

The Reformation *Messenger*

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



*"Behold the Lamb of God,
which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29*

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The Reformation Messenger



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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I DESERVE THIS



Only a few people say, “I deserve this”, when trials, difficulties and losses happen to them. For this reason there is so much complaining and murmuring in the world. People do not recognize that they have been sowing seeds that now bear a harvest to them.

Many say that there is no justice in the world, which is true. If there would be justice then we all would be dead, since the wages of sin is death. But there is mercy in the world. Sinners and criminals have a good life, which they do not deserve.

Two criminals were crucified beside the cross of Jesus. They represent the two classes of people in the Christian churches. One of them said, “If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us.” Luke 23:39. Many people expect that religion will save them from the penalty and suffering that their sins have brought upon them. They do not consider that the seed they have sown now brings to them the harvest. They have no joy in their Christian experience.

The other group is represented by the other

thief on the cross. He said, “Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss.” Luke 23:40, 41. He was suffering great pain, but yet did not complain. He accepted the fact that he deserved this death penalty.

David committed a great sin when he caused the death of Uriah. Because of this he lost four of his children prematurely. God said further to David, “Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised Me, and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.” 2 Sam. 12:10.

David repented of his sin, “And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.” 2 Sam. 12: 13, 14.

David fasted and pleaded with the Lord for the child, but it was in vain; the child died. The Lord forgave David his sin, but did not remove the harvest of his evil seed he had sown.

The Lord has made a law, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Gal. 6:7.

This law applies especially to the children of God. He may not always punish the evildoers now. They will receive their punishment after the 1000 years. But His own children He does chasten and discipline now in this life. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” Rev. 3:19.

Paul writes, “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father

chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. 12:5-8.

When the Seventh-Day Adventists were the church of God, the punishments came upon them for their disobedience. They lost the Battle Creek Sanitarium and the printing house to fire. After 1914 when they were no more the church of God, they could do greater sins and had no more punishments.

The only one who has suffered and did not deserve it was Christ. He was mocked, ridiculed, even hated and finally put to death. Yet He did not complain. He was the only One who could have complained rightfully, but His love toward the sinners made Him to bear His sufferings cheerfully.

Sister White writes, "Never speak a word of complaint or faultfinding. There are churches in which the spirituality has been almost killed, because the spirit of backbiting has been allowed to enter." CG p. 551.

"Spiritual disease is the sure result of giving way to this fretting, complaining, murmuring spirit. And this disease of soul will be your own fault." Test. Vol. 5, p. 117.

"Do not encourage criticism and complaining. Let no murmur or complaints come from your lips; remember that angels hear these words." Test. Vol. 7, p. 183.

Every moment of our lives have been

planned by God for our character development. If we let Him lead us, we all will make it to heaven. But when the fiery trials come our way and we start complaining and murmuring, then the Lord will leave us alone. Our complaining does grieve the Holy Spirit to the point that He may leave us. This happened to old Israel in the wilderness. Because of their murmurings, they could not enter into the Promised Land.

Apostle Paul learned the blessing that comes with trials and persecutions. He writes, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. 12:10.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4:17.

Peter also learned the same, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 1:7.

God's plan for His children is that they would always be happy and rejoicing. Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:11.

David said, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Ps. 16:11.

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Phil. 4:4. "Rejoice evermore." 1 Thess. 5:16.

"They will show that in the path of obedience and duty there is contentment and even joy." CT p. 98.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Prov. 17:22. "Gratitude, rejoicing, benevolence, trust in God's love and care—these are health's greatest safeguard. To the Israelites they were to be the keynote of life." MH p. 281.

Doctors today have found that unhappiness and bitterness cause physical diseases, while happiness and joy work as medicine.

It is lack of faith that makes people to complain when difficulties surround them. With faith in God's promises all uncertainty will be swept away. We will trust in God's leading and protection that He will not let us perish, but only purify us by these trials.

"The apostles counted not their lives dear unto themselves, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Did repinings and complaints then reach the ear of the jailer? Oh, no! From the inner prison, voices broke the silence of midnight with songs of joy and praise to God. These disciples were cheered by a deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which they suffered.

"As the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also will count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work." Test. Vol. 3, p. 406.

If we suffer for our sins and mistakes, then let us accept it as something we deserve, and learn lessons from them. If we suffer for the truth's sake then let us rejoice and be glad for the honour that has been bestowed upon us by the Lord. **AMEN.**

Timo Martin, Canada



REPROBATE SHEPHERDS



More important than any other direction, Jesus' commission to His under shepherds, beginning with the under shepherd, the apostle Peter, is and will always be "...Feed my flock." Undoubtedly, Peter, as the under shepherd faithfully kept the charge, and as a veteran shepherd and mentor did commit the same charge given him of Christ to the shepherds to come after him instructing them, "...Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Peter 5:23.

In the literal nomadic life of arid and semi arid areas, it would be interesting to take note how the herdsmen take pain and courage of providing medical aid, water and pasture for their livestock. In more life examples, news broadcasts from the Sahara and sub Saharan regions have often told of stories of the great struggle exercised by the shepherds, before they can let go the life of the least of their animals. Jesus was acquainted with the life of the pastoralists. They were among the few chosen ones that were given the privilege of reporting to the first congregation assembled at Bethlehem about the Saviour's birth after getting the news from the angels. What was it that necessitated their endurance in the chilly hours of the night? That they may tend and lead their flock to the virgin pastures along the mountain side. This care given by the shepherds to their flock is an example of the relationship between the church leaders as shepherds and the people as their flock.

"God has repeatedly shown that persons should not be encouraged into the field without unmistakable evidence that He has called them. The Lord will not entrust the burden for His flock to unqualified individuals. Those whom God calls must be men of deep experience, tried and proved, men of sound judgment, men who will dare to reprove sin in the spirit of meekness, men who understand how to feed the flock." {1T 209}

A REVOKED COMMENDATION

In every way possible, we do expect the aforementioned similitude will match with those that bear the name of shepherds: to search for virgin pastures, provide fresh water and medical aid besides watching against predators that may endanger the flock. The address given to the shepherds has a marked variance to the address given to the shepherds of Israel. He [the Lord] talks to the shepherds of Israel through His agent[s] saying; "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe [be] to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: [but] ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up [that which was] broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them." Ezekiel 34:2-4. In so doing, God confirms to all that have the favor of being co-workers with Him declaring this neglect of duty to be, "One of the greatest sins of the shepherds of Israel." {5T P.346}

What portion is there for him who has slighted the divine call such as "...feed my flock?" There are but a few alternatives to choose from.

One can either repent of his/her wrongs and be forgiven, or be given a probation season to come to a sense of sinfulness and reconcile with God through Jesus Christ, or when every other way seems unable to arouse the dead conscience expect to hear the terrible denunciation, "I know thy works... but because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:15. All who have enlisted themselves as young members of the heavenly family have this challenge before them but even more so to the shepherds; "But I saw that the ministers did not escape the wrath of God. Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people." {Early Writings, p. 282}

"The Lord says, 'Shall I not visit for these things?' Jer. 5:9. Because they failed of fulfilling God's purpose, the children of Israel were set aside, and God's call was extended to other peoples. If these too prove unfaithful, will they not in like manner be rejected?" COL 304. Certainly! "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Jer. 3:15.

THE PATH TO REPROBATION

"Many feel that they are fitted for a work that they know scarcely anything about; and if they start to labor in a self-important manner, they will fail to receive that knowledge which they must obtain in the school of Christ. These will be doomed to struggle with many difficulties, for which they are wholly unprepared. They will ever lack experience and wisdom until they learn their great inefficiency.

"Very much has been lost to the cause by the defective labors of men who possess ability, but who have not had proper training. They have engaged in a work which they knew not how to manage, and as the result have accomplished but little. They have not done a tithe of what they could have done had they received the right discipline at the start. They seized upon a few ideas, managed to get a runway of a few discourses, and here their progress ended. They felt competent to be teachers, when they had scarcely mastered their "a b c" in the knowledge of the truth. They have been stumbling along ever since, not doing justice to themselves or to the work. They do not seem to have sufficient interest to arouse their dormant

energies, or to tax their powers to become efficient workers. They have not taken pains to form thorough and well-devised plans, and their work shows deficiency in every part." {GW 78-9}

Pertaining to the wish of becoming a shepherd, God's thought in respect to this holy office will ever remain to be: "This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 1 Timothy 3:1. How then is it possible that the work which the Lord God pronounces as "good work" turns out to be reproached? Of the many reasons that underly such a reproach, the spirit of prophecy notes that; "Many who are teachers of the truth cease to be students, digging, ever digging for truth as for hidden treasures. Their minds reach a common, low standard; but they do not seek to become men of influence,--not for the sake of selfish ambition, but for Christ's sake, that they may reveal the power of the truth upon the intellect." Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 120.

"The truths of the divine word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve Him intelligently. The great object of education is to enable us to use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as will best represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God." Ibid 45.

In missing the great object of education, we are left to tread alone for rejecting knowledge, which equally calls upon the rejection of God on us, that we will not be His priests for having forgotten the law of our God. For this reason, "The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, [but] we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if [we had] no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night." Isaiah 59: 8-10. But why should the shepherds stumble when the light is at the very noonday, shining with all its glory?

THE PATH IN REPROBATION

Wherever the cause exists, the same results will follow. He who deliberately stifles his convictions of duty because it interferes

with his inclinations will finally lose the power to distinguish between truth and error. The understanding becomes darkened, the conscience callous, the heart hardened, and the soul is separated from God. Where the message of divine truth is spurned or slighted, there the church will be enshrouded in darkness; faith and love grow cold, and estrangement and dissension enter. Church members center their interests and energies in worldly pursuits, and sinners become hardened in their impenitence. {GC 378-9}.

Precisely, Jesus in His cutting denunciations declares; "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Matthew 15:14.

It pleases Satan to have it thus. "They are Satan's faithful servants, notwithstanding they have assumed another name. Very many who profess to be shepherds have not known God. The natural heart has not been changed, and the canal mind remains at enmity with God." {EW p.274}

"The enemy's avowed determination and purpose will always remain to be what it had been -- to work from within while disguising himself to be an angel of light. He in times past used Judas to betray the only one that could reinstate the lost glory in humanity even Jesus Christ. Just like then, his determination is, "I will influence popular ministers to turn the attention of their hearers from the commandments of God. That which the Scriptures declare to be a perfect law of liberty shall be represented as a yoke of bondage. The people accept their minister's explanations of Scripture and do not investigate for themselves. Therefore, by working through the ministers, I can control the people according to my will." {TM 472}

In his cunning sophistry to supplant and mislead thoughts and ideas in the hearts of them that are called to work as the shepherds of God, thus rendering them blind and deaf to the counsels of God, he on the other hand leads the masses to fasten or rather merge their confidence on their leaders. Even when the leaders make open errors in decision[s] as in Christ's day, the enslaved souls would first get an answer to the inquiry, "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him [Christ]"? John 7:48. What does this question infer? If the

rulers/Pharisees [shepherds] had believed on Him, then they [flock/people] would also, because by example their leaders have taught them.

How possible can this way of learning/teaching be right? Dear reader, let's have a deeper insight of the following episode of Christ's resurrection. It follows that after a great earthquake; "And for fear of him [Jesus] the keepers did shake, and became as dead [men]. Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him [away] while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you." Matthew 28: 8, 11-14.

In brief, the rulers, Pharisees and the priest are telling the soldiers to tell the people that Jesus was not resurrected, but that His disciples came by night and stole Him while they slept; when in the real sense they knew every particular event that morning. How safe would the people be if they asked the question, "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him [Christ]?" John 7:48. This group was given full mandate and power to decide on behalf of the masses. How safe would this be when the said leaders/Pharisees have been blind leaders leading the blind? The calculation of Satan is very certain. He well knows that by captivating the shepherd[s], he too gets all that merge their individuality with the leaders [pastors, priests, bishops, rulers etc.]

THE PATH FROM REPROBATION

"There is need to be an elevated, uplifting power, a constant growth in the knowledge of God and the truth, on the part of one seeking the salvation of souls." [Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers p.144]. This constant growth in the knowledge of God and the truth will bid us to the grand call of the gospel by Christ when He [Christ] counsels us saying, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these 'things' shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:23.

It's vital to remark that the way forward is to obtain the additional things that our

shepherds need to proceed in righteousness. "It is those who accept the warnings and cautions given them who will walk in safe paths. Let not men yield to the burning desire to become great leaders, or to the desire independently to devise and lay plans for themselves and for the work of God. It is easy for the enemy to work through some who, having themselves need of counsel at every step, undertake the guardianship of souls without having learned the lowliness of Christ. These need counsel from the One who says, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden.'" {TM 501}

"God has placed in the church, as His appointed helpers, men of varied talents, that through the combined wisdom of many the mind of the Spirit may be met. Men who move in accordance with their own strong traits of character, refusing to yoke up with others who have had a long experience in the work of God, will become blinded by self-confidence, unable to discern between the false and the true. It is not safe for such ones to be chosen as leaders in the church; for they would follow their own judgment and plans, regardless of the judgment of their brethren." {AA 279}

God's call to all His children at the present moment beginning with the ministers and elders as it has ALWAYS been with the disciples is to exercise unity in diversity with sincerity from the heart and no reservations whatsoever. "And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1Corinthians 12:6

"In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, [disciples] differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ's object to secure. To this end He sought to bring them into unity with Himself. The burden of His labor for them is expressed in His prayer to His Father, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may know that Thou has sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." John 17:21, 23. Has this object changed to those called to the ministry in the present time? Never will it be because the Giver of this counsel never changes.

"In all the Lord's arrangements, there is nothing more beautiful than His plan of

giving to men and women a diversity of gifts. The church is His garden, adorned with a variety of trees, plants, and flowers. He does not expect the hyssop to assume the proportions of the cedar, nor the olive to reach the height of the stately palm. Many have received but a limited religious and intellectual training, but God has a work for this class to do, if they will labor in humility, trusting in Him. . . .

"Different gifts are imparted to different ones, that the workers may feel their need of one another. God bestows these gifts, and they are employed in His service, not to glorify the possessor, not to uplift man, but to uplift the world's Redeemer. They are to be used for the good of all mankind, by representing the truth, not testifying to a falsehood. . . . In every word and act, kindness and love will be revealed; and as each worker fills his appointed place faithfully, the prayer of Christ for the unity of His followers will be answered, and the world will know that these are His disciples." [Signs of the Times, Mar. 15, 1910].

"There are sinners in the ministry. They are not agonizing to enter in at the strait gate. God does not work with them, for He cannot endure the presence of sin. It is the thing that His soul hates. Even the angels that stood about His throne, whom He loved, but who kept not their first estate of loyalty, God cast out of heaven with their rebel leader. Holiness is the foundation of God's throne; sin is the opposite of holiness; sin crucified the Son of God. If men could see how hateful sin is, they would not tolerate it, nor educate themselves in it. They would reform in life and character. Secret faults would be overcome. If you are to be saints in heaven, you must first be saints upon the earth. {TM 145.1}

"There is great need that our brethren overcome secret faults. The displeasure of God, like a cloud, hangs over many of them. The churches are weak. Selfishness, uncharitableness, covetousness, envy, evil-surmising, falsehood, theft, robbery, sensuality, licentiousness, and adultery, stand registered against some who claim to believe the solemn, sacred truth for this time. How can these accursed things be cleansed out of the camp, when men who claim to be Christians are practicing them constantly? They are somewhat careful of their ways before men, but they are an

offense to God. His pure eyes see, a witness records all their sins, both open and secret; and unless they repent and confess their sins before God, unless they fall on the Rock and are broken, their sins will remain charged against them in the books of record... I tell you, my brethren and sisters, there is need of humbling your souls before God. 'Cease to do evil,' but do not stop here; 'learn to do well.' You can glorify God only by bearing fruit to His glory." {TM 146}

A LASTING DESIRE

"I am instructed to say to our ministering brethren, Let the messages that come from your lips be charged with the power of the Spirit of God. If ever there was a time when we needed the special guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is now. We need a thorough consecration. It is fully time that we gave to the world a demonstration of the power of God in our own lives and in our ministry.

"The Lord desires to see the work of proclaiming the third angel's message carried forward with increasing efficiency. As He has worked in all ages to give victories to His people, so in this age He longs to carry to a triumphant fulfillment His purposes for His church. He bids His believing saints to advance unitedly, going from strength to greater strength, from faith to increased assurance and confidence in the truth and righteousness of His cause." {Ye Shall Receive Power 246}

The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and God's servants will speak the same things. The Lord will cooperate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10)

May the Lord's grace help us perform the duties allocated to us, the lay members and the ministers alike in proportion to the talents allotted to each one of us, as members of Christ's body. *Amen.*

John Rianga Obwocha.

GENERAL CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY 2007

International Missionary Society 7th-day Adventist Church Reform Movement

July 11-15, 2007 Puebla, Mexico

With the help of the Lord, the time of the next General Conference Assembly is at hand. Believers from all over the world are awaiting this spiritual event and desire to share the blessings and experiences that the Lord has given them and their brethren in the entire world.

The General Conference Committee is pleased to announce that the public meetings of the General Conference Assembly 2007 are scheduled for Wednesday, July 11, through Sunday, July 15, 2007 in the morning. We extend a cordial invitation to our members and friends to come and participate in this worldwide General Conference. The Mexican Union, with more than 1000 members, also looks forward to welcoming all our brothers, sisters, and visitors to this special event.

Where will the conference be held?

The General Conference Assembly 2007 will be held at the Centro Vacacional IMSS Metepec, in the State of Puebla, Mexico. The conference center is located close to the city of Atlixco. In this peaceful environment, within view of the beautiful volcanoes Popocatepetl and Ixtlaciuatl, the visitors may enjoy the spiritual conference. The conference center has several hotels and restaurants, as well as swimming pools and parks, offering a good opportunity for recreation and spiritual edification.

Reservation and payment

On Wednesday, July 11, the rooms will be available after 3 p.m. During the conference, breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided each day and are included in the price of the reservation. On July 11, however, only lunch and dinner will be served. We expect that all visitors to the General Conference Assembly 2007 will make their reservations ahead of time and will send their payment. The whole conference center has been booked for the event. The Mexican brethren have offered the foreign visitors the privilege of making their reservations first. Of all the places available, 600 beds are reserved for foreign visitors and the rest of the places have already been sold to Mexican visitors. In order for foreign visitors to make their reservations, their reservation forms and payment need to arrive at the General Conference offices no later than May 25, 2007. After May 25, 2007 no additional reservations or payments can be accepted, because all remaining places will be given to Mexican visitors. Reservations without payment will be not considered. Reservations and the corresponding payments may be made only under one and the same name. If you make a reservation under one name and the payment is sent under another name—even if it is a member of the same family—we won't be able to identify your reservation and payment. For participants who come from other continents and who wish to arrive at the conference ground one or two days ahead of time, there is a possibility of making a separate reservation for these days. However, this needs to be done on a private basis with the reception of the campground. The prices will be higher than the special rates offered to the conference participants. One will need to change rooms at the beginning of the conference.

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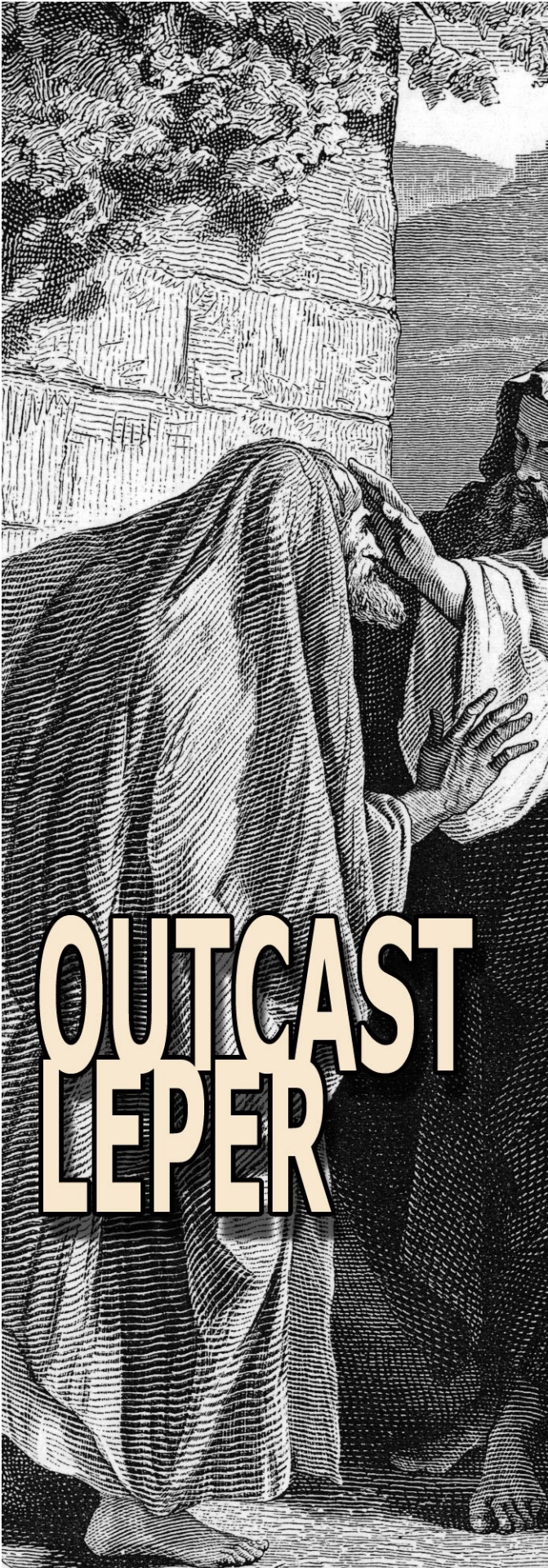
Please check the General Conference web site regularly for additional information.

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MEXICAN UNION

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OUTCAST LEPER

“Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, If You are willing, You can make me clean.” Mark 1:40

Here is the story of an unclean leper, an outcast, seeking mercy from the hand of Jesus. He obtained it! By mercy we mean compassion, sympathy; he not only received this, but was made whole again and restored with dignity to his family, society, and God.

What Is It

Leprosy is defined in: Latin (lepros) – dirty, polluted, profane; Greek (lepros) –a scale; (lepein) - to peel; Hebrew (tzaraath). It is one of the oldest known pathogens to affect mankind. Leprosy may go back as far as 600 B.C. The ancient Greeks and Romans, returning victoriously from Asia, unwittingly brought back the affliction with their plunder.

Leprosy (the polite name is Hansen’s Disease) is produced by a bacterium which affects the nerves primarily, which lead to the skin, eyes, liver, spleen, testes; causing white rashes, ulcers, numbness, peeling away of tissue –disintegration and loss of nails, fingers, toes, wrists, hands, ankles, teeth, hair, ending in blindness, and horrific disfigurement, lastly leading to death.

It is highly contagious, affecting primarily children, and those with no or very low immune systems. It is endemic, covering mostly Africa, Asia, South America, and the South of the U.S.A. Those affected are confined to institutions or colonies.

Leprosy is still a mystery today, and because of increased drug resistant bacterium, is returning at an alarming rate, along with tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and other ancient diseases referred to Biblically as “pestilences” and “plagues” (Matt 24:7; Rev 18:4). “It’s said to be contracted by eating swine flesh” (2SM417), also, through soil, droplets, armadillos, bed bugs, and mosquitoes.

Unclean!

“Away from his friends and his kindred, the leper must bear the curse of his malady. He was obliged to publish his own calamity, to rend his garments, and sound the alarm, warning all to flee from his contaminating presence. The cry, “Unclean! Unclean!” coming in mournful tones from the lonely exile, was a signal heard with fear and abhorrence.” (DA221).

Potent Words

In ancient Israel, leprosy was very common, particularly in the area of Lake Galilee, where Jesus was ministering and healing. It was an incurable, highly contagious, deadly disease and had a horrific effect on the people, creating fear at the mere mention of the word... leprosy. Much like the sound of the C words... cancer and coronary, today. Fear and stigma continues to be a major challenge for those with Hansen’s disease, despite advances in medical science. Progress sheds little light on the mystique and quiet awe of mankind. The Jews of that time considered leprosy as the “finger of God,” also called “the stroke,” and “God’s judgment” sent on account of sin. (DA262).

It's The Law!

If anyone was suspected of harboring or manifesting the sign of leprosy, they were, by ritualistic law obligated to go to the temple where the priests examined and pronounced a decision. If leprous, the victim was ostracized, separated from the family, worship, congregation, friends, man and society. Even the air they breathed was considered polluted. If anyone touched a leper, he too, was considered unclean. A leper, therefore, was to join those with a similar fate, living among the boulders, forests, wastelands, barred from the city, or even seeing his family or loved ones, holding hands again, touching, laughing, playing with his children, nieces, nephews, cousins. They were, furthermore, to keep a distance of 12 feet away from any crowds or suffer being stoned to death!

Good News

The outcast leper, however, received news of Jesus Christ, and of His healing of the sick, lame, blind, crippled, and diseased. He was determined to see Jesus. His heart began to respond in faith to the Spirit of Jesus, much like the response of Zacchaeus (Lk19:2) on hearing of the approach of Jesus. What motivated them to respond to this calling? It is that which many arise, and gird themselves to approach Jesus in a time of need... undying hope.

The leper was encouraged now to approach Jesus, and to seek mercy... to seek it aggressively.

However, "he is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon Him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."(DA222)

The Eyes Have It

What prompted the outcast leper to take such courageous steps to approach Jesus? He neither looked right nor left, pressed on

forward, closer and closer to the Saviour, the Healer of all diseases (Psalm 103:1-3). Rejected and condemned summarily by the priests, physicians, Pharisees, Samaritans; incurable, undesirable, repulsive. His desire was to seek Jesus, to seek His mercy, and grace, to be healed and restored again to society and his family. His eyes were fixed on Jesus at all times, braving the angry crowd, ignoring the threats of stoning and death; the rituals and laws for lepers, even the attempts of the disciples to stop him from seeing Jesus. All this was in vain. His goal was fixed.

Timing

He waited for the right time, the right place, and spoke the right words. A lesson for us. Jesus seeks the lost, the outcasts, the rejected. He never rejected a patient, or referred a patient out. His cures are certain and final...100% success. When healed, the flakes of skin that peeled away didn't slowly regenerate themselves into healthy tissue; but, were restored immediately to a healthy glow, much like a baby's skin, or that of Moses as he descended from Mt. Sinai. His oozing smelly ulcers disappeared, the strength in his muscles was restored again. In Greek, clean also means innocence. He was restored again to his family, dignity, and God. He no longer suffered a "living death."(DA566).

Keep A Secret

What else? Jesus told him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them. However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction."(Mk 1:44) Those that witnessed the healing of the leper also saw his return from the examining priests with the pronouncement... healed!

Spy Mission

The prejudiced priests, unaware of the miraculous healing of the leper, would do anything through their spies to destroy Jesus. The Lord, however, wanted in fact to reach the priests for Jesus' teaching was to "love your enemies," and "not evil for

evil." (Matt 5:44; 1 Peter3:9). Furthermore, "They have rewarded Me evil for good, and hatred for My love."(Ps 109:5).

Indeed, many lepers would now come at the news of the healing, and fear would arise of contaminating the people. Such news, too, would anger the priests who were looking for any opportunity to attack Jesus in His ministry. Crowds would overwhelm Jesus and His disciples at hearing of this spectacular miracle, and hinder His ministry further.

Look!

The healed leper, however, began to "proclaim it freely." It was impossible for him to be silent about the Great Healer. Jesus has warned us, however, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak."(Eccl 3:1,7) Francis of Assisi said it very wisely, "preach the gospel at all times; if necessary use words." Let's remember, "not what Jesus did for me, but what Jesus can do for you," in our testimonies.

Soul Cleansing

"The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an illustration of His work in cleansing the soul from sin. The man who came to Jesus was 'full of leprosy.' He who touched a leper became himself unclean. But, Jesus received no defilement. His touch imparted life-giving power. Thus leprosy was cleaned. Thus it is with the leprosy of sin, --deep-rooted, deadly and impossible to be cleansed by human power. (Isa. 1:5, 6) But, Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution. His presence has healing virtue for the sinner. Whoever will fall at His feet, saying in faith, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," shall hear the answer, 'I will; be thou made clean.' (Math. 8:2,3)(DA225)." When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from sin."(DA 225)

Plague Of Sin

What interest, finally, could we possibly have in an outcast leper that lived 2000 years ago? There's no history of him, no name, plagued with an "obnoxious disease"

(ML170). Covered with rags, and oozing smelly ulcers, we know, however, one thing. He had a need, and hope! Well, we have a disease worse than leprosy, cancer, or coronary disease. The plague of sin rests in your heart and makes your soul burn with fever.

Come Back!

Again, leprosy represents the plague of sin, by which the sons of Adam are diseased. (Gal 1:4; 1 John 1:9). Our problem, then, is that because we followed the ways of sin we've all become guilty; born with a fallen nature. In our own strength, we have no strength. We are in a hopeless position... a leprous position. Our own sins separate us from God. Luke writes that ten lepers were cleaned, but of the ten, "Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Only one turned back and with a loud voice glorified God." (Luke 17: 15, 17). We need to turn back!

Down

Mathew tells us the leper "came worshipping". Luke writes, "seeing Jesus he fell on his face." Mark says, the leper, "came kneeling." Well, that's the way you must come to Jesus Christ. You must come down; down from pride, down from self-righteousness, down from self-sufficiency, down from deception, down from covetousness, down from dissension, down from selfishness, down from envy, down from strife, down from unbelief, come down all the way to the feet of Jesus!

I want to persuade you to come to the Lord. Come like this leper. Come with a feeling of need. Come in humility. Come in faith. Come in submission. But, do come to Jesus. Come to Him now. Submit to His power the will to consume your sin. Only if we are willing to be purged from our sin, can we enter fellowship with Jesus (DA107,108). He is waiting just now!

We saw how the leper obtained mercy. Young and old alike, follow the example of the healed **Outcast Leper**. Jesus has saved others like you. He can save you, too. It's my prayer that you will obtain mercy today. *Amen.*

John Theodorou, USA

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Has it ever occurred to you that there are four levels of love, each one higher than the other?

First, there is the love that we harbour in our hearts for those who loved us first. Probably our parents are the pivot, so to speak, of this love. Without them we possibly would never have understood the meaning of true love. It was their unselfish devotion by day and by night, through joys and sorrows, that taught us how to respond to love.

“This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.” John 15:12.

Next, there is the love we feel toward those persons who are lovable. This group includes our friends—all the people who appeal to our intellect and our tastes. Some of us would consider many as belonging to this group. Others may tend to be exclusive and allow only a select few to enter the portals of this second level of love—the level of kindred souls.

“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16.

But then we must move to a higher level—and that is love for “the least” of them.

This is an idealistic yet practical love, and it reaches all who have a need. It is love for those who are hungry, thirsty, and in want of spiritual help. There is no superficial stardom connected with loving on this higher level, for it is not extended with self-glory as a goal. Its only reward comes from knowing that you are a part of the gospel commission.

There is one more-exalted love. Few of us have grown enough to give of this rare and glorious love. Such love found perfect fulfillment on a cross at Calvary. It is love towards our enemies.

People who have given up on love probably agree with the words to the song: Don’t put your faith in love, my son, my father said to me. I fear you’ll find that love is like the lovely lemon tree. Lemon tree very pretty and the lemon flower is sweet, but the fruit of the poor lemon is impossible to eat.”

Many people feel that way. “Love is bitter,” they say, because they have been used or abused. But there is a love that is sweet: “God is love.”

The world wants to turn John’s phrase around. “Love is God,” they say, and seek love as the highest good. But John did not say, that “love is God.”

“God is love,” he said. The author, Frederick Buechner wrote, “To say that love is God is romantic idealism. To say that God is love is either the last straw or the ultimate truth.”

The last straw? Yes, for some it is. They have looked for love in all the wrong places and have no other place to turn. But when they give themselves to God, as He is made real and personal in Jesus, they find the real love they have been looking for all their lives.

God is not indifference, abandonment, and abuse, my friend; God is love.

The life of Jesus is our supreme example of this love. He loved all classes of men. The tired, the lonely, the depraved—but, most blessed of all, He loved even His enemies. He regarded them as brothers, and His wounded heart ached when He saw them submitting to evil. He was crucified that they, too, might be saved. Friend, this love is a healing stream for all nations in these last days. Are you and I in it? *Amen*

Xavier Chelliah, Canada



PREACH THE WORD – BUT HOW?

When we eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood, the element of eternal life will be found in the ministry. There will not be a fund of stale, oft-repeated ideas. The tame, dull sermonizing will cease. The old truths will be presented, but they will be seen in a new light. **There will be a new perception of truth, a clearness and a power that all will discern.** Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry will, if susceptible to the Holy Spirit's influence, feel the energizing power of a new life. The fire of God's love will be kindled within them. Their perceptive faculties will be quickened to discern the beauty and majesty of truth. {COL 130.4}

The faithful householder represents what every teacher of the children and youth should be. If he makes the word of God his treasure, he will continually bring forth new beauty and new truth. When the teacher will rely upon God in prayer, the Spirit of Christ will come upon him, and God will work through him by the Holy Spirit upon the minds of others. The Spirit fills the mind and heart with sweet hope and courage and Bible imagery, and all this will be communicated to the youth under his instruction. {COL 131.1}

The springs of heavenly peace and joy, unsealed in the soul of the teacher by the words of Inspiration, will become a mighty river of influence to bless all who connect with him. The Bible will not become a tiresome book to the student. Under a wise instructor the word will become more and more desirable. It will be as the bread of life, and will never grow old. Its freshness and beauty will attract and charm the children and youth. It is like the sun shining upon the earth, perpetually imparting brightness and warmth, yet never exhausted. {COL 132.1}

God's holy, educating Spirit is in His word. A light, a new and precious light, shines forth from every page. Truth is there revealed, and words and sentences are made bright and appropriate for the occasion, as the voice of God speaking to the soul. {COL 132.2}

The Holy Spirit loves to address the youth, and to discover to them the treasures and beauties of God's word. The promises spoken by the great Teacher will captivate the senses and animate the soul with spiritual power that is divine. There will grow in the fruitful mind a familiarity with divine things that will be as a barricade against temptation. {COL 132.3}

The words of truth will grow in importance, and assume a breadth and fullness of meaning of which we have never dreamed. The beauty and riches of the word have a transforming influence on mind and character. The light of heavenly love will fall upon the heart as an inspiration. {COL 132.4}

The appreciation of the Bible grows with its study. Whichever way the student may turn, he will find displayed the infinite wisdom and love of God. {COL 132.5}

The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended. Truths vast and profound are shadowed forth in its rites and symbols. The gospel is the key that unlocks its mysteries. Through a knowledge of the plan of redemption, its truths are opened to the understanding. Far more than we do, it is our privilege to understand these wonderful themes. We are to comprehend the deep things of God. Angels desire

to look into the truths that are revealed to the people who with contrite hearts are searching the word of God, and praying for greater lengths and breadths and depths and heights of the knowledge which He alone can give. {COL 133.1}

As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. **The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand.** Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days, and He says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Rev. 1:3. {COL 133.2}

"This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. Why is it that we do not realize the value of this knowledge? Why are not these glorious truths glowing in our hearts, trembling upon our lips, and pervading our whole being? {COL 133.3}

In giving us His word, God has put us in possession of every truth essential for our salvation. Thousands have drawn water from these wells of life, yet there is no diminishing of the supply. Thousands have set the Lord before them, and by beholding have been changed into the same image. Their spirit burns within them as they speak of His character, telling what Christ is to them, and what they are to Christ. But these searchers have not exhausted these grand and holy themes. Thousands more may engage in the work of searching out the mysteries of salvation. As the life of Christ and the character of His mission are dwelt upon, rays of light will shine forth more distinctly at every attempt to discover truth. Each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The subject is inexhaustible. The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice and mediatorial work, will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last; and looking to heaven with its unnumbered years he will exclaim, "Great is the mystery of godliness." {COL 133.4}

In eternity we shall learn that which, had we

received the enlightenment it was possible to obtain here, would have opened our understanding. The themes of redemption will employ the hearts and minds and tongues of the redeemed through the everlasting ages. They will understand the truths which Christ longed to open to His disciples, but which they did not have faith to grasp. Forever and forever new views of the perfection and glory of Christ will appear. **Through endless ages will the faithful Householder bring forth from His treasure things new and old.** {COL 134.1}

As Jesus taught the people, *He made His lessons interesting and held the attention of His hearers by frequent illustrations* from the scenes of nature about them. The people had come together while it was yet morning. The glorious sun, climbing higher and higher in the blue sky, was chasing away the shadows that lurked in the valleys and among the narrow defiles of the mountains. The glory of the eastern heavens had not yet faded out. The sunlight flooded the land with its splendor; the placid surface of the lake reflected the golden light and mirrored the rosy clouds of morning. Every bud and flower and leafy spray glistened with dewdrops. Nature smiled under the benediction of a new day, and the birds sang sweetly among the trees. The Saviour looked upon the company before Him, and then to the rising sun, and said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." As the sun goes forth on its errand of love, dispelling the shades of night and awakening the world to life, so the followers of Christ are to go forth on their mission, diffusing the light of heaven upon those who are in the darkness of error and sin. {MB 38.2}

With the growing contempt for God's law there is an increasing distaste for religion, an increase of pride, love of pleasure, disobedience to parents, and self-indulgence; and thoughtful minds everywhere are anxiously inquiring, What can be done to correct these alarming evils? The answer is found in Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Preach the word." In the Bible are found the only safe principles of action. It is a transcript of the will of God, an expression of divine wisdom. It opens to man's understanding the great problems of life, and to all who heed its precepts it will prove an unerring guide, keeping them from wasting their lives in misdirected

effort. {AA 506.1}

God has made known His will, and it is folly for man to question that which has gone out of His lips. After Infinite Wisdom has spoken, there can be no doubtful questions for man to settle, no wavering possibilities for him to adjust. All that is required of him is a frank, earnest concurrence in the expressed will of God. Obedience is the highest dictate of reason as well as of conscience. {AA 506.2}

Paul continued his charge: "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Paul was about to finish his course, and he desired Timothy to take his place, guarding the church from the fables and heresies by which the enemy, in various ways, would endeavor to lead them from the simplicity of the gospel. He admonished him to shun all temporal pursuits and entanglements that would prevent him from giving himself wholly to his work for God; to endure with cheerfulness the opposition, reproach, and persecution to which his faithfulness would expose him; to make full proof of his ministry by employing every means within his reach of doing good to those for whom Christ died. {AA 506.3}

Paul's life was an exemplification of the truths he taught, and herein lay his power. His heart was filled with a deep, abiding sense of his responsibility, and he labored in close communion with Him who is the fountain of justice, mercy, and truth. **He clung to the cross of Christ as his only guarantee of success.** The love of the Saviour was the undying motive that upheld him in his conflicts with self and in his struggles against evil as in the service of Christ he pressed forward against the unfriendliness of the world and the opposition of his enemies. {AA 507.1}

What the church needs in these days of peril is an army of workers who, like Paul, have educated themselves for usefulness, who have a deep experience in the things of God, and who are filled with earnestness and zeal. Sanctified, self-sacrificing men are needed; men who will not shun trial and responsibility; men who are brave and true; men in whose hearts Christ is formed "the hope of glory," and who with lips touched with holy fire will "preach the word." For want of such workers the cause of God languishes, and fatal errors, like a

deadly poison, taint the morals and blight the hopes of a large part of the human race. {AA 507.2}

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8. {RC 130.1}

It is our privilege to preach the Word in the demonstration of the Spirit. It is the privilege of every soul to exercise faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But pure spiritual life comes only as the soul surrenders itself to the will of God through Christ, the reconciling Saviour. It is our privilege to be worked by the Holy Spirit. Through exercise of faith we are brought into communion with Christ Jesus, for Christ dwells in the hearts of all who are meek and lowly. Theirs is a faith that works by love and purifies the soul, a faith that brings peace to the heart, and leads in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice. {RC 130.2}

The promise is that if we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know that "his going forth is prepared as the morning." It is essential that we have daily the converting grace of God in the heart, that all our words and deeds may give evidence that we are in submission to the mind and will of God. In doing with meekness and humility our appointed service, we are to reveal the converting power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Then we become the Lord's agencies to do His work. {RC 130.3}

With humility and meekness and yet with great earnestness we are to render our service to God.

I am charged to keep ever before our people--ministers of the gospel, and all who claim to be giving the light of truth to the world--the danger of marring the sacredness of God's work by allowing the mind to consent to a cheap interpretation of the way that God desires His work to be done. I have had special instruction given me regarding bringing human plans and devisings into the work of making known to the world the truth for this time. {2SM 28.1}

Again and again in past years I have been bidden to speak in protest against the fanciful and forbidden schemes that have

been presented by one and another. My message has ever been, **Preach the Word in simplicity and all humility; present clear, unadulterated truth to the people.** Open no door to fanatical movements, for the influence of these is to bring confusion of mind and discouragement and lack of faith to God's people... {2SM 28.2}

We are not surprised to find that Satan will work today as he has worked in the past. We must live by faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God... Boasting claims of righteousness and noisy demonstrations are calculated to lead to a fanatical experience that will confuse many minds. If such things are encouraged, a wave of fanaticism will come into our ranks that will be detrimental to the work of God, and that will sweep away many souls in a dangerous delusion. These things are designed by Satan to deceive, if possible, the very elect. {TDG 359.1}

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Let there be no oddities or eccentricities of movement on the part of those who speak the Word of truth, for such things will weaken the impression that should be made by the Word. We must be guarded, for Satan is determined, if possible, to intermingle with religious services his evil influence. Let there be no theatrical display, for this will not help to strengthen belief in the Word of God. Rather it will divert attention to the human instrument... {TDG 359.3}

The commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world. The Lord calls for pastors, teachers, and evangelists. From

door to door His servants are to proclaim the message of salvation. To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of pardon through Christ are to be carried. Not with tame, lifeless utterances is the message to be given, but with clear, decided, stirring utterances. Hundreds are waiting for the warning to escape for their lives. The world needs to see in Christians an evidence of the power of Christianity. Not merely in a few places, but throughout the world, messages of mercy are needed.--Gospel Workers, p. 29. {ChS 23.3}

The Bible is the storehouse of the unsearchable riches of God. But those who have a knowledge of the truth do not understand it as fully as they might. They do not bring the love of Christ into the heart and life. The student of the Word finds himself bending over a fountain of living water. The church needs to drink deeply of the spirituality of the Word. Their service to God needs to be very different from the tame, lifeless, emotionless religious experience that makes many believers but little different from those who believe not. {OHC 348.3}

Preach Realities of the Message.--On a certain occasion, when Betterton, the celebrated actor, was dining with Dr. Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop said to him, "Pray, Mr. Betterton, tell me why it is that you actors affect your audiences so powerfully by speaking of things imaginary." "My lord," replied Betterton, "with due submission to Your Grace, permit me to say that the reason is plain; it all lies in the power of enthusiasm. We on the stage speak of things imaginary as if they were real; and you in the pulpit speak of things real as if they were imaginary."--Counsels to Teachers, p. 255. (1913) {Ev 179.1}

If we work to create an excitement of feeling, we shall have all we want, and more than we can possibly know how to manage. Calmly and clearly "Preach the Word." We must not regard it as our work to create an excitement. The Holy Spirit of God alone can create a healthy enthusiasm. Let God work, and let the human agent walk softly before Him, watching, waiting, praying, looking unto Jesus every moment, led and controlled by the precious Spirit, which is light and life.--2SM 16, 17 (1894). {LDE 93.1}

PREACH THE WORD – BUT WHAT?

Paul's Experience

We would do well to study carefully the first and second chapters of 1 Corinthians. "We preach Christ crucified," the apostle declared, "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise

men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that,

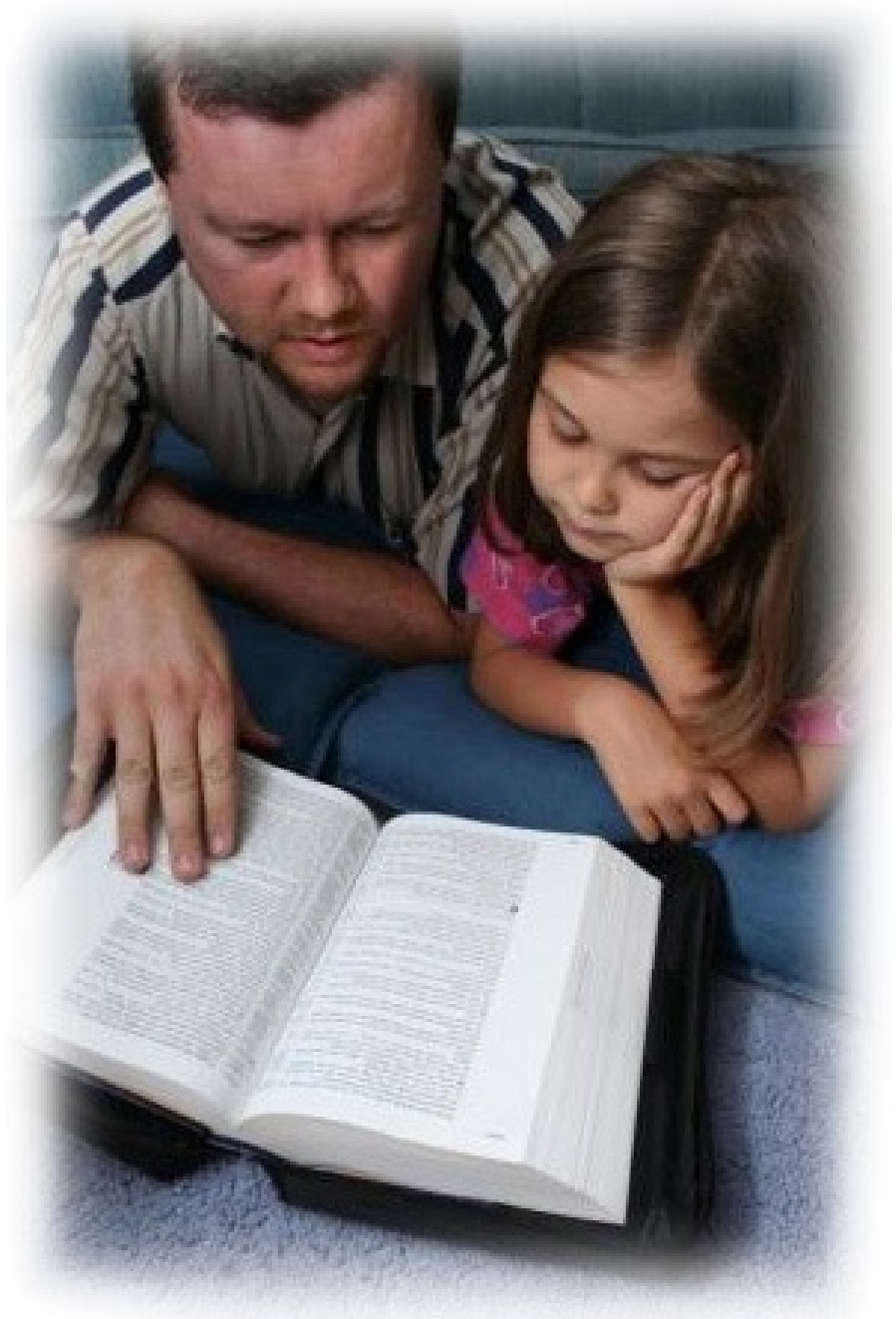
Formal Discourses.--Some ministers, in the preparation of their discourses, arrange every detail with such exactness that they give the Lord no room to lead their minds. Every point is fixed, stereotyped, as it were, and they seem unable to depart from the plan marked out. This is a grave error, and if followed, will cause ministers to become narrow-minded, and will leave them as destitute of spiritual life and energy as were the hills of Gilboa of dew and rain. {GW 165.1}

When a minister feels that he cannot vary from a set discourse, the effect is little better than that produced by reading a sermon. Tame, formal discourses have in them very little of the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit; and the habit of preaching such discourses will effectually destroy a minister's usefulness and ability. {GW 165.2}

God would have His workmen wholly dependent upon Him. They must listen to hear what saith the Lord, asking, What is Thy word for the people? Their hearts should be open, so that God may impress their minds, and then they will be able to give the people truth fresh from heaven. The Holy Spirit will give them ideas adapted to meet the needs of those present.

Voice in Sermon Delivery.--Preach short, govern your voice, [SEE ALSO PP. 665-670, "THE VOICE OF THE GOSPEL WORKER."] put all the pathos and melody into it you can, and this terrible exhaustion that is liable to come through long, protracted preaching will be avoided... {Ev 183.3}

Much of the effect of discourses is lost because of the manner in which they are delivered. The speaker frequently forgets that he is God's messenger, and that Christ and angels are in his audience as listeners. His voice should not be raised to a high key, shouting out the truth as through a trumpet; for this is more nervous power than the calm spirit and power of the Holy Ghost. **Jesus, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, was calm, earnest, and impressive in His discourses.** He is our example in all things.--Letter 47, 1886. {Ev 183.4}



according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” The human being who undertakes to become wisdom for another will find himself coming short. {TM 481.2}

“I was with you,” Paul continues, “in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” {TM 482.1}

In the next words the apostle brings to view the true source of wisdom for the believer: “God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God... Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” {TM 482.2}

These words mean very much to the soul that is trying to run the race set before him in the gospel. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.” {TM 483.1}

The gospel minister should preach the health principles, for these have been given of God as among the means needed to prepare a people perfect in character. Therefore, health principles have been given to us that as a people we might be prepared in both mind and body to receive the fullness of God’s blessing. The medical missionary work has its place and part in this closing gospel work. {CME 43.2}

The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become laborers together with God.-- Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 82. {ChS 69.4}

Ministers, preach the truths that will lead to personal labor for those who are out of Christ. Encourage personal effort in every possible way.--Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 124. {ChS 69.5}

Let ministers teach church members that in order to grow in spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon them,—the burden of leading souls into the truth. Those who are not fulfilling their responsibility should be visited, prayed with, labored for. Do not lead people to depend upon you as ministers; teach them rather that they are to use their talents in giving the truth to those around them. In thus working they will have the co-operation of heavenly angels, and will obtain an experience that will increase their faith, and give them a strong hold on God.-- Gospel Workers, p. 200. {ChS 69.6}

Preach Testing Truths.--If we allow the mind to take its own course, there will be countless points of difference which may be debated by men who make Christ their hope, and who love the truth in sincerity, and yet who hold opposite opinions upon subjects that are not of real importance. These unsettled questions should not be brought to the front, and urged publicly, but should, if held by any, be done quietly and without controversy... {Ev 183.1}

A noble, devoted, spiritual worker will see in the great testing truths that constitute the solemn message to be given to the world, sufficient reason for keeping all minor differences concealed, rather than to bring them forth to become subjects of contention. **Let the mind dwell upon the great work of redemption, the soon coming of Christ, and the commandments of God; and it will be found that there is enough food for thought in these subjects to take up the entire attention.** --Review and Herald, Sept. 11, 1888. {Ev 183.2}

The Spirit of Controversy.--Do not cherish a spirit of controversy. Little good is accomplished by denunciatory speeches. The surest way to destroy false doctrine is to preach the truth. Keep to the affirmative. Let the precious truths of the gospel kill the force of evil. Show a tender, pitiful spirit toward the erring. Come close to hearts.-- Letter 190, 1902. {Ev 304.1}

A familiarity with the truths of the Scripture will give the teacher of truth qualifications that will make him a representative of Christ. The spirit of the Saviour’s teaching will give force and directness to his instruction and to his prayers. His will not be a narrow, lifeless testimony; he will not preach over and over the same set discourses; for his mind will be open to the constant illumination of the Holy Spirit. {GW 252.2}

Ministers, preach the truths that will lead to personal labor for those who are out of Christ. Encourage personal effort in every possible way. **Remember that a minister’s work does not consist merely in preaching. He is to visit families in their homes, to pray with them, and to open to them the Scriptures. He who does faithful work outside of the pulpit will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labors to the desk.** Let our ministers carry their load of responsibility with fear and trembling, looking to the Lord for wisdom and asking constantly for His grace. Let them make Jesus their pattern, diligently studying His life and bringing into the daily practice the principles that actuated Him in His service while upon the earth.

Compiled by Jerry Eaton, Canada

SABBATH OBSERVANCE



Part 2

TWO KINDS OF WORSHIP

God gave two kinds of worship to mankind in Eden. One was before sin, and other was after sin. Before sin our first parent worshipped the Lord on the seventh-day Sabbath with the heavenly angels. The Lord says, "...Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13

After man committed sin, it was the will of God that all people must worship God continuously as it was before sin. We must observe the Holy Sabbath to preserve our holy relationship with God, to gain sanctification and to receive blessings from the heavenly Father. Also the practice of offering blood for redemption from sin continued until Jesus Christ shed His blood for mankind on Calvary's cross.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1 God created everything in this world in six days. "For He spake and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Psalms 33: 9. God spoke and it was done. After He finished the creation, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen 1:31, "And on the seventh day God ended His work, which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Genesis 2:2, 3

Seventh day Sabbath

Man's situation after sin entered into the world was revealed to him by God. He instructed man that he must work; He taught them how to face their problems and how to earn their daily bread. For man, who was to work physically and mentally, needed to rest; they learned that the aim of God was to establish a holy Sabbath day, the day of rest.

Before sin entered the world, what was the condition of man? "This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. While they lived in obedience to God, this circle of light enshrouded them. Although every thing God had made was in the perfection of beauty, and there seemed nothing wanting upon the earth, which God had created to make Adam and Eve happy, yet He manifested His great love to them by planting a garden especially for them. A portion of their time was to be occupied in the happy employment of dressing the garden, and a portion in receiving the visits of angels, listening to their instruction, and in happy meditation. Their labor was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. This beautiful garden was to be their home, their special residence." SP, vol.1, p.25

"...The lion and the lamb sported together peacefully and harmlessly around them, or slumbered at their feet. Birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers, and about Adam and Eve while their mellow-toned music echoed among the trees in sweet accord to the praises of their Creator." SP, vol.1, p.26.

Happiness forever; this everlasting happiness was given by the loving Father of heaven. This was given to man by God as the wonderful holy Sabbath day.

The week consisting of seven days was established by God in Eden.

The sun, moon and stars were “to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years.” Genesis 1:14. The blessings of the observance of the holy Sabbath is for man to communicate with God. Also, by its observance, man is privileged to enter into a physical rest and for mental happiness. “And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:3 “But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.” Exodus. 20:10 The Holy Sabbath day must be respected above all other days. “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” Genesis. 2:3. This denotes the Sabbath day as blessed by God Himself in a special way.

For example, take seven glasses full of water. Put fruit and sugar in only one of the glasses of water. First drink the glass of water with fruit and sugar, afterwards drink each of the rest of the glasses of water. The rest of the glasses of water will taste sweet because of the one glass of water that contained fruit and sugar. The other glasses aren't tasty as the first glass because on their own they are without taste. We can compare this to the special majesty of the Holy Sabbath day compared to the other days of the weekly cycle. We can call this special day as the especially tasteful day, blended with the sweetness of blessings and sanctification, a day of fruit.

So, “God rested on the seventh day from all His works. For he who has entered His rest has Himself also ceased from His works as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:4,10. Here we can come to the conclusion, in light of all the above, man must follow the same foot steps of God firmly without turning to the right or to the left, as pointed out by God himself. Revelation 1:10; Isaiah 58:13. This was the pattern of worship God intended, to worship Him on the Sabbath day.

Bloodshed Sacrificial Offerings

This system of sacrifices involving the shedding of blood is preached by almost all religions. But the origin of this subject is unknown to most of the believers of these religions. At the same time we can find proof from the Holy Bible. The Bible tells

us when these sacrifices started, what was their purpose, what resulted from them, how long they were to remain and when these sacrifices would cease.

Because man was created by God as perfect, man did not know evil or sorrow. Because of this there was no death, nor sorrow. Man was happy, yet sin entered into the world. “It was not the will of God that this sinless pair should have any knowledge of evil. He had freely given them the good but withheld the evil.” SP, vol.1, p.37

Had man heard and obeyed the commandments of God and His instruction for the future benefit of man, he could have experienced everlasting life. Instead of doing this, man heeded the cheating words of Satan, who is a deceiver and murderer, and obeyed him. Man fell into sin. And the result was death, sorrow, unhappiness and all other evils that we see and experience in this world.

God told man that if he did not listen to God, and disobeyed Him and His commandments, the result would be death. The whole universe stretched out in a solemn silence as man fell into sin. Why? For they were waiting anxiously, looking for the result that would follow the disobedience of the commandments of God.

The Soul Who Sins Shall Die

There is a way is opened by God for all who have fallen into sin. “...without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22. “For the life of the flesh is in the blood.” Leviticus 17:11 “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4.

The bitter experience of death and sorrow entered into this world to mankind because of the disobedience of our foreparents, Adam and Eve in Eden. At this time, Jesus, the only begotten Son of God approached the presence of God.

Jesus stood before God and pleaded with His Father that the blood of animals is not equal to His own blood in redeeming man from sin. He was ready to go and offer His own blood for mankind.

“The news of man's fall spread through heaven —every harp was hushed. The angels cast their crowns from their heads in sorrow. All heaven was in agitation. The

angels were grieved at the base ingratitude of man, in return for the rich bounties God had provided. A council was held to decide what must be done with the guilty pair.” SP, vol.1, p.42

“...He had been pleading with His Father and had offered to give His life a ransom and take the sentence himself that man might find pardon.” SP, vol.1, p.45

When anyone committed sin, he must bring an sacrificial offering before God for redemption from sin. This was the instruction given to him by God and it was to continue until the death of Jesus Christ for mankind. Jesus Christ is, “the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. The act of sacrificing animal was dreadfully cruel. It made man aware of the seriousness of needing a sacrifice for sin and to decide, “I shall never commit sin in my life hereafter. Man sacrificed animals without knowing the reason for the sacrifice. This animal offering did not set man free from sin, because without the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ there is no redemption for mankind.

When Adam, according to God's special directions made an offering for sin, it was to him a most painful ceremony. His hand must be raised to take a life, which God alone could give, and make an offering for sin. It was the first time he had witnessed death. As he looked upon the bleeding victim writhing in the agonies of death, he was to look forward by faith to the Son of God, whom the victim prefigured, who was to die as man's sacrifice.

This ceremonial offering, ordained of God, was to be a perpetual reminder to Adam of his guilt, and also a penitential acknowledgement of his sin. This act of taking life gave Adam a deeper and more perfect sense of his transgression, which nothing less than the death of God's dear Son could expiate. He marveled at the infinite goodness and matchless love, which would give such a ransom to save the guilty. As Adam was slaying the innocent victim, it seemed to him that he was shedding the blood of the Son of God by his own hand.” S.P, Vol. 1, p.53

Origin & Close Of Sacrificial Offerings

Since sin entered into this world, the system of animal sacrifices for the redemption of

man from sin was given by God to man in Eden. From the time of Adam to the age of Jesus Christ, this animal sacrificial system of offerings were followed by our forefathers, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, people of Israel, Judges, kings and prophets and all for approximately 4000 years.

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Hebrews 9:12-14

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” Hebrews 10: 4-12.

Redemption Only By Jesus' Blood

Even then there was no redemption experienced by man from sin. These sacrificial offerings of animals continued up until the death of Jesus Christ. Those who were offering the animal sacrifices were expecting the coming of Christ, to offer Himself as a sacrificial offering, His blood providing true redemption for man. According to the expectation of all the sinners, Jesus Christ came to this world for man. He suffered much torture, was cruelly crucified on Cavalry, He shed His blood,

died was buried and then was resurrected victoriously. Hereafter there is no offering necessary for the redemption of man; and all the sacrificial offerings were finished with the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ “Messiah is the Jesus Christ” John 1:14 “Messiah shall be cut off... And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the oblation to cease...” Daniel 9:26, 27 “Who needeth not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s, for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” Hebrew 7:27 “Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.” Hebrew 10:18 So, while we feel that we are sinners, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9. “Nor is there salvation in any other...” Acts 4:12 We must remember to keep these thoughts in our mind.

For example suppose a student unexpectedly fell and was wounded on the way to school. He would need to be taken to hospital to have his wounds dressed; this must be done until his wounds are healed. Then treatment is no longer necessary. But, he must still attend school until he completes his educational course of studies. Just like this wounded student, it is an example for the sinner to worship the Lord until he is healed of his sins. The healing of the wound is an analogy of the need for sacrificial offerings until the death of Jesus Christ. So, also the Sabbath day observance too will be continued up until one’s last breath.

Through the Sabbath worship human beings can increase their great relationship with God; the Sabbath also binds them to God. “Let none deceive themselves with the thought that God, in his great love and mercy, will yet save even the rejecters of His grace.” SC p.20 “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:17 **AMEN.**

S. Raj Israel

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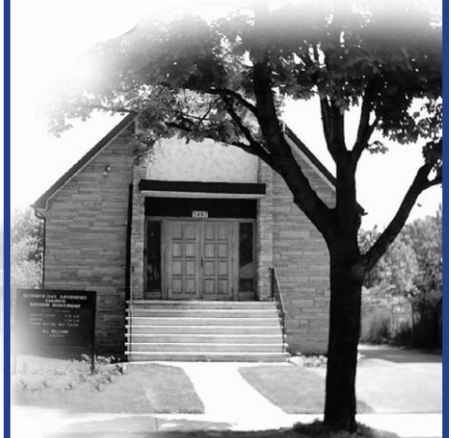
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HAVE A BLESSED SABBATH... IN ETERNITY!

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these [is] charity.” 1 Corinthians 13:13.

Every Sabbath we gather together after a week of hard work in order to celebrate the day of our Lord. What brings us to these meetings, to church service? A habit? Yes, the same habit Jesus had, as we read in Luke 4:16. *“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”* But this custom is based on something very important, namely on the three virtues we read before: **faith, hope** and **love** (in the original Greek version).

We come together because we **believe** in God’s grace and mercy and since we have accepted the unfathomable sacrifice done for us on Golgotha, we **hope** that our Lord is coming soon to take us before the throne of our Father to join our heavenly family as members of God’s kingdom. These, faith and hope fill our hearts with gratitude and **love**, and as we read, *“the greatest is love”*.

In 1 John 5:3, we read, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”* Therefore, we express our love to God by keeping His commandments and the Sabbath is not only one of these, but it is the seal of God.

Once, the Pharisees came to Jesus and asked Him, *“Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”* Matthew 22:36-39.

It is interesting that Jesus does not mention any of the Ten Commandments as written in the Decalogue, but seems to be speaking about a completely different thing. In other words, He says the same thing we read in 1 Corinthians: *“The greatest of these is love.”*

But, it is the last part of His answer that makes it clear that He is actually speaking about God’s law which He presents as the expression of our love to Him and our neighbour: *“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”* Matthew 22:40.

In the Sermon of the Mount, He makes it very clear that He did not come to ban God’s law. *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”* Matthew 5:17, 18.

The Pharisees did not expect such an answer. What did they actually expect? Their question was, *“Master, “which [is] the great commandment in the law?”* and this question was asked by *“one of them, [which was] a lawyer”*, in order to tempt Him, as we read in verse 35.

We know that the Pharisees were liars and murderers and were always trying to catch Jesus at fault so as to accuse and condemn Him. Actually, they always found Him guilty of not keeping the Sabbath according to their prescriptions. Therefore, Jesus gave this answer and told them that it is love that counts; keeping the Sabbath without love is just hypocrisy.

If we look at the Ten Commandments in the light of eternity, we see that the only commandment that will actually remain forever is the Sabbath day. All the other ones will disappear, just like faith and hope because we shall be like angels and will have been sanctified to be able to stand in the presence of the Holy God. In a new heart there is no adultery, lying, murder, blasphemy etc. Nobody will enter the kingdom of heaven with an old stony heart like the one Jesus describes in Matthew 15:19, *“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies,”* but with a heart that has been received as a gift

and reward for faith.

In Isaiah 66:23, we read, *“And it shall come to pass, [that] from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.”* We can come to the conclusion that in the same way that today we practice faith, hope and love, but *“love is the greatest”* and will remain in eternity, so is the Sabbath, God’s seal and our visa to heaven at the time of the end.

Spiritually, the Sabbath is for the children of God who have the law written in their heart, the greatest demonstration of love toward their Creator because it is the conscientious and grateful acknowledgement that they are the handwork of an almighty, loving and merciful God and they depend completely on Him.

Isaiah writes, *“I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, [and] the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, ... according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.”* (Isaiah 63:7).

Let us do this every day, every Sabbath and we shall grow in faithfulness and love.

May the Lord help us to understand that keeping the Sabbath day **holy** is the utmost expression of our love toward Him. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti



HEALTH MATTERS: WHOLE GRAINS

Grains have been the “staff of life” for thousands of years, serving as a vital food source for humans. Until the last century grains were commonly eaten as whole grains. Grains are an important source of carbohydrates. Carbohydrates supply energy to the body in the form of glucose, which is the only energy source for red blood cells and the preferred energy source for the brain and central nervous system. Grains contain carbohydrate primarily in the form of starches and some fibre. Dietary guidelines recommend 130 grams of carbohydrates a day, based on the minimum amount required to provide the brain with an adequate supply of glucose.

Advances in the milling processing of grains allowed large scale separation and removal of parts of the grain. This was known as refined flour, which became popular because it produced baked goods with a softer texture and extended freshness. This refining process removed a large amount of the nutrients that were present in the whole grain.

Grains are the seeds of plants belonging to the grass family. All grains start life as whole grains. In their natural state growing in the fields, whole grains are the entire seed of a plant. This seed is made up of three key parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm.

The bran is the multi-layered outer skin of the kernel, and is tough enough to protect the other two parts of the kernel from assaults by sunlight, pests, water, and disease. It contains important antioxidants, B vitamins, and fibre.

The germ is the embryo, which, if fertilized

by pollen, will sprout into a new plant. It contains many B vitamins, some protein, minerals, and healthy fats.

The endosperm is the germ’s food supply, which provides essential energy to the young plant so it can send roots down for water and nutrients, and send sprouts up for sunlight’s photosynthesizing power. The endosperm is by far the largest portion of the kernel. It contains starchy carbohydrates, proteins, and small amounts of vitamins and minerals.

Whole grains or foods that are made from them contain all three parts of the kernel. Most of the health-promoting substances are found in the germ and bran of a grain kernel and include resistant starch, oligosaccharides, lignans, phytosterols, phytic acid, tannins, lipids, and antioxidants. Refining normally removes the bran and the germ, leaving only the endosperm. Without the bran and the germ, about 25% of a grain’s protein is lost, along with at least seventeen key nutrients, including fibre, B vitamins, vitamin E, trace minerals, unsaturated fat, and about 75% of the phytochemicals. Phytochemicals are substances in plant-based foods with physiologically active components that have functional health benefits.

Today, foods made with whole grains are recognized as important sources of nutrients. Compared with refined grains, whole grains are healthier, provide more protein, more fibre, and many important vitamins and minerals. If the grain has been processed, i.e. cracked, crushed, rolled, and/or cooked, for a food product to be called a whole grain, it should deliver the same rich balance of nutrients that are

found in the original grain seed.

The following foods, when consumed in a form which includes the bran, germ, and endosperm, are considered whole grains: amaranth, barley, buckwheat, corn, millet, oats, quinoa, brown rice, rye, sorghum, teff, triticale, wheat (including varieties such as spelt, emmer, farro, einkorn, Kamut, durum, bulgur, cracked wheat, and wheatberries), and wild rice. This list does not include all whole grains, but are the most common ones.

Whole grains have come into prominence with people wanting to adapt healthier lifestyles. In 2005, the US government’s Dietary Guidelines advised Americans to “make half your grains whole,” which is 3-5 servings of whole grain a day. A serving should contain at least 16 grams of whole grain ingredients. Canada’s Food Guide is not as specific, but whole grains are thought of as healthier than products made from refined grains. The average North American eats less than one serving of whole grains a day, even though common knowledge is that we should be eating more whole grains.

When buying whole grain products, it is important to read the product label. The label should list the amount of grams of whole grains, or make a comment such as “100% whole wheat.” Be sceptical if you see words such as, “whole grain,” without more details. The product may contain only minuscule amounts of whole grains. The amount of fibre in a whole grain food varies depending on the type of grain, amount of bran, density of the product and moisture content. Some grains may not be an excellent source of fibre.

What can whole grains do for you? What are their health benefits? Researchers have found that whole grains can lower your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, obesity and constipation. Research also shows that refined grains have none of these health benefits. Although much of the research has focused on individual components of whole grains, such as fibre and antioxidants, evidence suggests that the whole grain food offers protection against a wide range of diseases that is greater than what is seen with any individual component. The array of nutrients and other components in whole grains are believed to have an additive and synergistic effect on health. Whole grains also have some valuable antioxidants not found in fruits and vegetables, as well as B vitamins, vitamin E, magnesium, iron and fibre.

Heart Disease

The strongest health benefit of whole grains is in preventing cardiovascular disease. Several studies have proved this. In one study, 34,000 women, who reported eating at least one serving of whole grains a day had a 30 to 36 per cent lower risk of heart disease than those who reported eating no whole grains. Another study of 75,000 women, who said that they ate roughly three servings of whole grain a day had a 25 per cent lower risk of heart disease and a 36 per cent lower risk of stroke than those who said they ate no whole grains. In a study of 44,000 men, those who reported eating at least three servings a day of whole grains (42 grams) had an 18 per cent lower risk of heart attack than those who reported eating less than 4 grams a day.

Even though researchers found this obvious health benefit in the studies that they did, they were not convinced that it was only whole grains that made the difference. People who eat whole grains tend to do a lot of other healthy things as well, like exercising and not smoking. They also ate less saturated fat and more vitamins. Therefore they looked further to find an explanation as to why whole grains might protect the heart. Some of the possibilities include:

Cholesterol. Whole grains that are rich in water-soluble fibre—like oats and barley—lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and increase HDL (“good”) cholesterol. They also lower blood pressure and triglyceride levels. But most people eat far less barley

and oats than whole wheat, which is high in insoluble fibre. And, wheat bran, one of the richest sources of insoluble fibre, doesn’t lower cholesterol. Yet men who eat the most bran have the lowest risk of heart disease.

If you consider the fibre data, it is clear that grains rich in insoluble fibre are heart protective. Research must look beyond cholesterol for a full explanation of the benefit of whole grains, which include insoluble fibres such as wheat.

Insulin. In a small study, researchers fed 11 overweight adults with high insulin levels 6 to 10 servings a day of either whole or refined grains. Fasting insulin levels were lower after six weeks on the whole grains than after six weeks on the refined grains.

Whole grains seem to improve insulin metabolism. High insulin levels can raise the risk of both heart disease and diabetes. And a new study found a lower risk of the metabolic syndrome—which is linked to high insulin levels—in older people who ate whole grains.

Antioxidants. Whole grains are rich in antioxidants that may protect against tissue damage by scavenging marauding free radicals.

Research has shown that high doses of antioxidants, such as Vitamin E, do not prevent heart attacks. It is possible, they theorize, that when you isolate antioxidants and take them in high doses, they don’t work. They work the best when they are taken in foods which are rich in antioxidants.

Whole grains are also rich in a number of other possibly protective substances, including plant sterols, lignans, phytates, vitamins, and minerals.

Magnesium, folate and potassium are abundant in whole grains, three minerals which are heart-protective. These minerals are lacking in refined grains.

Diabetes

Do whole grains prevent diabetes? In a study done in the US, people who consumed at least three servings a day of whole grains had a 20 to 30 per cent lower risk of diabetes over the next decade or so than people who

ate roughly one serving a week.

But again, people who eat whole grains have healthier behaviour overall. But researchers are encouraged by evidence for mechanisms that could explain why whole grains may prevent diabetes. Lower insulin levels is one possibility. Among the other are:

Fibre. The soluble fibre in whole grains like oats and barley can keep carbohydrates from entering the bloodstream too quickly. If the absorption of carbohydrates were slowed, you would have less stress on the pancreas, and insulin levels would not shoot up. Immediately after a meal, carbohydrate from refined grains causes a higher and more rapid elevation in blood glucose levels as well as a greater demand for insulin. Therefore, whole grains lower fasting insulin levels and decrease insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is a condition of decreased insulin sensitivity that increases the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

But, many whole grains, including wheat bran, are rich in insoluble fibre, which doesn’t slow absorption. Therefore, the health benefits of whole grains on insulin levels include those grains which contain soluble fibres. In studies that examined fibre sources, researchers found that fibre from whole grains, but not from fruit and vegetable sources appear to exert the protective effect in reducing risk for developing Type 2 diabetes.

Glycemic index. Many people assume that whole grains raise blood sugar levels less than refined grains (they have a lower glycemic index). However, what matters isn’t whether the grain is whole or refined, but whether it is finely ground (like flour) or intact (like bulgur or brown rice).

Whole-grain flour has nearly the same glycemic index as refined flour. Intact whole grains have a low glycemic index. Therefore, we need to eat more foods that contain intact whole grains, as opposed to grains that have been finely ground.

Bowel Function

Whole grains may have their biggest impact on the bowel, where fibre helps keep things moving.

For example, Australian researchers gave

28 overweight middle-aged men enough whole-grain wheat or rye to bring their fibre to 32 grams a day. This amount is what experts now recommend, and is about twice as much as the average man consumes. Stool weights were higher than when the men ate low-fibre versions of the same foods (only 19 grams of fibre a day). The large intestine responds to the larger and softer mass of residue produced by contracting, which speeds the movement of the bowel towards excretion. The effect of promoting intestinal regularity makes whole grain products integral components of diet plans to help alleviate constipation and decrease the risk of developing diverticulosis and diverticulitis.

Obesity

In a 12-year study, women who consumed more whole grains consistently weighed less than women who consumed fewer whole grains and those with the highest fibre intake had a lower risk of major weight gain. The reasons by which whole grains may support weight management include a feeling of fullness with less calories taken in, prolonged emptying of the stomach to delay the return of hunger, and increased insulin sensitivity to lower insulin demand.

Cancer

If there is one benefit people expect from whole grains, it is a lower risk of colon cancer. Whole grains appear to be associated with a reduced number of gastrointestinal cancers, as well as several hormone-dependent cancers. A review of 40 studies on gastrointestinal cancers found a 21 to 43 per cent lower cancer risk with high intake of whole grains. Whole grain foods may reduce the risk of cancer by a variety of mechanisms. Fibre and certain starches found in whole grains ferment in the colon to help reduce transit time and improve gastrointestinal health. Whole grains also contain antioxidants that may help against oxidation damage, which may play a role in cancer development.

The Bottom Line

Whole grains contain many healthful components, including dietary fibre, starch, essential fatty acids, antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, lignans and phenolic compounds that have been linked to reduced risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and other chronic diseases. Since most of the health-promoting components are found

in the germ and bran, foods made with whole grains can play an important role in maintaining good health.

Some strategies to use when shopping: Look for products that list whole grains as the first ingredient; look for whole grain products that contain at least 2 grams of fibre per serving; and, look for products

that display the health claim of reducing the risk of heart disease and certain cancers.

To increase your whole grain intake: Eat whole grain breakfast cereals; substitute whole grain breads and pastas for those made from refined flours; substitute brown rice for white rice; add barley to soups and stews; and, when baking, use whole grain flour.

What is a Whole Grain?

Protective outer shell.
High in fiber and B vitamins.

Bran

Endosperm

Contains starch, protein, and some vitamins and minerals.



Graphic courtesy of
Bob's Red Mill.

Germ

The seed for a new plant.
Contains B vitamins, some protein, minerals and healthy oils.

MEXICO 2007

Youth Conference



INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS REFORM MOVEMENT

July 15 to 22, 2007 Puebla, Mexico

The program entails study workshops with topics of interest for the youth. Every evening there will be evangelistic meetings. Excursion to Mexico City and one to the ruins of Teotihuacan.

Site of the Conference

Centro Vacacional IMSS Metepec, in the state of Puebla, Mexico.

Booking and Payment

To make a reservation, the forms and payment of foreign visitors must be received at the General Conference offices no later than June 25, 2007.

eMail: imssdarmgc@yahoo.com

Fax: (+1) 562-863-7559

In Mexico contact the Union Headquarters:

eMail: unionmexicana_ims@hotmail.com

Tel., FAX Office: 553 626 1866

Additional Information

email: Pablo-Hunger@aon.at

website: www.juventudencristo.org



THE OLD BROWN HOUSE



CHILDRENS CORNER

The brown house stood a little ways off the road. It was very old. It had a low roof and looked rather run-down. It almost looked deserted except for a thin column of smoke that wound slowly above the roof.

But someone did live there, and if you had pushed open the creaking door you would have seen an old woman, wrinkled and grey, sitting by the silent hearth, stirring the dull fire, or looking absently from the window.

It was Aunt Ruth Jones, as the neighbours called her. No one knew very much about her, except that she seemed to be a queer old woman – a sort of hermit, living all alone in the neglected old house. She had inherited it, along with the small farm next door, when her parents died, some thirty years earlier.

When she first moved in the neighbours were a bit curious to find out who the new occupant was. They found a tall, thin woman about thirty-four years of age. She kept to herself – did not like to join in the local gossip. They perceived her as shy and cold. Some thought that she was proud, and others said that her life had been one of disappointment. But no one had succeeded in drawing out her story, and gradually the old brown house and its occupant were left to themselves.

Years had gone by and the house became run-down. The walls were darkened with smoke; the windows dingy; the floor sunken in; there was nothing cheery in the ill-kept room, or in the face of Aunt Ruth. Some people become shrivelled and crumpled when left to themselves, and Aunt Ruth was such an one. I am afraid it was also narrowed and hardened by being shut off from humanity, with none to share her joys or grief, or to care indeed, if she had any.

As the days came and went, they brought nothing to her but a little round of chores, a bit of patchwork, or straw braiding, and occasionally a walk to the village store to buy the few articles she needed.

The pretty dresses that the other women

wore, the stares of the girls, the glimpses of the happy homes she saw through windows as she walked along, and the noisy stir of life, only made more striking the contrast of her lonely life. Gladly she would hasten back to her own silent fireside, where the cats, at least, were glad to have her presence. Old Brindle knew the sound of her steps, and tossed her head impatiently for her food when she returned. The hens cackled merrily, and scarcely stirred from their tracks, as her dress brushed their shining feathers.

The care of these creatures was a kind of company, and on frosty mornings Aunt Ruth might be seen watching them eating greedily, while her own breakfast was yet untouched, and her feet and fingers were numb with cold.

Though no one shared her heart or home, yet there was sometimes one bright presence within those dim walls, a childish, questioning voice, and sweet laughter.

It was Bessie Lane. One June day, on her way to school, a sudden storm came up and drove the child to the old brown house to find shelter. And ever since that time, the happy little girl, with flaxen hair and clear eyes, would go to the forsaken old house to chat with Aunt Ruth. As that springing step was heard, and the latch lifted, there would come a gleam of brightness to the faded eyes, and a smile to the thin mouth.

The child found ready entrance to the lonely heart; children will, you know, they are so innocent, as wise old heads will agree.

“What in the world makes you visit that old hermit?” said Eliza Ray, her schoolmate, one morning. “Bridget, our hired girl, says she is sure such a strange looking old hag she must be a witch.”

“Witch or not, I like her;” and Bessie Lane tossed up her hat, and pranced off after a fox squirrel down the road.

So Bessie kept up her visits, and the two would sit and talk together by the hours, Aunt

Ruth showing her long-treasured trinkets, relics of years gone by, and detailing their history, till Bessie’s eyes would be wide open with wonder.

On this wintry morning, in which we have introduced her to you, sitting by the dull fire, and looking from the dingy window, the time of Bessie’s absence had been longer than usual. The sky was leaden, and the wind whistled down the chimney and shook the bricks.

Suddenly Aunt Ruth starts and peers through the window. There is a bright little hood and blue cloak approaching; she sees that, but not the carefully wrapped parcel Bessie is carrying, for she hurries to brighten the fire and brush the hearth.

“Good morning, Aunt Ruth. It has been ever so long since I’ve been here, hasn’t it?”

“Yes, a long time for a lonesome old body like me; but this is no place for the young and happy, I know.”

“Oh, yes it is, dear Aunt Ruthie. You must not say so. I love coming to visit you. But Uncle Jake has been so sick; he asked my parents to visit him and I went with them. It is such a long way to go; I thought we would never get there. And Oh, Aunt Ruth, I have not told you yet” – and the chubby face sobered.

“What is it, child?” picking up bits of litter from the floor. Somehow she always did so when Bessie was around, the hands involuntarily moved in little touches of order and neatness. The room was good enough for her: for the child it seemed dismal and must be brightened a little. But Aunt Ruth was unconscious that she was being called to a better life, or that a love for light and beauty was awakening her weary heart.

“Well, I will tell you; we are going to move away. I declare, I think it’s too bad to leave all the girls just as I began to like them, and you, too, Aunt Ruth. I don’t want to go one bit;” tears rolling down her face.

“Going away, my little girl is going away?” said Aunt Ruth seriously.

“Yes; and mother said we couldn’t move Chip, it would be such a bother, so I have given poor birdie away to Allie Smith;” tears flowing afresh. “I let Amy Wells have my kitten, but I haven’t found a place for my poor little rose. See,” said Bessie, going to the table and removing the wrapper from her parcel, “isn’t she a beauty? You will keep it to remember me by, and take care of it always, won’t you, Aunt Ruth?”

The little blossoms were out in full bloom and seemed to smile a benediction upon the old woman.

“Yes, yes child, I will keep your rose; no harm shall come to it.” The little plan seemed to carry her thoughts away, for she began talking absently to herself, then recalling her musing she said: “So you are going away; and you’ll forget about poor Aunt Ruth with so many new friends. Well, well, it’s natural.”

“No, no, indeed I shall not,” said Bessie, giving her a hearty hug, “and sometime I will come to see you.” They talked a long time, but at last, with a good-bye kiss to Aunt Ruth, and to the pet rose, she was gone like a fluttering sunbeam.

Then the shadows seemed to come back to the inmate of the old house; but as her glance fell upon the flower, she began clearing a place for it to stand in the warmest corner, thinking to herself awhile:

“Just such roses I used to carry in my hand to the old stone church in Amsden when I was no bigger than Bessie. It seems like yesterday, but ah! It is a long time. Maybe if I could do like that again, it would not be so dark and lonesome. I think I’ll put the rose here by the south window, then if the child ever does come, she will see it from the gate.”

Bringing a little pine stand, she carefully placed the plant upon it. In doing so, she chanced to glance at the window. “Bless me! It never looked quite so dirty before;” and Aunt Ruth moved with new life, as she cleansed, rinsed, and polished the glass. But this being done, the old curtain seemed dingier than usual, shading the clear glass; so it was taken down, and another finer one unpacked from a drawer and put in its place.

The next morning, as she ate her lonely breakfast, she placed her chair to face the window and the rose. The sun was shining, and as the rays streamed across the room to the opposite wall, she noticed the cobwebs. That day the cobwebs were swept down, the other window washed, and the floor cleaned. The old house had not been so neat and cheery for many years.

Near the close of the week she went to the village, this time putting on a nice neat dress, rather than the old shabby one she used to wear. Somehow the pretty dresses that others wore, or their curious stares did not bother her any more. She pleasantly waved to a neighbour that she had not spoken to in years.

A strange feeling had come over her, --a feeling that she was one of the great human family after all, and the icy mountain of reserve began to thaw just a little. Her purchases made, she decided to take another road home. This road went past the little church. It had a light on, and though it was early, there were a few worshippers that had met to pray before the regular service.

They were singing now, and Aunt Ruth paused, as a clear triumphant voice was heard singing, “Plunged in a gulf of dark despair...” Spell-bound, she listened to the end of the song, never stirring from her tracks until a group of people passed near, then slowly she walked on, you might have heard her talking to herself:

“Oh, Ruth Jones, where are you? I used to sing that song too, in the same old church where I carried the roses, only it was years ago. I used to pray, too. I wonder if God would hear me now.”

That night, and many nights after, she could not sleep; the words of that song kept ringing in her ears, bringing up the old scenes and associations, until the great deep in her soul was broken up.

In her darkness she felt gropingly, feebly, for the old paths, and the good Spirit was all the time leading her back to the light. I cannot retrace for you all the way that she came. I only know that gradually, surely, the night wore away, and the Sun of peace shone upon her soul. She went to the church, where the song had that night stayed her footsteps, and listened to the words of life.

Her life became a blessing; for her nature was broadened, deepened and purified. The sick and needy learned to be glad at her coming, and little children ran to meet her.

And did Bessie Lane ever come again?

Yes, when June smiled upon the earth, the childish figure once more paused at the gate, but the blue eyes gazed bewilderingly around. “This isn’t the place. Aunt Ruth must have moved away.” Well might she think so; the house was neatly painted, the yard fence repaired, and up and down the path all sorts of flowers were blooming. Just then Bessie noticed a neatly dressed old lady tying up some vines.

“Can you tell me where Aunt Ruth Jones has gone? She used to live here.” Bessie stopped, and with one bound sprang into the woman’s arms, for it was Aunt Ruth herself.

“It is so beautiful here! How did it all happen?” cried the delighted child.

Aunt Ruth smiled brightly, and, taking Bessie by the hand, passed into the neat, cheerful room, and up to the south window, where the carefully tended rose was putting forth beauty and fragrance.

Bessie fairly danced with delight at the sight of the rose, but Aunt Ruth seated the child gently by her side, and told her how it had happened; how the gift of the little flower had at first touched her heart; of the holy song that would not let her sleep; and, lastly of God’s good Spirit that had so tenderly led her straying steps to the sun-gilt path of peace.

The loving gift of a small child had changed the life of Aunt Ruth. Everyone else simply stared at Aunt Ruth and left her alone. They could not take the time for her. She was judged as odd, but the love of a little girl, and her small gift changed her life. Is there someone that you can help by a small loving gift? Or is there someone who is alone and lonely and could use some company to cheer them up? Are we too busy with our lives to not take notice of the elderly and lonely? Jesus said, “What then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me... Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Matthew 25:35,36,40



Sabbath outing at the park in London, Canada



Singing at St. Olga's Nursing Home in Hamilton, Canada



EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS, LONDON, CANADA

18th February 2007

I.M.S. members Yeji branch
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From br. Louis Joe Mensah

Ghana field treasurer

