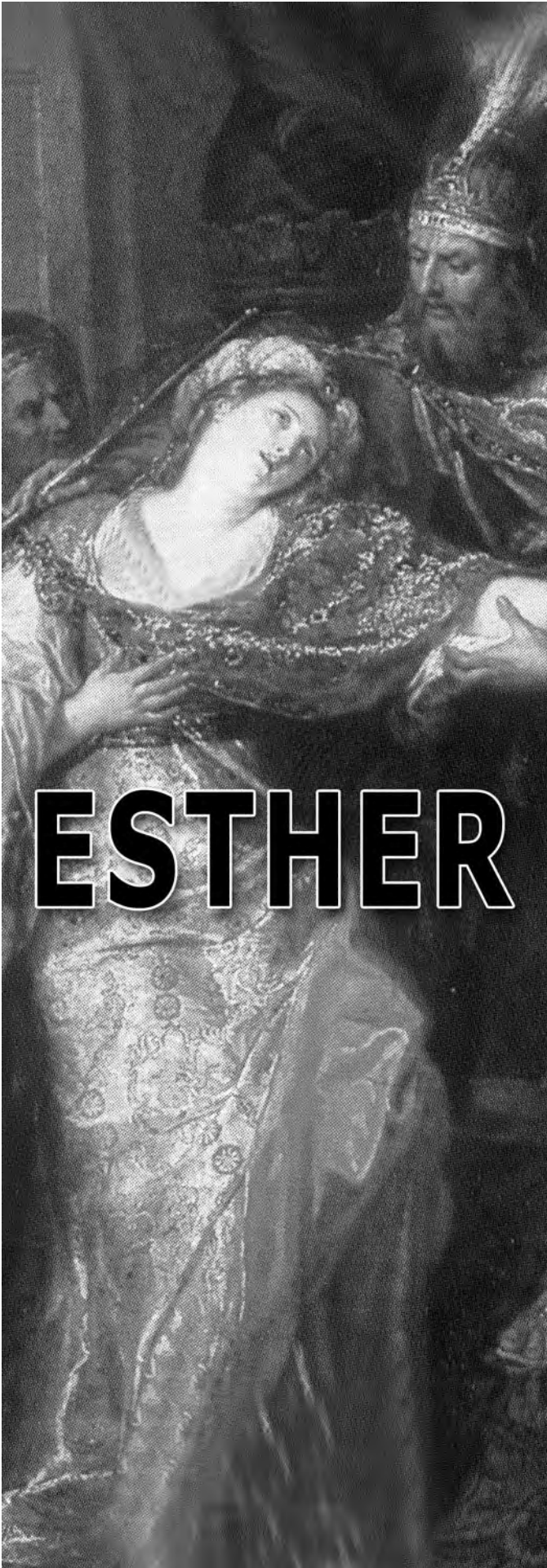
Also we need to ask God to help us in it. David writes, "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." Ps. 26:2.

It would be a terrible disappointment to anyone of us if we fail to receive the seal of God and be shaken out in the end. The Holy Spirit is urging us to get ready. But after resisting His calls continually He will leave us alone and then great darkness will fall upon us and we become confused and leave the church of God. This kind of shaking has continued since the beginning of the church's history.

"For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Amos 9:9.

It may be sooner than many of us do realize that the mighty shaking will come to its end and all who have neglected this preparation time will be shaken out. Let us wake up to realize the seriousness of our time and not to waste even one more day in sleeping while eternity is closing on us. May the Lord have mercy on us and reveal to each one the sins that may still be lingering in our lives, that no one may be shaken out. **AMEN.**

Timo Martin, Canada



In ancient times, there were many queens who were ruling many countries, like England, India and Persia. But coming to Queen Esther she was a well recognized, devoted and a dedicated queen in her day. There is no doubt about her beauty; she was also very brave and intelligent.

The events in the book of Esther which took place in the winter residence of the Persian Emperor, center around a Jewish heroine, Esther, who by her great courage and devotion to her people saved them from being exterminated by her enemies. How? She did not believe in military power, but she conquered the difficult situation by fasting and prayer. She did not eat or drink anything for three days and nights with her female servants. What an intelligent queen.

Esther came from an ordinary family background to the life at the royal palace. She was a devout worshipper of the living God, she always obeyed Him and also took instruction from her Uncle Mordecai. She reserved time for spiritual matters continually and God opened her heart wide to pay attention to the things being spoken by Mordecai. Perhaps, her household was composed of good servants. In any case, Esther zealously shared the things she had learned with those who worked under her and what a joy she must have had when she lived and embraced the true faith.

Queen Esther was concerned about being faithful and humble to God, her king, her people and her Uncle Mordecai. Her offering of hospitality was an evidence of her faith. What an excellent example. Her palace life was very spiritual and it is logical to think that her palace continued to be a center of spiritual activity in the city. If we will put our confidence in God like Esther did, He will reveal to us His will.

The tremendous courage shown by Queen Esther proved to be a characteristic of the whole reform congregation. In our day, our living God is expecting more Esther's in His remnant church.

The Scriptures do not reveal what happened to Esther after the events narrated in the book of Esther 10, but the brief mention of this dynamic woman makes us want to "follow the course of spirituality". Rom. 12:21. "Do not be overcome by evil, but conquer evil with good."

How thankful we are to have a Christian like Queen Esther in our midst. Her spirit does much to make our reform congregation warm and friendly, to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be great in God's kingdom is to be as a little child in humility, in simplicity of faith and purity of obedience like Esther. *Amen*

Xavior Chelliah



When Gideon was called by God to deliver the Israelites from the cruelty of the Midianites, he was hesitant at first. After receiving assurance from God that He would be with him in the battle, Gideon called for the men of Israel to join the army to drive out the raiders. Sadly, only 32,000 men heeded the call, to face the vast army of Midian with over 100,000 soldiers. What was Gideon's army in comparison? From a worldly viewpoint, the Israelites had little hope for success, however God had a plan in mind. The Lord appeared to Gideon and told him, "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Judges 7:2

I'm sure Gideon was surprised to hear the Lord say this. He thought his army was far too small in the first place, and here the Lord is telling him it is too large. So a test was given by the Lord, "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead." Judges 7:3

"Those who were unwilling to face danger and hardships, or whose worldly interests would draw their hearts from the work of God, would add no strength to the armies of Israel. Their presence would prove only a cause of weakness." PP 548

God has no place in His work for cowards.

Gideon was supposed to make this announcement prior to going to fight the Midianites. "It had been made a law in Israel that before they went to battle the following proclamation should be made throughout the army: 'What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.' And the officers were to speak further to the people, saying, 'What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.' Deuteronomy 20:5-8." PP 548

But Gideon had neglected his duty. "Because his numbers were so few compared with those of the enemy, Gideon had refrained from making the usual proclamation. He was filled with astonishment at the declaration that his army was too large. But the Lord saw the pride and unbelief existing in the hearts of His people. Aroused by the stirring appeals of Gideon, they had readily enlisted; but many were filled with fear when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites. Yet, had Israel triumphed, those very ones would have taken the glory to themselves instead of ascribing the victory to God." PP 549

However, when Gideon obeyed the Lord's direction, with a heavy heart he saw 22,000 or more than two thirds of his entire force, depart for their homes, leaving him with only 10,000 men.

But the Lord was still not satisfied – He sent another test. "The people are yet too many" the Lord told Gideon. This time God did the separating. The first test saw men making a decision to leave, this time they were asked to leave. Gideon was instructed to send them to the water for a drink. "A few hastily took a little water in the hand and sucked it up as they went on; but nearly all bowed upon their knees,

and leisurely drank from the surface of the stream. Those who took of the water in their hands were but three hundred out of ten thousand; yet these were selected; all the rest were permitted to return to their homes." PP 549

"By the simplest means character is often tested. Those who in time of peril were intent upon supplying their own wants were not the men to be trusted in an emergency. The Lord has no place in His work for the indolent and self-indulgent. The men of His choice were the few who would not permit their own wants to delay them in the discharge of duty. The three hundred chosen men not only possessed courage and self-control, but they were men of faith. They had not defiled themselves with idolatry. God could direct them, and through them He could work deliverance for Israel. Success does not depend upon numbers. God can deliver by few as well as by many. He is honoured not so much by the great numbers as by the character of those who serve Him." PP 549

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zech 4:6.

Gideon's army won a mighty victory.

Gideon's army was mightily shaken. Less than 1% remained. There have been many shakings in the history of God's church. In the time of Noah, the percentage remaining was even smaller. Many times people choose to leave the truth and God's church, but sometimes they are asked to leave due to their sinful lifestyle that they hold on to or false doctrines they are teaching.

THE LORD'S ARMY

"Men of stamina are wanted, men who will not wait to have their way smoothed and every obstacle removed, men who will inspire with fresh zeal the flagging efforts of dispirited workers, men whose hearts are warm with Christian love and whose hands are strong to do their Master's work.

"Some who engage in missionary service are weak, nerveless, spiritless, easily discouraged. They lack push. They have not those positive traits of character that give power to do something--the spirit and energy that kindle enthusiasm. Those who would win success must be courageous and hopeful. They should cultivate not only the

passive but the active virtues. While they are to give the soft answer that turns away wrath, they must possess the courage of a hero to resist evil. With the charity that endures all things, they need the force of character that will make their influence a positive power.

"Some have no firmness of character. Their plans and purposes have no definite form and consistency. They are of but little practical use in the world. This weakness, indecision, and inefficiency should be overcome. There is in true Christian character an indomitableness that cannot be moulded or subdued by adverse circumstances. We must have moral backbone, an integrity that cannot be flattered, bribed, or terrified." MH 497/498

SEPARATION

Many people have left God's church (the Lord's army) throughout history. We still see people leaving today and they always have their excuses, which they have convinced themselves are plausible. They range from "obtaining new light" to "being offended by a brother", assuring themselves that surely this cannot be God's church if there are these kinds of people in the church.

If they can't think of a reason, they try to invent a new one. Why would people want to leave God's church? For the very same reasons that Gideon's army was reduced. Whatever excuse they offer, there are two underlying reasons, the first one is fear and the second one is a sinful indolent, self-indulgent, lifestyle. They will often not admit that this is the reason so they make up an excuse to save face.

Sometimes people leave suddenly, unexpectedly, however their departure was a long slow process of separation from Christ, which eventually ended up in their separation from God's church.

"Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness." PK 188

In the time of Jesus, we see many unable to

grasp the truths He brought. Not that it was an impossibility for them to understand. The hardness of their hearts kept the truth out. It could not penetrate a heart of stone. "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" John 6:60

"Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Will you leave also? John 6:67-69. They chose not to leave. Jesus was left with only 12 sincere followers.

"This was one of the times of purging. By the words of truth, the chaff was being separated from the wheat. Because they were too vain and self-righteous to receive reproof, too world-loving to accept a life of humility, many turned away from Jesus. "Many are still doing the same thing. Souls are tested today as were those disciples in the synagogue at Capernaum. When truth is brought home to the heart, they see that their lives are not in accordance with the will of God. They see the need of an entire change in themselves; but they are not willing to take up the self-denying work. Therefore they are angry when their sins are discovered. They go away offended, even as the disciples left Jesus, murmuring, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"

"Praise and flattery would be pleasing to their ears; but the truth is unwelcome; they cannot hear it. When the crowds follow, and the multitudes are fed, and the shouts of triumph are heard, their voices are loud in praise; but when the searching of God's Spirit reveals their sin, and bids them leave it, they turn their backs upon the truth, and walk no more with Jesus." DA 392

There are two ways of separation – those that leave by their own volition, and those who are asked to leave.

FEAR

Those who leave God's church on their own volition are represented by the fearful in the time of Gideon.

To be fearful is cowardly, so the fearful look for another excuse to give them reason to depart without appearing cowardly.



People fear the truth for various reasons. First of all, unless you have a connection with Christ, the prophecies concerning the final events on this earth's history can appear rather daunting. With the passing of the Sunday Law and Death Decree – the entire world will be against God's chosen few. Who will be able to stand? Not the fearful. Many will have turned back from the faith due to fear.

Another reason for fear is the fear of losing material possessions. Perhaps you have a well-paying job that requires you to break the commandments by dishonest work practices, or other means? Some are too fearful to give up their job, not having the faith to believe that God will provide them another job. The new job may not be as well paid, but God has promised that He will sustain us and provide adequate food and shelter for us.

Those fearful of losing material possessions end up making various excuses such as, marriage, land purchase, etc. We see these excuses in the parable of the great supper. (Luke 14:16-24). Are these excuses the result of fear? Yes, they fear losing their wife, or fear concerning the land or the oxen. When fear of losing material possessions takes hold of a person, they put

those material possessions before God. If a person had no worries about their material possessions, they would trust them to God, and willingly respond to the call Jesus makes them.

There are many others fears, such as losing friends or popularity.

Or perhaps a threat from a spouse that unless you give up the faith, they will leave you. There have been cases in the past when this has happened, but the Lord has provided for the faithful spouse in marvellous ways. Jesus promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5

Then there is the fear that they will lose out on some "fun" in life while they are yet young. They don't want to miss out on the good times.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36

They don't have the faith to believe in Eternity. They cannot give up the things of this world – the price is too high.

Or then finally, they fear of what God may

ask of them. They fear that they will have to give up the things they love. The food they love, the dress they love, and the music they love. They don't want to know what God's ultimate will is, so they choose to remain ignorant, or then leave the church through fear.

The way appears too difficult and they fear they cannot make it so they give up.

DRIFTING

The second way for separation... when does God separate people from the church?

There will be times when the Lord asks people to leave, just as Gideon asked some soldiers to leave his army. It was the indolent and self-indulgent that were asked by Gideon to leave. It is commonly taught in the Christian world that you do not have to give up sin fully in order to receive salvation. The Ten Commandments are impossible to keep, so don't even try. Unfortunately the churches accept such teachings, and this is why they are considered Babylon. There is always danger that these types of ideas will creep into God's church. Yes, all believers accept the letter of the law as written, however the

spirit of the law goes much deeper into the human heart. As the heart is yielded to Christ He will cleanse and purge it from all selfishness and sin. There will always be those who are only half-committed; those who do not fully turn their backs on the ways of the world. They live on the edges of the truth – acknowledging that it is the correct way to live, but not fully accepting Christ into their lives to change their entire lifestyle. They hang on to some secret sins. These people will be found out and, as in the parable of the wheat and tares, the Lord will do the separating.

Just as He separated the half-committed ones in the time of Gideon, He will also separate the tares in His time. Unless we are battling upstream, against the current of this world, we are being swept down by drifting further and further away from Christ and eternal life.

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Mat. 7:20-23

These people wanted to remain with God’s church, but they were told to leave. The Lord never knew them.

The five foolish virgins came later and were told, “the door was shut.” They cried, “saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.” Mat. 25:10-12.

“Many are drifting about without knowledge, like a ship at sea without compass or anchor; and what is more, they are not interested to learn.” CH 38

“And many who bear the name of Christ’s followers are, through pride of heart, seeking popularity, and are drifting away from the established landmarks. The plain commands of God in His Word are discarded because they are so plain and old-fashioned, while vain and vague theories attract the mind and please the fancy.” Confrontation 68.

Jesus also separates those who teach false doctrines. “Many know so little about their Bibles that they are unsettled in the faith. They remove the old landmarks, and fallacies and winds of doctrine blow them hither and thither. Science, falsely so-called, is wearing away the foundation of Christian principle; and those who once were in the faith drift away from the Bible landmarks, and divorce themselves from God, while still claiming to be His children.--RH 12-29-96.” Ev 362

“Lucifer himself did not at first see whither he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings.” GC 496 Lucifer finally was cast out of heaven, although he would have liked to stay, but God would not permit him to stay and continue in his current lifestyle.

“The lives of many show that they have no living connection with God. They are drifting into the channel of the world. They have, in reality, no part or lot with Christ. They love amusement and are filled with selfish ideas, plans, hopes, and ambitions. They serve the enemy under the pretence of serving God. They are in bondage to a taskmaster, and this bondage they choose, making themselves willing slaves of Satan.” 5T 540. Just like their slave-master, Satan, they will eventually be cast out from God’s presence unless they choose to change masters. “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Rom. 6:16.

“Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church.” COL 71.

Perhaps people don’t leave the church, but they don’t take an active interest in the meetings and activities. When there is a duty to be done for the church, whether missionary work, or maintenance, just watch what kind of excuses people come up with. Some are fearful of missionary work, some have too many of their own business activities to take care of, and so there is no time for the Lord’s business.

Both of these reasons – fearfulness and no time, are rooted in selfishness. Think of your standing before God. Don’t you trust Him to be with you? Don’t you have time

for Him? Seek the Lord first. If you put His interests first, He will give you priority in return.

What if God didn’t have time for you? Perhaps He is too busy with the rest of the universe to trouble with a few small people on this planet in rebellion. Are we too worried about our things to be concerned with Him and the work He is doing for us? Do we have nothing to give in return for His great love towards us?

If we don’t put our interests in subordination to God’s interests, the simple fact is that we will not be saved when Jesus comes. Those who remained in Gideon’s army had courage (no fear), self-control (temperance – health reform), faith (God WILL deliver), and no connection with idolatry (all worldly affairs of this life are subordinate to God’s will). (PP549)

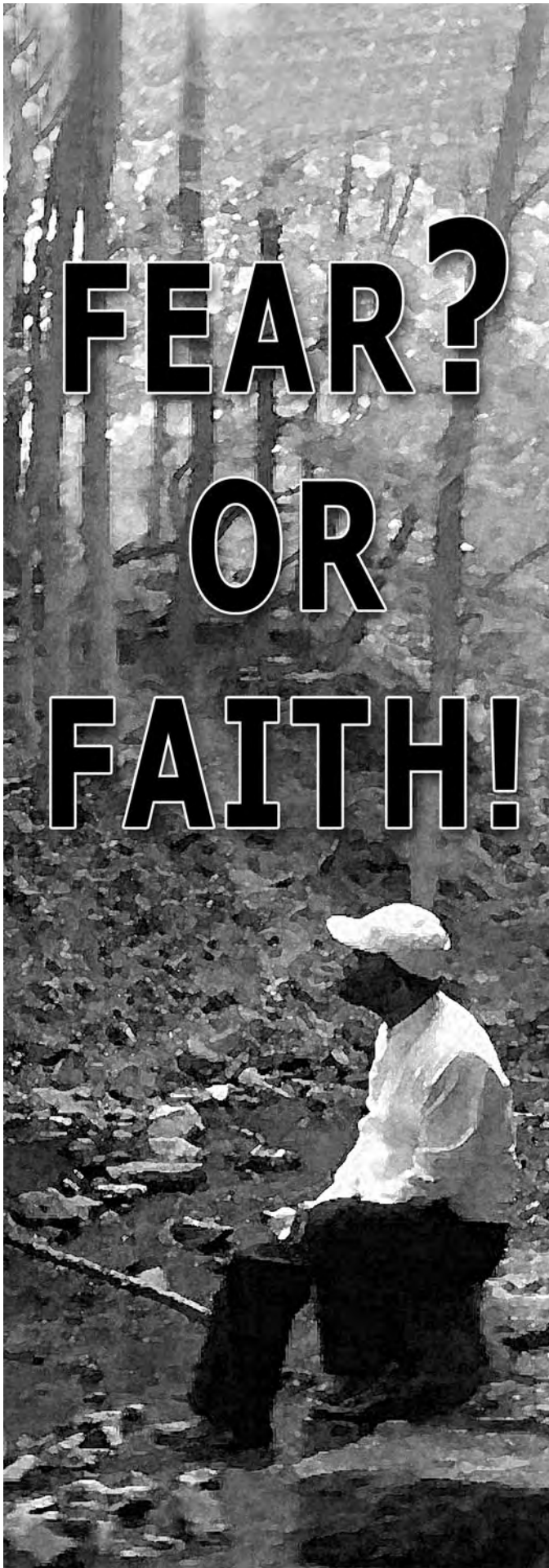
As we are rapidly reaching the end of this earth’s history, God is shaking His church. A mighty shaking is prophesied. Those that are half-committed will either leave on their own (resign) or they will be asked to leave (disfellowshipped). One way or another, God will have a pure church when the Latter Rain is poured out. My prayer is that each one of you will receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit when the Latter Rain does come. There are some who will not be ready, “Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” TM 507

“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 25:13.

May God help us not to be of the class who are drifting into eternal death or fearful, refusing to trust in God, choosing rather to trust the things of this world. “Consider your ways”, are you connected with Jesus so that you can endure unto the end to receive a crown of Glory?

AMEN.

Wendy Eaton, Australia



“Therefore I say to you, Don’t worry about your life, what ye shall eat or drink, or wear. Isn’t your life more than food? And your body than clothing? Watch the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store up food, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Don’t you think you’re as important to God as the birds?” Matt. 6:25, 26.

This gardening year I have decided to act on a different principle, i.e. FAITH rather than FEAR. To that end I am disciplining myself. In the past years, I have chased worry until I was exhausted, and I never caught up. There was always something more ahead to worry about.

“Faith lightens every burden, relieves every weariness.” PK 175. A lot of manufactured trials suddenly stand out in their true deformity. Other fears from past years surface, and are recognized for what they are—fear of man, or... foolishness. “The fear of man brings a snare: but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe.” Prov. 29:25.

“Today... today I will carry my duties cheerfully. Today’s faith in Jesus I must have. Today I will look and live. Today I will put my trust in god.” SOP

I think I’m going to start calling my little article— Short Sermons From Solitary Confinement. After all, although I am fairly free physically, to move around in my sphere, yet I am confined spiritually. I am almost alone in my way of worshipping our Creator God. No one understands me. No one understood Jesus. No one understands you either. Only our Creator completely understands the complex human soul. He never betrays the secrets we pour into His sympathizing ear.

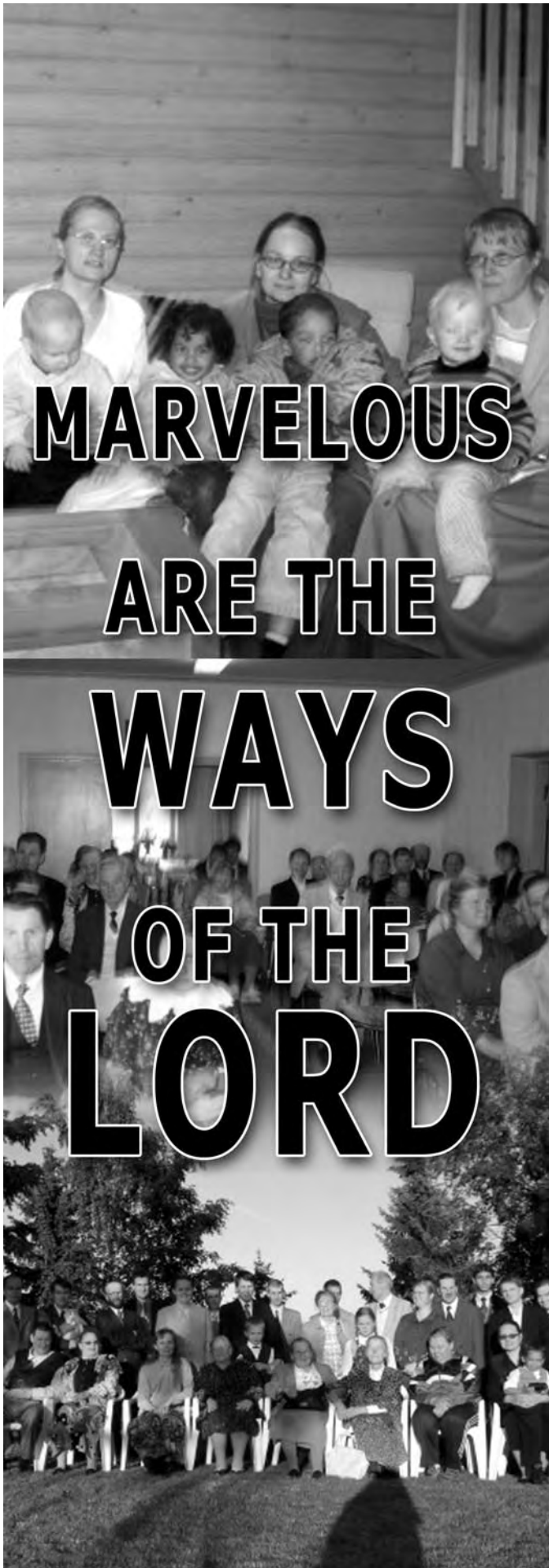
But, even for God, some of our actions must be mysterious and unaccountable, i.e. worry in the way of wonderful provisions. Fear in the face of unlimited favour.

*Come, O Thou Traveler unknown,
Whom still I hold but cannot see,
my company before is gone,
And I am still alone with Thee;
With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.*

*“I need not tell Thee who I am,
My sin and misery declare,
Thyself has called me by my name,
Look on Thy hands, and read it there,
But who, I ask thee, Who art Thou?
Tell me Thy name, and tell me now.*

*In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold.
Art Thou the Man that died for me?
The secret of Thy love unfold,
Clinging I will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy name, thy nature know.”
-Charles Wesley, (1707-1788)*

Kathleen Ross, Alberta, Canada



“On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour.”
Acts 10:9.

Wherever I am my thoughts are in the Lord’s work. My heart desires new experiences with my Saviour! I want to be an instrument in the hand of the Lord to lead souls that are seeking for truth to the narrow way which leads to our eternal home.

That morning, May 16, 2004 I was leaving on a mission trip to Sweden and Norway. On the ship, I went to sit down in the lounge and I was glad that there was an electric outlet to plug in my computer, because my plan was to continue my writing on the computer.

As the ship was leaving I started to write. The sea was calm and the ship moved slowly between the islands, heading towards the open sea. The beautiful sunshine made me glad, and reminded me again of the great mercy and love that God has towards us.

I would like to tell you, dear Brothers and Sisters, what I have experienced in my mission trips lately, and also what I will experience on this trip. My prayer is that the Lord may bless also this mission trip.

It was the 23rd of April as I went to Estonia. There we had a blessed conference. Sabbath evening I had an opportunity to talk with an interested soul. Next morning I had a chance to talk with another soul who then bought almost all of the Sister White books that we had in the mission house. He wants to read and study more to find the truth. In the evening of the same day we had a blessed meeting with a group who live far from Tallinn. Two days later, we went to the southern part of Estonia, where we had communion service with the members of the church.

Early Friday morning, I wanted to take a bus to continue my journey to Latvia, because the car belonging to the church had broken down, and we were not able to repair it.

I had been praying for my mission trip, which included also Lithuania after I had completed my work in Latvia.

I was surprised that the bus which I wanted to take did not stop at the bus stop, so I was stuck in Estonia. I was wondering why the Lord permitted this to happen since for several days I had been praying that this trip would be successful. But then I was also sure that the Lord must have some other plan for me. Then I decided to try to get a lift on one of the passing cars. On the way that leads from Võru to Valga, were very few cars passing, and I prayed for God’s help that someone would give me a lift.

Soon one car stopped and gave me a lift, but only for 10 km. as I left I gave the driver a pamphlet on Events of the Future. Soon after another car gave me a lift for another 7 km and I gave him the pamphlet also. Then I found a bus stop but I was told that the next bus would not come until 3:30 p.m.

The time was passing quickly and I was wondering if I would be able to make it to my destination in time. The whole distance that I was traveling was about 500 km. I continued my journey on foot, because hardly any cars were passing by. I was hoping that in the next

village or on some intersection a car would come and give me a ride. I walked many kilometers and I was thinking how Jesus walked long distances as He took the glad tidings of salvation to the people, who were lost in sins.

As I was coming closer to the next village a man riding a bicycle asked me where I was going, so we started a conversation. We came to the village and as I was planning to continue on foot, he told me not to continue walking, that he would find a car that would take me to the city of Valga, which was yet another 25 km away. That city was at the border of Latvia. I also gave him the pamphlet. Soon a car was found to take me to the city; it was a car belonging to the post office.

In the city I asked when the next bus would leave for Latvia, and I was told that it would leave the next day. It became clear to me that I had to continue my trip by getting lifts in private cars. As I was walking towards the border a car stopped and gave me a lift. He was a customs officer. After crossing the border I decided to look for a truck that might take me to the capital city from where I could continue by bus to Liepaja. That city is situated along the sea shore where we have church members.

I asked of one truck driver if he would take me, but he was not going that direction. Following his advice I asked of other drivers and I found one who was about to leave and he agreed to take me. As I told him that I really wanted to go to Liepaja he said that this was the place he was also going to, and that he was in a hurry to catch a boat to Denmark. I too was in a hurry to make it there before Sabbath beginning.

On the way we had an opportunity to speak much about religion and of many experiences with God. He said that he believes in God and told me many of his own experiences. I gave him my address and he gave me his telephone number. I offered him money for the trip but he did not take it. We arrived on time into the city, and I gave him the pamphlet also. We arrived almost three hours before the Sabbath beginning and I gave thanks to the heavenly Father for His help and providence.

In Liepaja, we had a blessed Sabbath service. In the afternoon we visited the neighbour,

Vladimir, who was sad because his wife was very sick. We had a long discussion and Bible study with the pamphlet. He said that he did not understand the Bible, so I offered to him our Bible course and encouraged and comforted him with the Bible promises, and in the end I prayed for him and his wife that they would get new hope in their lives.

Apparently our discussion had touched his heart because the next day he came to look for me, after I had left. Our sister gave him a book to read, and I asked our mission house in Estonia to send him our Bible course and the book, *Steps to Christ*.

Early the next morning I left for Lithuania. First I had to travel to Klaipeda and from there to Kaunas. There, Sister Leokadia waited for me with another sister. We went to the home of Leokadia's daughter, where we had a Bible study and afterwards we continued with questions and answers. There came to our study, three sisters from the Adventist church and five from Selkov's group. Some of them were interested to know more of our Reform Church. Our discussion continued until half past ten at night.

Next morning we went to the capital city. There again we had discussions, and I told them some of my experiences with the Lord. We had a wonderful time together. One young couple were with us also and they wanted our Sabbath School lessons, to study them. Their minister had passed away and they were as sheep without a shepherd, and even their leadership does not recognize them as members any more. They are seeking the true church of God to join. Let us pray for them.

By a miracle, Sister Leokadia found the address of our General Conference and wrote to them. They in turn sent the letter to me and so the connection was made. She is very willing to join with us and is rejoicing in the Lord's leading that she found us. May the Lord continue to lead her all the way.

In the evening the young couple accompanied me to the bus station. At ten o'clock my bus left and the next morning I was in Tallinn again. The same day I continued my journey to Finland and in the afternoon I was home again.

After four days I left on my next mission trip to northern Finland and Sweden. On the way we visited members and interested souls. The Lord protected us on the way and gave us new experiences. On the way we were able to distribute many pamphlets and magazines.

Then on the 16th of May I left on my next mission trip to Sweden and Norway. In Oslo I met a young man, Jeremia, with whom we had spoken before, and he expressed his desire to be baptized. He was very glad that we could see each other again after many years. He was very zealous in faith and has a great desire to find new souls who would be interested in the Reform Church. He called on two of his friends but on that day it was not possible to meet with them.

The next day we left from Oslo to go to the conference in Sweden. On Friday, Jeremia made his covenant with the Lord. The weather and the water were cold but it did not prevent the sacred service. Our hearts were rejoicing that a new soul united with the heavenly family. During the conference, Brother Alexander held public meetings especially on the topic "How to stop smoking". These meetings were announced in the newspapers and the editors of the newspaper came to talk with Brother Alexander and took photographs also.

On Sabbath it was solemn occasion to accept Brother Jeremia into the church. In the afternoon he told us of his experiences how the Lord by His miraculous way had led him into the decision to join the Reform Church. Our Heavenly Father blessed us richly during these conferences.

After these conferences, filled with joy and comfort we started our journey back home, with the desire that if it is the Lord's will we will see each other again.

May the Lord bless His work and lead His own to the way of truth. **AMEN.**

*Your brother,
Vladimir Marinov, Finland*



VLADIMIR MARINOV CONDUCTING BAPTISM IN SWEDEN



BELIEVERS IN FINLAND



YOUTH CONFERENCE IN FINLAND



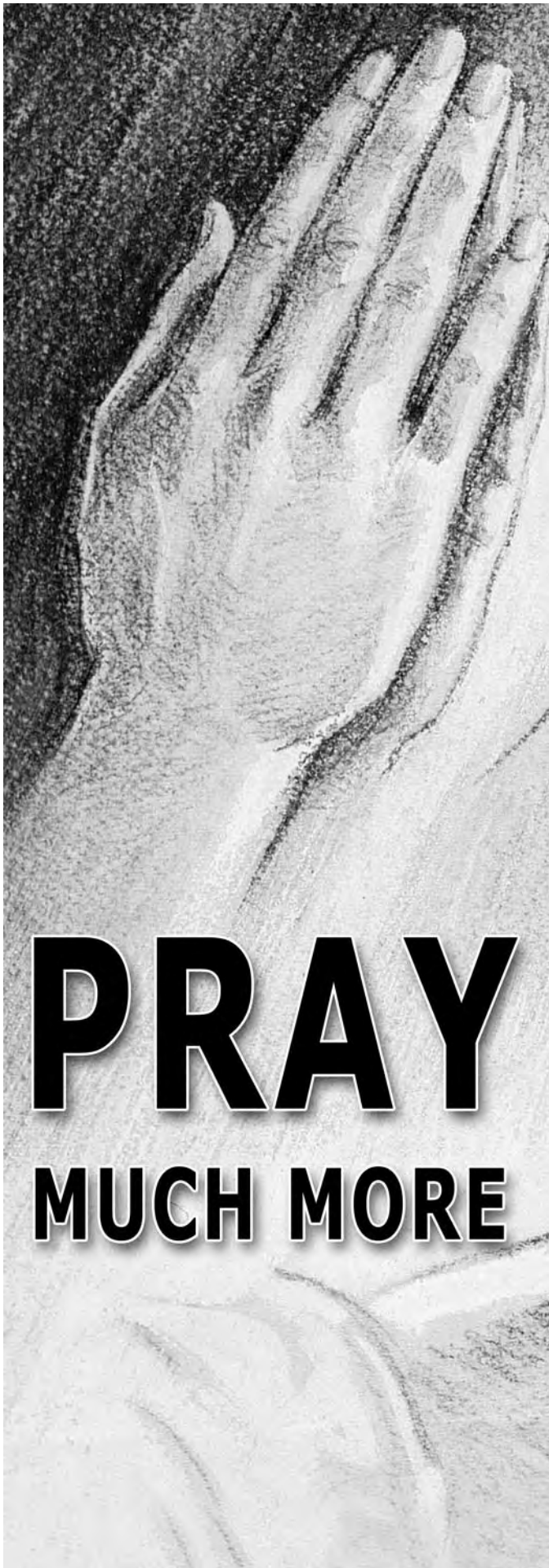
BR. JEREMIA BAPTIZED IN SWEDEN



BR. & SIS. GUTKENECHT



YOUTH CONFERENCE IN FINLAND



Many times we may speak to individuals in the byways of life, at our workplaces, etc. and we speak to them of the fulfilling of the prophecies of the Bible in the things that have been happening up until now, since Sept. 11, in Iraq and in other places. But they seem not to understand what we are saying; that we are trying to show them that there is a God and that the time is short.

We need to pray and ask the Lord to help the people to understand what we are saying, but how do we pray?

One day the disciples came to Jesus as He was praying. They were very impressed and they asked; Lord teach us how to pray (Luke 11). Jesus gave an example of prayer in what is known as the Lord's Prayer.

There are many examples of prayer we have in the Bible: We can pray in strong faith like Joshua when the sun stood still, as in the prayer of the confession of Daniel, and Ezra as he prayed for the people. A good prayer of contrition is that of David for his great sin, asking the Lord to search his heart and to make it as white as snow.

Something to remember when we pray for the sick is that we need to be very careful and always say "if it is the Lord's will" that the sick person (s) we prayed for should be healed and God be glorified. The 3rd commandment says: "thou shalt not take the Lord's name in vain." In the Lord's Prayer in Matt.6:9-13, we read in verse 6 that we should not take the Lord's name in vain when we pray. There is no need to mention the Lord's name so much (it is only mentioned once in the prayer); no need for vain repetition, God hears us.

So then for whom, how, why or what we pray for is outlined in the model of the Lord's Prayer.

(1) Jesus teaches us to call His Father **our Father**. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 2:11. No earthly parent ever pleaded so earnestly with an erring child as He who made you pleads with the transgressor. No human, loving interest ever followed the impenitent with such tender invitations. God dwells in every abode; He hears every word that is spoken, listens to every prayer that is offered, tastes the sorrows and disappointments of every soul, regards the treatment that is given to father, mother, sister, friend, and neighbor. He cares for our necessities, and His love and mercy and grace are continually flowing to satisfy our need. {MB 105.2} It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father and to every member of His family. You will rejoice to do any act, however humble, that will tend to His glory or to the well-being of your kindred. {MB 105.3}

(2) To **hallow the name of the Lord** requires that the words in which we speak of the Supreme Being be uttered with reverence. "Holy and reverend is his name" (Ps. 111:9). We are never in any manner to treat lightly the titles or appellations of the Deity. In prayer we enter the audience chamber of the Most High; and we should come before Him with holy awe.

(3) **His kingdom will not come until** the good tidings of His grace have been carried to all the earth. Hence, as we give ourselves to God, and win other souls to Him, we hasten the coming of His kingdom.

4) "**Thy will be done** in earth, as it is in heaven," is a prayer that the reign of evil on this earth may be ended, that sin may be forever destroyed, and the kingdom of righteousness be established. {MB 110.1}

(5) In teaching us to **ask every day for what we need**--both temporal and spiritual blessings--God has a purpose to accomplish for our good.

He would have us realize our dependence upon His constant care, for He is seeking to draw us into communion with Himself. In this communion with Christ, through prayer and the study of the great and precious truths of His word, we shall as hungry souls be fed; as those that thirst, we shall be refreshed at the fountain of life. {MB 113.1}

(6) When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. We should not try to lessen our guilt by excusing sin. We must accept God's estimate of sin, and that is heavy indeed. Calvary alone can reveal the terrible enormity of sin. If we had to bear our own guilt, it would crush us. But the sinless One has taken our place; though undeserving, He has borne our iniquity. "If we confess our sins," God "is faithful and just to **forgive us our sins**, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(7) We are not to be dismayed by trial, bitter though it be, we should pray that God will not permit us to be brought where we shall be drawn away by the desires of our own evil hearts. It is not safe for us to linger to contemplate the advantages to be reaped through yielding to Satan's suggestions. If we venture on Satan's ground we have no assurance of protection from his power. So far as in us lies, we should close every avenue by which the tempter may find access to us. The prayer, "**Bring us not into temptation**," is itself a promise. If we commit ourselves to God we have the assurance, He "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Corinthians 10:13. {MB 118.2}

(8) "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and **the power, and the glory**, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine... In Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." 1 Chronicles 29:11, 12. {MB 122.1}

"In the case of the noble man at Capernaum whose child was sick to death. Jesus revealed to him his selfish motive of seeking Him. The Lord wants us to plead our great need of His help to cure us of our sickness. We like the nobleman need to plead in 'agony of supplication' as when Jacob cried; 'I will not let thee go unless thou bless me.' When we come to Him in faith, every petition enters into the heart of God. When we have asked for His blessings we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we have received it then go about our duties, assured that the

blessing will be realized when we need it most. {DA 200.}

Sometimes, we may get caught up in our busy lives, we are to come aside and rest awhile. "As activity increases, and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less, and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the Word of God. Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good." {DA 362.}

Many times we hear of hardened criminals, abusers, torturers etc and their acts and life. It may bring feelings of disgust; but like the demoniac (filled with a legion of evil spirits) God will hear their prayer if they sincerely seek His help to leave their evil habits behind. "None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded." {DA 258}. We may not have any regard for these people or even for those among us whom we may term trouble makers. But we must pray for them; Jesus died for all men.

A situation occurred after the transfiguration, when Jesus came down from the mountain with the three disciples to meet the others. (Matt. 17: 1-8, 15). In the end He said: "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but

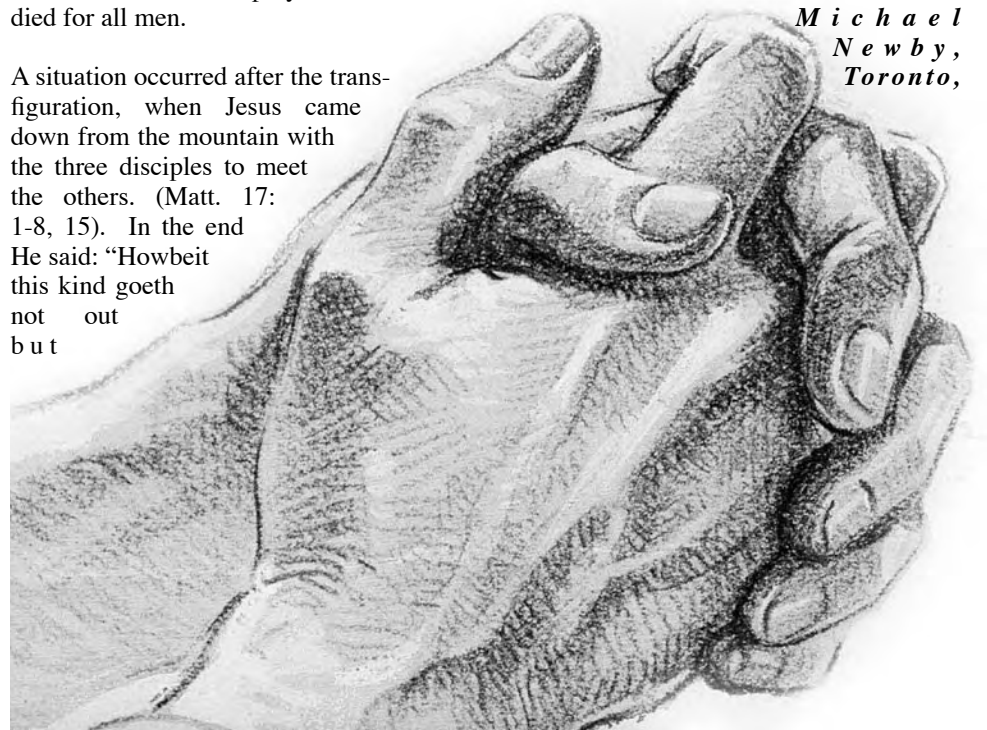
by prayer and fasting. We need also to do this as part of our prayer; especially when we need to overcome some great sin (s) or situation (s). These times may require fasting and fervent prayer, with much humiliation of the heart to strengthen our faith.

Jesus has promised that: "He would be present before the Father to make request (our prayers) for them. The prayer of the humble suppliant He presents as His own desire in that soul's behalf. Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection. 'In My name,' Christ bade His disciples pray. In Christ's name His followers are to stand before God. Through the value of the sacrifice made for them, they are of value in the Lord's sight. Because of the imputed righteousness of Christ they are accounted precious. For Christ's sake the Lord pardons those that fear Him. He does not see in them the vileness of the sinner. He recognizes in them the likeness of His Son, in whom they believe." {DA 667}

The disciples were sleeping in self sufficiency in the Garden of Gethsemane. They did not look to the Mighty Helper as Christ had counseled them to do. Let us cooperate with the Lord in these last times, pray more and not die in our sleep. Let us agonize and pray for transformation of character; we need to pray much more.

Amen.

*Michael
Newby,
Toronto,*





SAVAGELY DESPERATE TIMES PHIL 4:6

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.”

We are living in cruelly desperate times. Dangerous times. Is this age the most dangerous, the most desperate in history? For many it feels like it is. Many more say we’re living in nerve-wracking times, anxious times. We cannot dismiss the seriousness of the dangers in the world today.

Many nations are developing security strategies beyond one’s imagination. But, in spite of this, today’s security environment has become more complex and dangerous.

There is a group of atomic scientists in Chicago that publish a bulletin, which keeps a “doomsday clock”, that scientists use as a gauge to warn of the chances of a nuclear war. It’s now at 6 min. to midnight.

Another group, the Peace Research Group Institute in Sweden, has estimated 32 separate raging wars in the world today.

There is another organization, called Freedom House in New York, that monitors world conflicts and human rights, that says the world’s not “boiling over” yet, but it may seem that way to many.

Although other statistics paint a comforting picture about the dangers of the modern world, even the experts and historians, political scientists, and others, can become anxious; and say, furthermore, that emotions can be difficult to overcome.

One historian said, “everyone’s nerves get rattled, or shaken by the issues of control. It seems that we have less control over the world.”

Others say there are many good and positive changes in the world, and rightly so; dramatic advances in medicine, positive breakthroughs, marvelous cures, and surprising longevity studies. There are, however, others who say the positive trends and advances don’t matter much when compared or “weighed in the balances” with new evils and growing wickedness in the world.

Can we merely ignore all of these dangers? How does the world cope or approach these dangers? Well, the experts say to ignore such dangers would be irrational. They say also, these dangerous times and new threats need to be put in perspective, so that fear does not dominate people’s lives, and so one can form well rounded opinions about such issues of security and dangers. This is interesting, however, not comforting as it is a human analysis fraught with a human rational approach, under one’s own power, and weaknesses... an analytic approach.

Others say, “by being more informed about world dangers, your reasoning side can overcome your emotional side and you can, in other words, reason things out with your mind and you’re better off.” This, too, is human mind power, efforts, or endeavors to overcome on one’s own initiative, without a solid foundation for guidance and support.

One author said, “to look at problems from many perspectives; that there’s many greater threats than before, but modern medicine saves

and extends millions of lives yearly.”

“This is, all right,” a risk expert said, “as long as you don’t give less importance to your legitimate fears.” Well, again, this is all interesting, but merely academic, philosophic, view points. None seem to be comforting to the soul, and can lead many to become even more desperate. It all seems like a mammoth, colossal, fruitless, task.

But, what’s the Christian’s viewpoint, the believer’s way, to all of these new cascading threats and dangers facing us in the world today... these desperate times? Firstly, there’s many Christians that live in a sad state of unbroken anxiety, and others fret and fume terribly, and “whose minds are continually harassed and oppressed by anxiety.” (AH 150)

To be perfectly at peace in the middle of the rush of daily life is a secret worth knowing. What’s the use of worrying? It never made anyone strong; never helped anybody to do God’s will; never made a way of escape for anybody out of his perplexity or problems. Worry, in fact, spoils lives which would otherwise be useful and beautiful.

Restlessness, anxiety and care are absolutely forbidden by our Lord, who said, “Take no thought, that is, no anxious thought, saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed.” (Lk. 12:22).

He does not mean that we are not to think ahead and that our life is to be without plans; but, we’re not to worry about these things, “regarding the outcome of future affairs.” (MH 478)

“People just know you live in the realm of anxious care by the lines on your face; it’s stamped on every feature.” (6T 566). Also, “the tones in your voice, body movements, the small, unimportant key in your life, the lack of joy in your spirit. The life forces are crushed by anxiety; spiritual growth cannot be secured or had.” (SC 68)(MH 115).

It’s always weakness to be worrying, fretting, questioning, and mistrusting. Can we gain anything by it? We don’t make ourselves fit for action, or our minds clear for wise decisions. We

create a block to the mind, channels are diverted. We are sinking in our struggles in anxiety, when we should be floating in faith!

We read in Ps 37:2, “fret not”! This sounds to me like a divine command; the same as “thou shall not steal, or kill.” Well, it is! “It’s not the fruit of the spirit.”(GW 287)

Let’s go now into a deeper definition of fretting (worrying); made rough on the surface, worn or rubbed away; and a peevish, irrational, fault-finding person; not only wears himself out, but is very wearing to others... rubs people the wrong way.

To fret, furthermore, is to be in a state of vexation, annoyance, irritation; like when missing a bus; or the rush-hour traffic, a daily vexation for many.

In this Psalm (37:1), we are not only told not to fret but God does not want us to hurt ourselves, does He? A physician will tell you that a fit of anger is more injurious than a fever, and a fretful disposition is harmful to the body.” Health is broken down.” (MH 241). There’s a rule for “fretting”, as that for “sowing and reaping.” The next step down (not up) is crossness... just plain meanness, and that amounts to anger; the next step.

Let’s settle this matter here and now, today! Let’s read from Phil 4:6 again, “In nothing be anxious.”!

No anxiety ought to be found in a believer. Yes, I know, our trials may be great and many, our afflictions, our difficulties, yet, there should be no anxiety under any circumstances, because we have a Father in Heaven that is Almighty, and who loves His children as He loves His only begotten Son, and whose joy and delight is to help them at all times and under all circumstances. We should listen to the Word again, “In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” (Phil 4:6)

In “everything”, that’s not merely when the house is on fire or when the beloved husband or wife and children are on the

edge of the grave, but in the smallest matters of life, bring everything to God, the little things, the very, very little things, what the world calls “trifling things”... everything! Remember... everything. Yet, always living in close communion with our Heavenly Father, and with our precious Lord Jesus “all day long”!

And when we wake at night, by a kind of spiritual instinct, turn to Him again, speak to Him, bring all our little matters before Him in the sleepless night, the family problems, our business, trade or profession, “whatever troubles us”, presses us, speak to the Lord about it in His name, and in His blood. Maybe your spiritual life is neither hot, nor cold, but maybe lukewarm... then, speak to the Lord about it.

Next, by prayer and supplication... waiting, waiting, waiting on God, on the Lord.

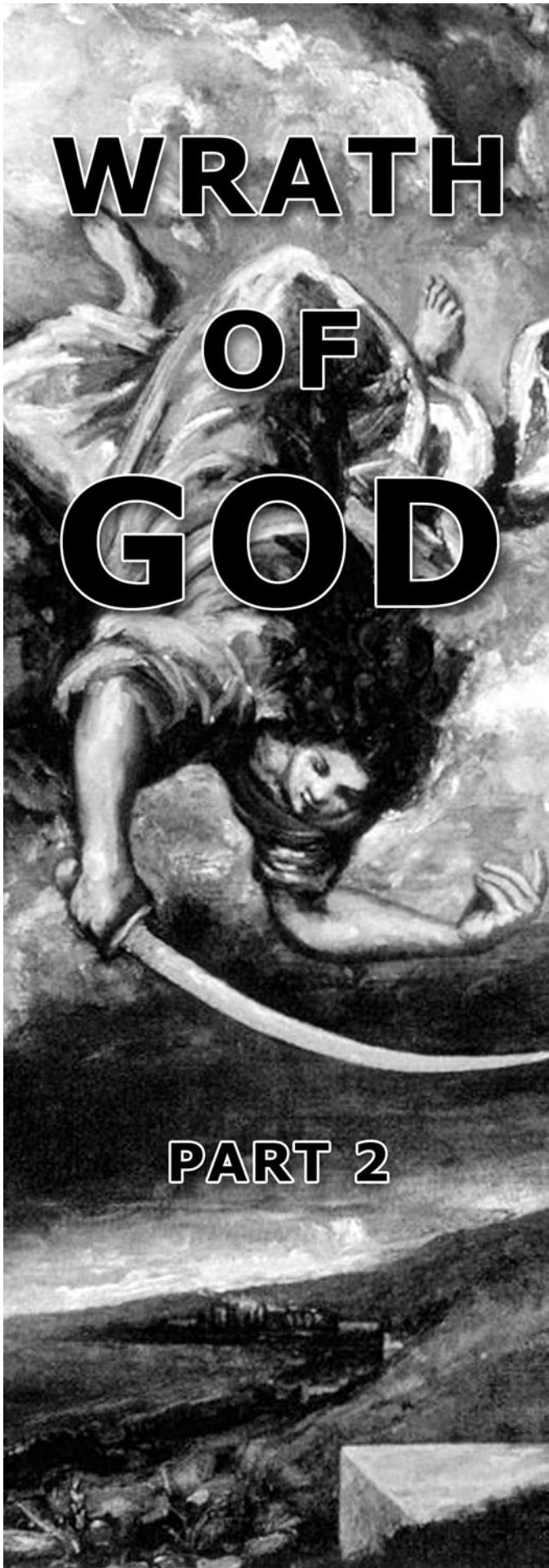
Then, with thanksgiving, at all times lay a good foundation with thanksgiving. The Lord has saved us from eternal destruction. He’s given us the truth, prophecy, His Word, His Son (His greatest gift), and the Holy Spirit. We have reason for thanksgiving. So, aim for this with all diligence!

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4: 6). This is such a great blessing, so real a blessing, so precious a blessing, that we must experience this, for it passes all our human understanding; it’s beyond us all!

Try this two to three times a day. Look to see if your heart is not troubled, anxious, uneasy, about something; pause, stop whatever you are doing and reflect on this deeply. And if you find that it is, take care to restore it to the calm of Jesus. Lean your head upon the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ. “When we are pressed under anxiety, God is near. Spread your anxiety before God.” (DA 329)(SD 19) Open the door of your heart.

“Do not BEGIN to be anxious.” **AMEN.**

John Theodorou, USA



How did Christ drink of the wine of the wrath of God?

Matthew 26:39,42. And he went a little further and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt... He went away again, the second time, and prayed, saying O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

DA 686-7. He went a little distance from them... not so far but that they could both see and hear him... and fell prostrate upon the ground. He felt that by sin He was going separate from His Father. The gulf was so broad, so black, so deep, that His spirit shuddered before it. This agony He must not exert His divine power to escape, as man He must suffer the consequences of man's sin. As man He must endure the wrath of God against transgression.

Christ was now standing in a different attitude from that in which He had ever stood before. His suffering can best be described in the words of the prophet. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." Zech. 13: 7. As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was suffering under divine justice. He saw what justice meant. Hitherto He had been as an intercessor for others, now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself.

As Christ felt His unity with Father broken up, He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the powers of darkness... With the issues of the conflict before Him. Christ's soul was filled with dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom and would never more be one with God...

The sins of men weighed heavily upon Christ, and the sense of God's wrath against sin was crushing out His life.

DA 690. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man... Will the son of God drink the bitter cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty?

DA 693. But God suffered with His son. Angels beheld the Saviour's agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of Satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched, the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offending in His sight is sin.

DA 753. Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendent of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a

sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God, that their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the son of God...

In that thick darkness, God's presence was hidden. He makes the darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory from human eyes. God and His holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with His Son, yet His presence was not revealed. Had His glory flashed forth from the cloud, every human beholder would have been destroyed. And in that dreadful hour, Christ was not to be comforted with the Father's presence. He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Him.

DA 700. The angels of heaven witnessed every movement made against their loved commander. They longed to deliver Christ. Under God the angels are all-powerful. On one occasion in obedience to the command of Christ, they slew of the Assyrian army in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand men. How easily could the angels, beholding the shameful scene of the trial of Christ, have testified their indignation by consuming the adversaries of God! But they were not commanded to do this.

DA 755. And all that He endured... the blood drops flowed from His head, His hands, His feet, the agony that racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father's face... speaks to each child of humanity, declaring, it is for thee that the Son of God consents to bear this burden of guilt, for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise. He who stilled the angry waves and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble

and disease flee, who opened blind eyes and called forth the dead to life... offers Himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, and this from love to thee. He, the sin bearer, endures the wrath of divine justice, and for thy sake becomes sin itself.

DA 756. Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father, He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith, He rested in Him, who it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father's favour was withdrawn by faith, Christ was the victor.

GC 539-40. God has given in His word decisive evidence that He will punish the transgressors of His law. Those who flatter themselves that He is too merciful to execute justice upon the sinner, have only to look to the cross of Calvary. The death of the spotless son of God testified that "the wages of sin is death," that every violation of God's law must receive its just retribution. Christ the sinless became sin for man. He bore the guilt of transgression, and the hiding of His Father's face until His heart was broken and His life crushed out. All this sacrifice was made that sinners might be redeemed. In no other way could man be freed from the penalty of sin. And every soul that refuses to become a partaker of the atonement provided at such a cost must bear in his own person the guilt and punishment of transgression. (c o n t i n u e through GC 545:1).

5 BC 1103. It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of

the old world by a flood, by the record of the fire which fell down from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, the son of the infinite God, when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. It was in consequence of sin, the transgression of God's law, that the garden of Gethsemane has become pre-eminently the place of suffering to a sinful world. No sorrow, no agony can measure with that which was endured by the son of God.

Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs, but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and the character of retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ to the repenting, believing sinner.

Sowing and Reaping

Gal. 6:7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.





Prov. 1:30, 31. They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

Ezek. 7:3, 4. Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abomination. And mine eye shall not spare thee, either will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abomination shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

1T 188. God proves His people in this world. This is the fitting up place to appear in His presence. Here, in this world, in these last days, persons will show what power affects their hearts and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead to good works. It will elevate the receiver and make him noble-hearted and generous, like his divine Lord. But if evil angels control the heart, it will be seen in various ways. The fruit will be selfishness, covetousness, pride, and evil passion.

GC 654-5. The minister who has

sacrificed truth to gain favour of men, now discerns the character and influence of his teachings. It is apparent that the omniscient eye was following him as he stood in the desk, as he walked the streets, as he mingled with men in various scenes of life. Every emotion of the soul, every line written, every word uttered, every act that led men to rest in a refuge of falsehood, has been scattering seed, and now, in the wretched, lost souls around him, he beholds the harvest.

3T 226-7. That which ye sow ye shall also reap. These young men are now sowing the seed. Every act of their lives, every word spoken, is a seed for good or evil. As is the seed, will be crop. If they indulge hasty, lustful, perverted passions or give up to the gratification of appetite or the inclination of their unsanctified hearts, if they foster pride or wrong principles and cherish habits of unfaithfulness or dissipation, they will reap a plentiful harvest of remorse, shame, and despair.

Angels of God are seeking to lead these young men to cry unto the Lord in sincerity: "Be thou the guide of my youth." Angels are inviting and

seeking to draw them from the snares of Satan. Heaven may be theirs if they will seek to obtain it. A crown of immortal glory will be theirs if they will give all for heaven.

TM 467. The prejudice and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means. The seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers. When, by thorough confession, you destroy the root of bitterness, you will see light in God's light. Without this thorough work you will never clear your souls. You need to study the word of God with a purpose, not to confirm your own ideas, but to bring them to be trimmed, to be condemned or approved as they are or are not in harmony with the word of God. The Bible should be your constant companion. You should study the testimonies, not to pick out certain sentences to use as you see fit, to strengthen your assertions, while you disregard the plainest statements given to correct your course of action.

MH 492:2. Earnest workers have no time for dwelling upon the faults of others. We cannot afford to live on the husks of others faults or failings. Evilspeaking is a twofold curse, falling more heavily on the speaker than upon the hearer. He who scatters the seeds of dissention and strife reaps in his own soul the deadly fruits. The very act of looking for evil in other develops evil in those who look. By dwelling upon the faults of others, we are changed into the same image. But by beholding Jesus, talking of His love and perfection of character we become changed into His image. By contemplating the lofty ideal He has placed before us, we shall be uplifted into pure and holy atmosphere, even

the presence of God. When we abide here, there goes forth from us a light that irradiates all who are connected with us.

5T 93. Every act, however small, has its place in the great drama of life. Consider that the desire for a single gratification of appetite introduced sin into our world, with its terrible consequences. Unhallowed marriages of the sons of God, with the daughters of men resulted in apostasy which ended in the destruction of the world by flood. The most trifling act of self-indulgence has resulted in great revolutions. This is the case now. There are very few who are circumspect. Like the children of Israel, they will not take heed to words of counsel, but follow their own inclination. They unite with a worldly element in attending gatherings where they will be brought into notice, and thus lead the way and others follow. What has been done once will be done again by themselves and many others. Every step these take makes a lasting impression, not only on their own consciences and habits, but upon those of others. This consideration gives awful dignity to human life.

CDF 125-6. Thousands have indulged their perverted appetites, have eaten a good meal, as they called it, and as the result have brought on a fever, or some other acute disease, and certain death. That was enjoyment purchased at immense cost. Yet many have done this, and these self murderers have been eulogized by their friends and the ministers, and carried directly to heaven at their death... Such will never be exalted to the right hand of Jesus, the precious Saviour, the suffering man of Calvary, whose life was one constant self-denial and sacrifice.

CDF 125. You groan under pains and prostrations which you cannot account for, and you try to submit with as good a grace as you can, thinking affliction is your lot, and providence has thus ordained it. If you could have your

eyes opened, and could see the steps taken in your lifetime to walk right into your present condition of poor health, you would be astonished at your blindness in not seeing the real state of the case before. You have created unnatural appetites, and do not derive half that enjoyment from your food which you would if you had not used your appetites wrongfully. You have perverted nature, and have been suffering the consequences and painful has it been.

CDF 124. Your appetites are morbid, and because you do not relish a plain,



simple diet, composed of unbolted wheat flour, vegetables, and fruits prepared without spices or grease, you are continually transgressing the laws which God has established in your system. While you do this you must suffer the penalty, for to every transgression is affixed a penalty. Yet you wonder at your continual poor health. Be assured that God will not work a miracle to save you from the result of your own course of action.

CDF 124-5. God has established laws in your system which you

cannot violate without suffering the punishment. You have consulted taste without reference to health.

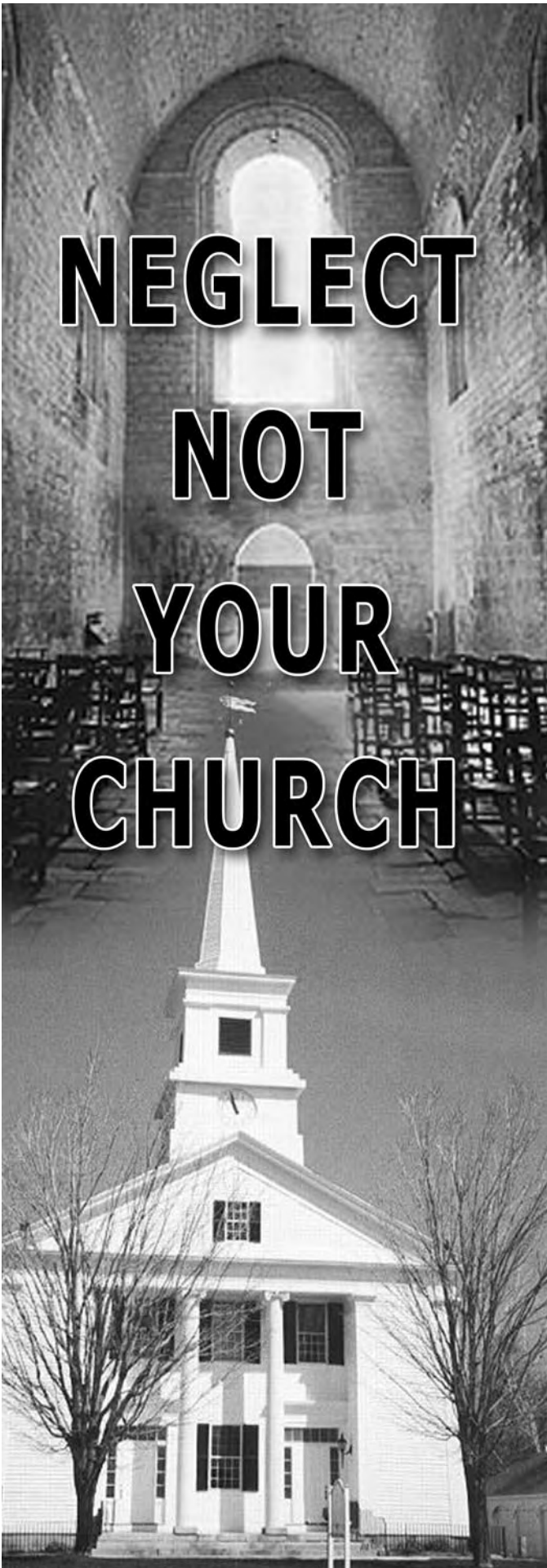
2 SM 425,6. Children in this age are suffering with their parents, more or less, the penalty of the violation of the laws of health. The course generally pursued with them, from their infancy, is in continual opposition to the laws of the being... Parents manifest astonishing ignorance, indifference, and recklessness, in regard to the physical health of their children, which often results in destroying the little vitality left the abused infant, and consigns it to an early grave. You will frequently hear parents mourning over the providence of God which has torn their children from their embrace. Our heavenly Father is too wise to err, and too good to do us wrong. He has no delight in seeing his creatures suffer. Thousands have been ruined for life because parents have not acted in accordance with the laws of health.

PK 57. Solomon's course brought its sure penalty. His separation from God through communication with idolaters was his ruin. As he cast off his allegiance to God, he lost the mastery of himself. His moral efficiency was gone. His fine sensibilities became blunted, his conscience seared.

The All-Important Consideration

Let none begin to believe that amusements are essential and that a careless disregard of the Holy Spirit during hours of selfish pleasure is to be looked upon as a light matter. God will not be mocked. Let every young man, every young woman, consider: "Am I prepared today for my life to close? Have I the heart preparation that fit me to do the work which the Lord has given me to do?" **AMEN.**

*Golden Kayawa Hingabantu
Zambia*



NEGLECT NOT YOUR CHURCH

Neglecting church fellowship is only one step removed from neglecting God. The communion and worship in church is something that you can never find by yourself, no matter how sincere you are. I have found that the reasons given for not attending church boil down to a few typical excuses.

“I do not know enough; I am not good enough.” But no one is saved by his knowledge of Christ, not by his goodness. We are saved by faith. The church is a power house or training ground for every one who desires to get closer to his Saviour, and his fellow men. “Come and learn of Me,” said Jesus Christ.

Our living God has revealed Paul’s instruction to me. “Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep His promise. Let us be concerned for one another to help one another to show love and to do good. Let us not give up the good habit of meeting together, as some are doing, instead let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the day of the Lord is coming very near.” Heb. 10:23-25.

In a letter to the editor of a British newspaper, a man complained that he saw no sense in going to church every week. “I have been attending every service quite regularly for the past 30 years,” he wrote, “and during that time I have listened to no less than 3000 sermons. But, to my consternation, I discover I cannot remember a single one of them. I wonder if a minister’s time might be more profitably spent on something else.”

That letter sparked many responses. One, however, was the clincher; “I have been married for 30 years, during that time I have eaten 32,850 meals—mostly of my wife’s cooking. Suddenly I discovered that I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, I received nourishment from every one of them. I have the distinct impression that without them I would have starved to death long ago.

The Bible assumes the importance of going to church, and the only admonition to do so appears in the context of the danger of forsaking the practice. Again we can read the same verse of Hebrew 10:23-25. We need help to keep our faith and hope from wavering, and to love and do good works. Just as physical food keeps us alive and strong, so also the spiritual nourishment of teaching and fellowship are very necessary for our survival.

“The people are not friendly enough.” Strange, for no one would dream of staying away from a bank, a hairdresser, a supermarket, or a concert for such a reason.

“I do not need to go to church to be a Christian.” This is so easy to say. Yet, everywhere in nature we can learn the lesson that isolation means extinction. The old elephant, ostracized from his herd, roams the jungle with hate in his heart until he finally dies. The lone wolf does likewise. What happens to the soldier who loses contact with the rest of his company? He is helpless. Yes, you can be a reformer without going to church, but how much more difficult it is.

Jesus, while here on earth faithfully attended the synagogues on His Sabbath day. The church then was filled with hypocrites and unfriendly people, but Jesus has set an example for every future young and old generation. So I trust that church is an important part of our life.

If we want to keep growing in Christ daily, so we must keep going to church every Sabbath. *Amen. Xavior Chelliah, Canada*

HOW ANTIOXIDANTS MEASURE UP

Antioxidants are a class of chemicals that quash the damage that natural oxidants can cause in the body.

Studies over the past several years have linked cellular damage from the unremitting onslaught of oxidants to many afflictions of aging: cancer, heart disease, diabetes, dementia and the development of artery-clogging plaque.

People cannot avoid oxidizing chemicals, formally called free radicals. We inhale them in polluted air, especially during heavy smog days. And the body naturally unleashes free radicals as one means of removing aging or sick cells and of killing invaders, like bacteria.

In young and healthy individuals, the body also unleashes its own antioxidants to stop free radical chain reaction from getting out of hand. But as people age, the efficiency of that internal antioxidant production system declines and the body needs help. *Toronto Star, Friday, July 22, 2004.*



Top sources of antioxidants

Foodstuffs have widely varying levels of antioxidants, as this newly published "league table" shows.

| Food | Amount | Units per serving | Food | Amount | Units per serving |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Small red beans | dry half cup | 13,727 | Red cabbage, cooked | half cup | 2,539 |
| Wild blueberries | one cup | 13,427 | Figs | half cup | 2,537 |
| Red kidney beans, dry | half cup | 13,259 | Raisins | half cup | 2,490 |
| Pinto beans, dry | half cup | 11,846 | Red potato, cooked | one | 2,294 |
| Cultivated blueberries | one cup | 9,019 | Pistachios | one ounce | 2,267 |
| Cranberries | one cup | 8,983 | Blackeye peas | half cup | 2,258 |
| Artichoke hearts | one cup | 7,904 | Medjool dates | half cup | 2,124 |
| Blackberries | one cup | 7,701 | Red grapes | one cup | 2,016 |
| Prunes | half cup | 7,291 | Yellow pepper, raw | one | 1,905 |
| Raspberries | one cup | 6,058 | Red grapefruit | half | 1,904 |
| Strawberries | one cup | 5,938 | Beets, raw | half cup | 1,886 |
| Red Delicious apple | one | 5,900 | White potato, cooked | one | 1,870 |
| Granny Smith apple | one | 5,381 | Orange pepper | one | 1,830 |
| Pecans | one ounce | 5,095 | Peach | one | 1,826 |
| Sweet cherries | one cup | 4,873 | Green grapes | one cup | 1,789 |
| Black plum | one | 4,844 | Mango | one cup slices | 1,653 |
| Russet potato, cooked | one | 4,649 | Asparagus, cooked | half cup | 1,480 |
| Black beans, dry | half cup | 4,181 | Apricots | three | 1,408 |
| Red plum | one | 4,118 | Tangerine | one | 1,361 |
| Gala apple | one | 3,903 | Yellow onion, cooked | half cup | 1,281 |
| Walnuts | one ounce | 3,846 | Almonds | one ounce | 1,265 |
| Golden Delicious apple | one | 3,685 | Pineapple | one cup, diced | 1,229 |
| Deglet Noor date | half cup | 3,467 | Red leaf lettuce | 4 outer leaves | 1,213 |
| Avocado | one | 3,344 | Toasted oatmeal squares | one cup | 1,200 |
| Red Anjou pear | one | 2,843 | Sweet potato, cooked | one | 1,195 |
| Hazelnuts | one cup | 2,739 | Radishes | one cup sliced | 1,107 |
| Broccoli raab, raw | 1/5 bunch | 2,621 | Oat bran cereal | 1 1/4 cup | 1,075 |
| Navy beans, dry | half cup | 2,573 | Red pepper, raw | one | 1,072 |
| Orange, navel | one | 2,540 | Eggplant, raw | half cup | 1,031 |

SOURCE: Ronald Prior, U.S. Department of Agriculture

TORONTO STAR GRAPHIC

NEW BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT: *Get Involved!*

In Australia, we are compiling a new health book. It will be about individual experiences with natural healing. While there are many excellent health books currently available, most provide natural remedies for specific illnesses. This new book will be from a unique perspective, based solely on your personal experiences.

If you know someone who has been ill, whether yourself, a friend or relative, and found healing by using natural remedies, we would like to include your experience in the book. Please state the illness, methods that were used and the length of time it took to complete the healing process. It should be written as an experience in a couple of paragraphs. Provide not just the illness and remedy, but the entire experience involved.

We hope to print this book in September. If you could send your experiences by the end of August it will be greatly appreciated. We will then make the book available for everyone who wants one. If you miss this printing, you may still send your experiences for inclusion in a subsequent edition. Your experience could be a help and comfort to others!

Please forward experiences to:

International Missionary Society
P.O. Box 54
Toongabbie, NSW 2146
Australia



or as an e-mail to: jerryeaton@smartchat.net.au

Thank you - we pray that the Lord will use this book to be a blessing for many people.

Wendy Eaton

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

WHEN: DECEMBER 27, 2004 to JANUARY 2, 2005.

WHERE: SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

The Australian Field would like to invite young people from around the world to attend a Youth Conference in the middle of our summer at the end of this year.

Spaces are limited in Sydney as our facilities can only accommodate approximately 60 young people. Therefore it is recommended that you reserve your space early.

Reservations must be received by September 1st, 2004.

Payments can be sent to:

International Missionary Society
P.O. Box 54,
Toongabbie, NSW 2146
Australia

For detailed information:

jerryeaton@smartchat.net.au or

markus@justinternet.com.au

or call by telephone: Tel. (+61) 2-9670-2886

We look forward to seeing as many of you as we are able to do so at the end of this year.

CANADIAN CONFERENCE

You Are Invited To Attend

In Toronto

July 30, 31 & Aug 1, 2004

For More Information Please Contact:

Timo Martin:

416-252-1197 or 416-235-0667

timom@sympatico.ca

Additional Information:

www.imssdarm-bg.org • www.ims.truepath.org



OLD-FASHIONED PARENTS



CHILDRENS CORNER

“This must be the crookedest creek in the world,” said Paul. “If it weren’t going so slow we would all be dizzy by now.” His twin brother Perry and their friend Roger hopped across the flat stones in their bare feet. They had spent all afternoon in the creek. Watching minnows and crayfish, and skipping stones made the time fly by. Occasionally a kingfisher with its “rat-a-tat” call or a muskrat bobbing its head out of the water added to their enjoyment.

“Why don’t we each grab a leaf and race it downstream?” suggested Roger.

“Ok,” said Perry. “The first one to reach that bridge way downstream wins.” Perry’s leaf found the shortest path through the stream that tumbled over and around small rapids of stones. But it became wedged against two rocks. Paul’s was caught in a backwater, so Roger’s leaf won easily. The twins demanded a rematch which Perry won.

“This really has been a fun day out here away from the city,” sighed Perry as the three kept splashing downstream. “You’re

lucky to have all this in your backyard. I’m glad our parents are letting us stay the night.”

“Yes,” said Roger. “I hear your parents are pretty strict though.”

“Old-fashioned is the word for it,” said Paul. “You’re practically the only friend we have that they approve of. They think this is still the Middle Ages and we’re all still little kids. We can’t go to any parties or anything that has dancing and loud music. We’re not supposed to talk at the supper table. They check all the books that we read and we are not permitted to talk on the telephone very long.”

“Wow, my parents aren’t nearly that bad,” said Roger.

“...Make us save all our money and take piano lessons. Sometimes we have to stay in for not having our room clean enough, can you imagine!”

“I feel lucky,” said Roger. “I don’t get bothered nearly so much.”

“You can say that again,” said Perry. “Can you imagine if we tried to grow our hair this long!” He lifted up a few of Roger’s curly locks.

“What do you suppose make your parents like that?” asked Roger.

“I don’t know,” said Perry, catching his balance after slipping on a slimy rock. “There doesn’t seem to be any way to change their minds. They say they are doing this for our own good. By the way, what time is it getting to be?”

Roger stared at his watch and held it to his ear. “Oh, great!” He moaned. “It stopped at exactly ten to six, and who knows how long ago that was!”

“You mean it’s after six?” asked Paul.

“I’ll bet it’s closer to seven. Can you believe that? We’ve been walking down this creek for almost four hours!” said Roger.

It didn’t seem possible that it had been that long since they had wandered into the creek from the ravine behind Roger’s yard. “If we’ve been gone that long,” said Paul, who wasn’t quite convinced, “that means it will be dark before we get home.”

“Oh, no! We’d better turn around and get going,” said Roger. For awhile none of them spoke as they tried to walk quickly through the water. But the current was stronger than they had thought. That, plus countless toe-stubbing from their haste, made the going much slower than they hoped.

Perry, who had a better sense of direction than the others, saw a path leading up from the left bank of the creek. “Look, that trail leads up in the direction of



your house, Roger. With the way this creek winds all over the place it could save us hours. We'd be home in plenty of time."

The others looked doubtful. "What if it ends?" asked Roger. "Or suppose the trail winds around and doesn't end up where you think it will? Then we would really be in trouble when it gets dark."

Paul agreed. "At least there's no way you can get lost following a river."

"You've got to take a chance sometime," argued Perry. But he could not convince the others, and they continued on. The more Perry thought about it, the more certain he was they should have tried the path. He could feel the shadows deepening, and the splashing water was feeling less refreshing and more chilling in the evening air. In the growing blackness they fell more than once on the unseen stones. Perry was sure his feet had lost half their skin. After what seemed like hours of getting nowhere, none of them was saying a word.

Perry had been plodding ahead without even watching where he was going. Suddenly something seemed familiar. He stopped and headed back to the left bank.

"Does this tree look familiar to anyone else?" he asked. He heard nothing but sloshing as his companions drew near.

"Sure!" cried Roger. "That's it! That's the tree we swung from for awhile before we started down the creek. We're back! Look, I've got the rope in my hands."

Paul shuddered. "Do you realize we almost went right past it?" he whispered. "We would have been in the creek all night! Probably would have caught pneumonia."

They scrambled up the steep ravine to Roger's house. Before they reached it, they knew they were in trouble. Several cars were in the driveway. The kitchen window was all lit up, displaying a roomful of worried people.

Roger's father was the only one to greet them with a laugh. When he heard their whole story, he shook his head. "So you were in the creek. You know that path you were talking about leads almost back to the house. We used to take it when I was a boy."

Mr. and Mrs. Rose were there, and they

quickly escorted the twins to the car. "I'm afraid you can't stay overnight. You've caused enough trouble as it is," said Mrs. Rose over her shoulder.

Perry and Paul stared straight ahead from the back seat. Their parents' action had taken the chills out of them. In fact, Paul's face was flushed as he spoke. "It's not fair. The one time you finally let us out of the house and you come running after us."

"You didn't handle it well," said Mr. Rose. "We were worried sick about you. Maybe you need an earlier bedtime to straighten you out."

"I hate always being treated like a baby," fumed Paul. "You know how we lost track of time? We were talking about you!" He told them what they had been discussing with Roger. His parents did not speak for a few seconds, and he saw his mother sitting tensely well forward in her seat.

"It's not easy to be a perfect parent," sighed Dad, his eyes never leaving the road. "We want to bring you up right. It's just that there are so many decisions to make. We have to do the best we can. When the right choice isn't clear to us, we fall back on what our parents did. Can you see a better way?"

"I think I know the problem," said Perry. "I've been thinking about that since we debated whether or not to take the path home tonight. We didn't really know what to do, so we ended up taking what we thought was the safest way, the one we were most sure of."

"You're right," said Mom. "That's how we often decide when we have decisions to make as parents. When the chips are down it seems better to go with what you did before."

"But look what happened to us," protested Paul. "We thought we were taking the safe way, and it was nearly the worst choice of all. Roger didn't recognize our starting point. It turned out to be different than the way we remembered it."

"If we would have taken the chance on the path and not been so scared, we would have been home on time," said Perry. "Why are you so afraid to take a chance on us?"

"Maybe that's the trouble," admitted Dad. "The old, familiar ways aren't always as we remember them, yet we act as if they

were. However you still should have been more careful about how far you were going and how long you were gone. You were irresponsible about that."

The twins just sighed in acknowledgement. Their father was right about that.

"Hasn't there been a lot of trouble in the church over the years because people have been afraid to give up old, familiar ways?" asked Paul. He was excited that they were finally discussing this with their parents. Hoping for more freedom in the future. "Weren't the Pharisees sticking to the old road when Jesus came along? They wouldn't take a chance on Him."

"Yes, Jesus came in with what they thought were new ideas," said Dad. "But don't forget He did a lot of the old too. He observed the ceremonial law as well as the Ten Commandments, and read out of the Old Testament."

"So if the old way isn't always the best, and the new way isn't either, how do you decide?" asked Perry.

"I think you understand our problem in being parents. We don't have all the answers. We certainly do a lot of praying and asking God for guidance."

"Maybe we have been holding on to safe, familiar ways with you boys a little too much," said Dad. "After all, you really are growing up. We can't keep you under our wings all the time. But I hope you have a better idea now of why we act the way we do. It's not just to be unkind and unfair. We want the best for you."

Mom turned in her seat. "We may always have a hard time breaking away from what you think are old-fashioned ways. But maybe if we all work at it, we can try to see each other's point of view and maybe we can balance each other out."

***"Honour thy father and thy mother:
that the days may be long upon the land
which the Lord thy God giveth thee."
Exodu20:12.***

We should thank Jesus for our parents. Life isn't meant to be a tug-of-war between us, is it? We don't want to always be on different sides. We need to ask Jesus for the ability to talk with each other and not at each other.

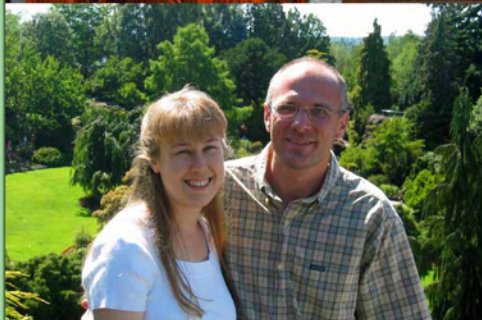
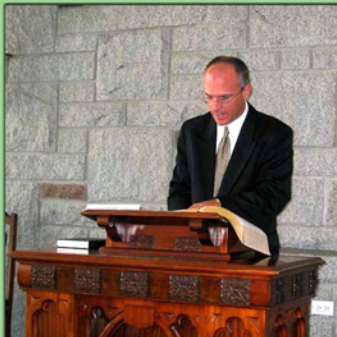
Philip &
Eveline Lammes
Sweden



Missionary Workshops
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