

The Reformation
Messenger

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 3, MARCH 2011



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

“The sunflower keeps its face sunward. If it is turned from the light, it will twist itself on the stem, until it lifts up its petals to the bright beams of the sun. So let everyone who has given his heart to God, turn to the Sun of Righteousness, and eagerly look up to receive the bright beams of the glory that shine in the face of Jesus.” ST, Dec. 16, 1889



WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

ABOUT THE COVER

Front Cover Photo:

Photo by Helen Marttinen
Nova Scotia

Back Cover Photo:

Photo by Helen Marttinen
Nova Scotia

Inside Cover:

Photo by Wendy Eaton

Volume 18, Number 3, March 2011

- 3 **Mañana**
- 6 **Trial of our Faith**
- 9 **Youth Conference in Mosbach, Germany**
- 11 **The Stoning System**
- 16 **Faith is the Victory**
- 20 **What is the Meaning of Life?**
- 21 **"You Are What You Eat!"**
- 24 **Joseph Scriven—Friend of Jesus**

The Reformation
Messenger 

Official Publication of the International
Missionary Society of the Seventh Day
Adventist Church Reform Movement,
Canadian Field.

- Tel: 905-876-2518
- Email: anjetmartin@yahoo.com
- Web: www.ims messenger.org

SUBSCRIBE TO THE REFORMATION MESSENGER

Order by Mail: Please Fill In

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

No. Of Annual Subscriptions:

_____ Black & White x \$22.00 each per year

_____ Colour x \$28.00 each per year

(Price includes 12 issues. One per month including shipping & handling)

Purchase all 17 years of the Messenger for \$200.00
(Price includes over 190 issues, including shipping and handling)

___ Catalogue for articles for all 17 years

Amount of cheque: \$ _____ Payable to IMS Publishing

Or order online: www.ims messenger.org

IMS
PUBLISHING

RR # 3
7899 15 Sideroad
Milton, ON
L9T 2X7
Canada

MAÑANA



H. Marttinen

Latin people are well known for a tendency to procrastinate and leave everything for tomorrow; but I am sure that not every one is like that and that people from other ethnic groups have the same shortcomings. Although “mañana” has already become an international word, we can find some synonyms in other languages, such as “take it easy” or “kein problem”.

As I am rereading the Book of Exodus, I come across the word “mañana” being used in such a situation that makes a very deep impression on me and gives me goosebumps.

Moses is dealing with the Pharaoh of Egypt and asking him to let his people go. Two plagues have already fallen over the land, first the waters have turned into blood, and secondly everything was invaded and infected by frogs. Now the Pharaoh calls Moses and asks him to “*entreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs,*” (Exodus 8:8) and Moses asks him, “*When shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people?*” (Exodus 8:9) And here is the amazing answer, “*Mañana - tomorrow.*”

We know that we are living at the very end of the time of grace and that we, as bearers of the pure light of the

gospel, will go through judgement first. The latter rain shall be poured upon every soul that has been walking with the Lord in total surrender of heart and will, so that he can be a herald of heaven and be prepared to go through the time of Jacob’s distress and the subsequent plagues and come out victorious. Being that this time is so near and will come quite suddenly, we need to be prepared every single moment.

Procrastinating in this very solemn time is very dangerous. Moses, the Liberator of God’s people at the time, could still entreat for the hard-hearted Pharaoh during the time of the plagues, but we know that when the plagues of Revelation fall, our High Priest will not be in the sanctuary any longer and the names of all those who shall be saved will have already been called in the heavenly courts.

We may be going about performing our daily tasks, quite unaware of what is going on in heaven. We may be playing with God’s grace, stubbornly committing our cherished sin, joking at every opportunity, taking sacred things lightly while our personal book is being brought before “*the Ancient of days.*” Then, the word “mañana” will remain frozen in our lips, in our hearts; the time of grace for us personally will be over. Have

you ever thought about this? Do you think about it often or you prefer to ignore it?

Someone may say it is scary; I have seen Adventists, mostly among the youth, who do not want to hear and even get upset when one mentions that the Lord's coming is near. Isn't Jesus' second coming the message embodied in the name of our denomination?

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied full of joy and hope, "*Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.*" (Jude 14). When Jesus was born in Bethlehem Ephrata, a group of angels came to the shepherds to announce the glorious event, but this time the whole of heaven will be emptied of its "*ministering spirits*"; there will be silence in the heavenly court and every eye shall see this wonderful spectacle, thousands of angels covering the sky, "*the armies which were in heaven following Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*" (Revelation 19:14) How exciting!

I am sure Isaiah and other prophets rejoiced in this thought and longed for this event. "*Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence*" (Is. 64:1) were the words with which Isaiah expressed the longing of his heart. And he even saw us, the last generation upon earth, lifting our heads and saying, full of joy, "*Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.*" (Isaiah 25:9). What a wonderful reality we shall very soon experience!

Please, whether you are Latin or Anglo-Saxon, procrastinate no more. Listen to the tender voice of the Holy Spirit inviting you to repentance, to separation from the world, to the surrendering of the flesh to the higher Intellect.

"The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness

of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth." (DA, p. 489)

We are usually very proud of knowing this wonderful truth, which is a real gift from heaven. How often do we tell one another how we came to the truth? Some have even the privilege of having being born in the truth! Maybe we should review and reform our way of expressing ourselves. The truth is not a theory; it is not a dogma; the truth is Jesus Christ, our Lord. He left this earth, but sent the Comforter to convince us of sin, righteousness and judgment. In other words, to show us who we really are, that there is no way we can justify ourselves and that we cannot stand before the heavenly court without an Advocate. This news takes all our joy away and we may walk for months, like Nehemiah, with a sad countenance, until we really come to the

Truth. Then everything changes into peace, great joy and real happiness.

The Holy Spirit is called "Paraklitos" in Greek, and the term comes from the noun "paraklisis" which means entreaty, supplication--exactly what Moses was doing for the Pharaoh. But, we have someone more important than Moses, "*the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*" (Romans 8:26).

"Too many are counting on a long stretch of a tomorrow; but that is a mistake. Let every one be educated in such a way as to show the importance for the special work for today.... 'Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' The Lord prefaces the requirement by the use of the word 'son.' How tender, how compassionate, yet withal, how urgent! ...

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Special Testimonies on Education, March 21, 1895." (FE, p. 366).



“Beware of procrastination. Do not put off the work of forsaking your sins and seeking purity of heart through Jesus. Here is where thousands upon thousands have erred to their eternal loss. I will not here dwell upon the shortness and uncertainty of life; but there is a terrible danger--a danger not sufficiently understood--in



delaying to yield to the pleading voice of God's Holy Spirit, in choosing to live in sin; for such this delay really is. Sin, however small it may be esteemed, can be indulged in only at the peril of infinite loss. What we do not overcome, will overcome us and work out our destruction.” (SC, p. 32).

“Adam and Eve persuaded themselves that in so small a matter as eating of the forbidden fruit there could not result such terrible consequences as God had declared. But this small matter was the transgression of God's immutable and holy law, and it separated man from God and opened the floodgates of death and untold woe upon our world. Age after age there has gone up from our earth a continual cry of mourning, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain as a consequence of man's disobedience. Heaven itself has felt the effects of his rebellion against God. Calvary stands as a memorial of the amazing sacrifice required to atone for the transgression of the divine law. Let us not regard sin as a trivial thing.” (SC, p. 33).

The only reason why there is still sin in Jerusalem, while “*the man clothed in linen*” with the inkhorn by his side is going through it putting “*a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof*” is that the cross of Calvary has not been treasured enough; there has not been enough time to spend with Jesus, there has not been conformity to the principles He so clearly sets in the Scriptures out of love for Him, there has not been a new birth experience and therefore no death to self.

The door of grace is still open, and we have been hearing this for years, in other words, there is still time; if not today, “*mañana*”. Let us not forget what happened to Pharaoh.

“The gifts of Jesus are ever fresh and new. . . . Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of the Lord. He gives grace for grace. There can be no failure of supply. If you abide in Him, the fact that you receive a rich gift today insures the reception of a richer gift tomorrow. . . .” (AG, p. 104).

Let “*mañana*” mean for each one of us an expectation of richer gifts and of an ever more lively hope. Amen.

Teresa Corti

LOOKING FOR YOU...

If you are interested in submitting an item for publication in the Reformation Messenger, please submit to:

By Email to:
anjetmartin@yahoo.com

By Mail to:
IMS Publishing
RR#3, 7899 15 Sideroad
Milton, ON L9T 2X7
Canada

SUBMIT:
ARTICLES
POEMS
PHOTOS
DRAWINGS
ANNOUNCE -
MENTS



TRIAL OF OUR FAITH

“Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming,—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation,—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.” Test. Vol. 9, p. 17.

We need to change our attitude toward these fiery trials. They are not given to hurt us or to destroy us, but to develop our characters and to prepare us for heaven.

Peter writes to us, “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 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. 1:6, 7.

“But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.” 1 Pet. 4:14

Paul writes the same, “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Rom. 5:3-5.

“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Tim. 3:12.

Already Daniel wrote about the trials that will come upon the people of God. “And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.” Dan. 11:33.

These tests will strengthen the faithful children of God and separate others from the fold; all who are fearful and not able to stand the test.

Many great men in the past have fallen and lost their faith, and even prophets did not all remain faithful to the end.

Paul was not beyond falling. He said, “But I keep under

my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Cor. 9:27.

Every day we are tested by the Lord, often by little incidents. If we are faithful in them then we will be ready for greater tests.

If someone offends us, or irritates us, how we react is a test of our patience. In traffic, someone cuts us off and almost causes an accident, or in a store when we stand in line for the cashier, someone goes in front of us and gets service before us. Do we still stay calm and friendly?

With children it is easy to lose our patience, yet it is sin if we lose our calm. One of the distinguishing signs of God's people is their patience.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

Our honesty is being tested. In buying and selling it is easy to be dishonest. Paul writes, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Rom. 12:17.

We need to be honest in our words that we speak. Even in our imagination we need to be honest and avoid all vain daydreaming. With constant practice an honest character can be reached.

Also our humility will be tested. Evil can be spoken of a humble person, yet he is not offended because he agrees that there is nothing good in him. It is possible that someone is proud of his pretended humility.

God is testing our forgiveness. "If we forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6:14, 15.

To forgive means also to forget. If someone forgives the offence and hurt done to him, but right after goes and tells others what this person did to him, he is getting even with him by ruining his reputation. In reality he did not forgive, and therefore God will not forgive his trespasses either.

As we are learning the lessons and developing our characters, the tests and trials will get greater. Finally the

tests may include a martyr's death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10.

When David fled through the wilderness being pursued by his own son, he learned lessons that he would never have learned in his royal palace. The Psalms that he wrote from these experiences have comforted many afflicted hearts for thousands of years.

The pit and the dungeon were the schools from which Joseph graduated, preparing him for the position of prime minister of Egypt.

The hurricane which killed the children of Job prepared inspiration for the book that has been read by millions after him.

Sister White writes, "It would be well for all the workers to study the history of the Waldensian missionaries and to imitate their example of sacrifice and self denial." Test. Vol. 5, p. 400.

"Through ages of darkness and apostasy there were Waldenses who denied the supremacy of Rome, who rejected image worship as idolatry, and who kept the true Sabbath. Under the fiercest tempests of opposition they maintained their faith. Though gashed by the Savoyard spear, and scorched by the Romish fagot, they stood unflinchingly for God's word and His honour." GC, p. 67

The papal leaders of Rome were determined to exterminate the Waldenses. Therefore the persecutions continued for many centuries. The same spirit that crucified Christ and slew the apostles was at work to rid the earth of those who were beloved of God.

"I was shown the Waldenses, and what they suffered for their religion. They conscientiously studied the word of God, and lived up to the light which shone upon them. They were persecuted, and driven from their homes; their possessions, gained by hard labour, were taken from them, and their houses burned. They fled to the mountains and there suffered incredible hardships. They endured hunger, fatigue, cold, and nakedness. The only clothing which many of them could obtain was the skins of animals. And yet the scattered and homeless ones would assemble to unite their voices in singing, and praising God that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's name. They encouraged

and cheered one another; and were grateful for even their miserable retreat. Many of their children sickened and died from cold and hunger, yet the parents did not for a moment think of yielding their religion. They prized the love and favour of God far above earthly ease or worldly riches. They received consolation from God and with pleasing anticipations looked forward to the recompense of reward.” Test. Vol. 1, p. 371.

In June 1488, more than 20,000 soldiers were marching over the mountains toward their villages. People took shelter in a deep cave, but the soldiers set a large fire at the entrance and suffocated more than 3,000 Wal-



densians with 400 little children in their mother’s arms. From place to place the soldiers continued burning their homes and killing without mercy the in-

habitants. This continued for one year.

Then one day the Lord intervened for His people. An army of 30,000 soldiers were coming up a narrow mountain path toward their villages. Suddenly a little black cloud was seen coming closer to them and finally covered the whole army in a thick fog, so that they could see nothing, and then a landslide of rocks fell upon them. In a panic they lost their foothold and fell into a deep precipice below. Few men from this army returned from these mountains.

After this the persecution continued. Time to time armies of soldiers attacked them. It was in 1650 that the order was given by Rome that all Waldensians must be killed.

On April 15, 1655, the Marquis of Pianez came to them as a friend with 15,000 soldiers. He said that they were looking for an escaped criminal. They came on Wednesday and stayed in the homes of the Waldensians. They slept in their homes, ate at their tables, played with their children. Then on Saturday, the signal was given and the soldiers started to murder their hostages. Little children were taken from their mother’s arms and smashed against rocks. The sick and the aged

were burned alive in their homes. Before killing them, terrible torture was applied.

The historian, Leger writes, “Here I must stop. My hand trembles, that I scarcely can hold the pen. My tears mingle in torrents with the ink while I write the deeds of these children of darkness, blacker than the prince of darkness himself. These cruelties form a scene unparalleled and unique in history.”

In 1658, the Marquis of Pianez came again with 10,000 men and attacked villages, burning them and killing the people.

Yet the darkest chapters of the world’s history are still ahead of us. But we have nothing to fear if God is with us.

I had a dream that I was sentenced to death. As I was led by a soldier to the place of execution I talked to him about God and His salvation. Then I closed my eyes, expecting to die. The strange thing was that all this time I felt such a happiness that I had never felt before. After I woke up, the whole day this happiness continued with me.

If the martyrs felt the same joy and happiness as I felt in my dream, they did not really suffer. It will be their murderers who will be suffering for their deeds.

Let us be faithful in our little tests and by so doing, prepare for the great trials and realize that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” Rom. 8:28. AMEN.

Timo Martin



“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” ~ Jesus Christ.



Youth Conference in Mosbach, Germany December 26, 2010 to January 2, 2011

On Sunday December 26th, 2010, despite the bad weather conditions on the roads and at the airports, we gathered together at the mission house "Salem" in Mosbach, Germany,

The motto of our youth conference was "Singing explorers and missionaries".

At the very beginning of our meeting we happily discovered that we were a varied group of young people coming from ten different countries: Spain, Holland, Austria, Bulgaria, Argentina, Canada, Finland, Ukraine, England and Germany.

The program was challenging. We had a wonderful time together in the museum "Experimenta" and ice skating on the rink in Heilbronn. We also had the opportunity to renew old friendships and get to know new brothers and sisters.

Spiritually we shared new things and made startling discoveries. In several discussion groups we talked about the importance and the effect of a person's outward appearance and his character.

On Wednesday we had separate programs for boys and girls, responding to the question: "How can I be a man/woman according to God's will?"

On Thursday evening Sister Ines Müller conducted an anonymous survey of the participants. The boys were

to describe: a) I would like to be considered by girls/women as... b) I don't like if a girl/woman is... The girls were to describe, from their perspective, their views on the same points. We experienced fascinating, funny and unexpected results which showed us that both sexes often have different points of view.

On Friday evening we divided up into four different groups; the topics were: "Teenager--striving for appreciation;" "Single--not incomplete!" "Head over heels in love;" and "Marriage starter". We realized that these topics are important for us young people and should be discussed in more depth. Among the speakers we also had brother José Giner, leader of the youth department of the General Conference, who dealt with some of the themes and had the divine service on Sabbath.

The focus of our meeting was the preparation of a public New Year's concert on January 1st, 2011 in Mosbach-Neckarelz. Under the direction of Jacqueline Möblacher we formed an international choir and rehearsed ten hymns in this one week. Our choir leader was very patient but also had fun with us; and with the help of Miguel Cabrera was successful in joining us together harmoniously and inspiring us, although a lot of people got sick with the flu that put them out of action.

A bit nervous and full of expectation we looked forward to the public performance. The varied concert program was completed by a Power Point presentation with impressive pictures, instrumentals and the reading of Bi-

ble verses and other quotes. Among others we sang Dietrich Bonhoeffer's song, "By Gracious Powers," and asked the attendees to sing along. We were very happy to see familiar faces in the audience: brothers and sisters from the churches of Mosbach, Heilbronn, Bielefeld, Lahr, Winterbach and Solingen had headed to Mosbach-Neckarelz in order to participate in this happy event. Furthermore a reporter from the "Rhein-Neckar-newspaper" was present who published an enthusiastic report about our concert. The event was a complete success and all our worries turned out to be groundless. We owe a debt of gratitude to Markus Hartmann and his assistants who took care of the technical issues. During our meeting a "Youth project 2011" was presented as well: a charity campaign for a school garden for the "Maranatha School" in Uganda which yielded 200 Euros.

We would also like to thank Brother Boris Gardew, his wife and all the other helpers in the kitchen who cared for our well-being, the translators and interpreters, who made the communication between the different language groups easier, and finally our leader team for organizing and carrying out the meetings.

We look back with thanks for an interesting and joyful get-together and hope to soon experience a similar opportunity.

Manuela Di Franca





The stoning system was used in Ancient Israel under the Ceremonial Law as a punishment for certain sins. We see mention of it made at Mt. Sinai when Jesus came to speak the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:13). Any man or animal that touched the mountain when the presence of God was there would be stoned. The stoning system was punishment for a variety of other sins also, for man and beast. A man was stoned for breaking the Sabbath (Numbers 15:36). Achan was stoned for stealing and lying (Joshua 7:25, 26). There were many other sins that resulted in the death penalty by stoning such as adultery and rebellion of children against parents.

The Pharisees used this form of punishment to test

Jesus. They brought a woman to Him who had been caught in adultery. They asked Him, "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" John 8:5. They were not seeking to sacredly guard the law by punishing a lawbreaker, but rather they were seeking to trap Jesus. If He agreed with them, Jesus would be defying Roman authority, but if He let her go, He would be disregarding the Law of Moses. This woman had been led into this act by these very men for the sake of their desire to trap Jesus. The woman was afraid. John 8:1-10 tells of how Jesus thwarted the plans of the Jewish leaders. He turned to them and spake those ominous words, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." John 8:7

"The woman had stood before Jesus, cowering with fear. His words, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone,' had come to her as a death sentence. She dared not lift her eyes to the Saviour's face, but silently awaited her doom." DA 462. This story has a happy ending, though. The enemies of Jesus departed when their own faults were pointed out by the writing in the sand. None of them were without sin. They were not worthy to cast the first stone. Only Jesus was worthy to do so, but He had another message for her. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." John 8:11. No wonder Mary was one of Jesus' most faithful followers. Only Jesus was worthy... only Jesus... but He did not. He forgave her and she appreciated His forgiveness. "Her heart was melted, and she cast herself at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out her grateful love, and with bitter tears confessing her sins." {DA 462.1}

"In His act of pardoning this woman and encouraging her to live a better life, the character of Jesus shines forth in the beauty of perfect righteousness. While He does not palliate sin, nor lessen the sense of guilt, He seeks not to condemn, but to save. The world had for this erring woman only contempt and scorn; but Jesus speaks words of comfort and hope. The Sinless One pities the weakness of the sinner, and reaches to her a helping hand. While the hypocritical Pharisees denounce, Jesus bids her, 'Go, and sin no more.'" {DA 462.3}

Jesus says the same to each and every sinner. "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." How many appreciate this forgiveness? How many ignore the second part, "Go and sin no more?" Ignoring the second part can have dire consequences.

THE STONING SYSTEM

Sister White saw a very interesting dream regarding the stoning system. Let's read it here...

"I had a dream. I saw A in close conversation with men and with ministers. He adroitly would make statements born of suspicion and imagination to draw them out, and then would gain expression from them. I saw him clap his hands over something very eagerly. I felt a pang of anguish at heart as I saw this going on. I saw in my dream yourself and B in conversation with him. You made statements to him which he seemed to grasp with avidity, and close his hand over something. I then saw him go to his room, and there upon the floor was a pile of stones systematically laid up, stone upon stone. He placed the additional stones on the pile and counted them up. Every stone had a name--some report gathered up--and every stone was numbered." {12 MR 10.1}

"The young man who often instructs me came and looked upon the pile of stones with grief and indignation, and inquired [of A] what he had and what he proposed to do with them. A looked up with a sharp, gratified laugh. 'These are mistakes of C. I am going to stone him with them, stone him to death.' The young man said, 'You are bringing back the stoning system, are you? You are worse than the ancient Pharisees. Who gave you this work to do? The Lord raised you up, the Lord entrusted you with a special work. The Lord has sustained you in a most remarkable manner, but it was not for you to degrade your powers for this kind of work. Satan is an accuser of the brethren.'

"I thought 'A' seemed very defiant and determined. Said he, 'C is trying to tear us to pieces. He is working against us, and to save our reputation and life, we must work against him. I shall use every stone to the last pebble here upon this floor to kill him. This is only self-defense, a disagreeable necessity.'" {12MR 11.1}

"And then said the young man solemnly, 'What have you gained? Have you in the act righted your wrongs? Have you opened your heart to Jesus Christ, and does He sit there enthroned? Who occupies the citadel of the soul under this administration of the stoning system?'" {12MR 11.2}

"You have a higher calling, a more important work. Leave all such work of gathering stones for the enemies of God's law. You brethren must love one another, or

you are not children of the day, but of darkness.'" {12MR 11.3}

"I then saw C engaged in a similar work, gathering stones, making a pile, and ready to begin the stoning system. Similar words were repeated to him with additional injunctions, and I awoke." {12MR 11.4}

This is a very sad situation and my prayer is that it does not happen in God's church. If it does it must be put away before the Latter Rain can be poured out upon God's people. God's people will be unified

STONING THE RIGHTEOUS

Sometimes the righteous were unjustly stoned to death by evildoers as was the case when Jezebel had Naboth stoned (1 Kings 21:14). And also when Stephen was stoned (Acts 7:58, 59). Hebrews 11:37 informs us that many righteous people gave up their lives for the faith by being stoned.

Although the stoning system is not legal in many parts of the world today, people can be stoned figuratively as in the dream that Sister White saw. Gossip, evil speaking, criticism, censure and all like sins are figurative stones. Righteous people are often stoned by the unrighteous for a variety of reasons. The wicked just cannot leave them alone. The devil is the mastermind behind all evil and is making every attempt to destroy God's faithful people.

History relates many instances where different religious groups "stoned" other religious groups who did not conform to their ideas and interpretations of scriptures. The saddest time is when brother picks up stones and hurls them at another brother in the same congregation.

"If men desire to place themselves where they can be used by God, they must not criticize others, to make their defects apparent. This is Satan's special temptation, whereby he strives to hinder the work.--Manuscript 152, 1898." {Ev 634.3}

STONING THE LEADERS

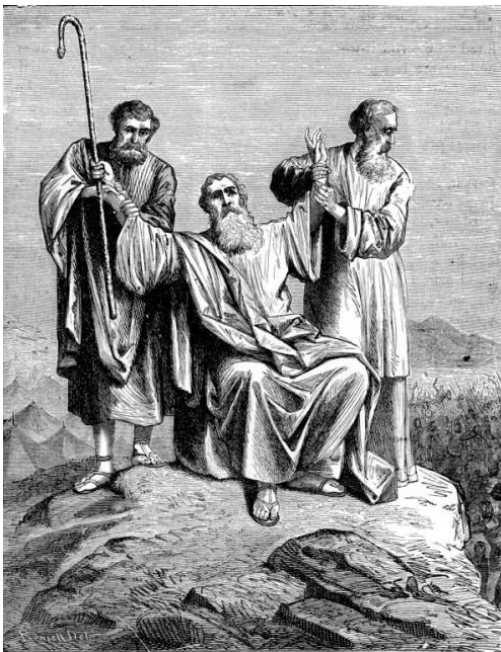
Leaders are often a target as we have certain expectations of our leaders, and when they do not fulfil our expectations, or do the work as we expect them to do, then they become a target. Not all workers will use the same methods and means. Some have been "stoned" by their own members as seen in the example of how

Korah treated his own cousin, the leader of the nation, Moses (Numbers 16).

“Many have strong feelings against Brother ----. They accuse him of unkindness, harshness, and severity. But some of the very ones who would condemn him are no less guilty themselves. He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.” Brother ---- has not always moved wisely, and he has been hard to convince where he has not taken the best course. He has not been as willing to receive counsel, and to modify his methods of instruction and his manner of dealing with his students, as he should have been. But those who would condemn him because of his defects could in their turn be justly condemned. Every man has his peculiar defects of character. One may be free from the weakness which he sees in his brother, yet he may at the same time have faults which are far more grievous in the sight of God.” {5T 35.2}

Our leaders get tired also and need help. They are not infallible. They will become weary. What did Aaron and Hur do when Moses became tired?

“Moses and Aaron and Hur were stationed on a hill



overlooking the battle-field. With arms outstretched toward heaven, and holding the rod of God in his right hand, Moses

prayed for the success of the armies of Israel. As the battle progressed, it was observed that so long as his hands were reaching upward, Israel prevailed, but when they were lowered, the enemy was victorious. As Moses became weary, Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands until the going down of the sun, when the enemy was put to flight.

“As Aaron and Hur supported the hands of Moses, they

showed the people their duty to sustain him in his arduous work while he should receive the word from God to speak to them.” {CC 95.5}

“Many thank God for the truth and then turn around and question and find fault with the very means which Heaven has ordained to make them what they are or what they ought to be. How much more pleasing to God it would be for them to act the part of Aaron and Hur and help hold up the hands of those who are bearing the great and heavy burdens of the work in connection with the cause of God. Murmurers and complainers should remain at home, where they will be out of the way of temptation, where they cannot find food for their jealousies, evil surmisings, and faultfindings, for the presence of such is only a burden to the meetings; they are clouds without water.” {1T 526.2}

“Happy the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary, and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work, and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously.” {GW92 32.2}

PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS:

“Brethren and sisters, have you forgotten that your prayers should go out, like sharp sickles, with the labourers in the great harvest field? As young men go forth to preach the truth, you should have seasons of prayer for them. Pray that God will connect them with Himself and give them wisdom, grace, and knowledge. Pray that they may be guarded from the snares of Satan and kept pure in thought and holy in heart. I entreat you who fear the Lord to waste no time in unprofitable talk or in needless labour to gratify pride or to indulge the appetite. Let the time thus gained be spent in wrestling with God for your ministers. Hold up their hands as did Aaron and Hur the hands of Moses.-- 5T 162.” {PaM 100.2}

EVIL SPEAKING

Evil words are some of the harshest stones thrown. They are very sharp. “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.” James 3:5,6. Words spoken can never be taken back. They can permanently wound relationships.

“Earnest workers have no time for dwelling upon the faults of others. We cannot afford to live on the husks of others' faults or failings. Evilspeaking is a twofold curse, falling more heavily upon the speaker than upon the hearer. He who scatters the seeds of dissension and strife reaps in his own soul the deadly fruits. The very act of looking for evil in others develops evil in those who look. By dwelling upon the faults of others, we are changed into the same image. But by beholding Jesus, talking of His love and perfection of character, we become changed into His image. By contemplating the lofty ideal He has placed before us, we shall be uplifted into a pure and holy atmosphere, even the presence of God. When we abide here, there goes forth from us a light that irradiates all who are connected with us.” {MH 492.2}

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” Ephesians 4:29. If your words will not benefit, inspire and encourage the listeners to a higher course, then they would be best left unspoken.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO INSTEAD OF STONING?

It is a really sad situation when we see a Christian hurling stones at another Christian, or brother against brother. The angels weep. We are counselled that when we are aware of someone who is doing what we perceive is wrong we should not “stone” them with our words and actions, but rather, “Cultivate the habit of speaking well of others. Dwell upon the good qualities of those with whom you associate, and see as little as possible of their errors and failings. When tempted to complain of what someone has said or done, praise something in that person's life or character.” {MH 492.1}

People make mistakes. People sin. What should we do? Throw away our stones. “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Romans 15:1; and “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” Galatians 6:1. “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.” “Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” James 5:9, 20

“And not all, even of those who appear most faulty, are like Judas. Peter, impetuous, hasty, and self-confident, often appeared to far greater disadvantage than Judas did. He was oftener reproved by the Saviour. But what a life of service and sacrifice was his! What a testimony does it bear to the power of God's grace! So far as we are capable, we are to be to others what Jesus was to His disciples when He walked and talked with them on the earth.” {MH 493.4}

“Regard yourselves as missionaries, first of all, among your fellow workers. Often it requires a vast amount of time and labour to win one soul to Christ. And when a soul turns from sin to righteousness, there is joy in the presence of the angels. Think you that the ministering spirits who watch over these souls are pleased to see how indifferently they are treated by some who claim to be Christians? Should Jesus deal with us as we too often deal with one another, who of us could be saved?” {MH 493.5}

“One thing all can do: They can avoid making the work of others unnecessarily hard by criticizing their efforts, putting stones in front of the car their brethren are trying to push uphill. If any are unwilling to put their shoulder to the wheel, let them at least refrain from hindering those who are working. God calls for labourers who will refuse to discourage their fellow labourers.” {7T 237.2}

“STONE” YOURSELF

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” 2 Cor. 13:5 “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam [is] in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.” Matthew 7:3-5

If you are tempted to throw stones, then throw stones at yourself. “Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavourable trait to remain uncorrected.” {COL 331.1}

“Instead of criticizing and condemning others, say, ‘I must work out my own salvation. If I co-operate with Him who desires to save my soul, I must watch myself diligently. I must put away every evil from my life. I

must overcome every fault. I must become a new creature in Christ. Then, instead of weakening those who are striving against evil, I can strengthen them by encouraging words.' We are too indifferent in regard to one another. Too often we forget that our fellow labourers are in need of strength and cheer. Take care to assure them of your interest and sympathy. Help them by your prayers, and let them know that you do it." {MH 492.3}

CONCLUSION

True followers of Christ will not have any stones to throw at their fellow Christians or church members. "Those who are forward in accusing others, and zealous in bringing them to justice, are often in their own lives more guilty than they. Men hate the sinner, while they love the sin. Christ hates the sin, but loves the sinner. This will be the spirit of all who follow Him. Christian love is slow to censure, quick to discern penitence, ready to forgive, to encourage, to set the wanderer in the path of holiness, and to stay his feet therein." {HM, February 1, 1892 par. 6}

This is how Christ worked as we seen in the experience of the woman caught in Adultery. While the Jewish leaders saw nothing good in this woman, Jesus could read her heart. When Jesus spoke these words to Mary, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," "this

was to her the beginning of a new life, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In the uplifting of this fallen soul, Jesus performed a greater miracle than in healing the most grievous physical disease; He



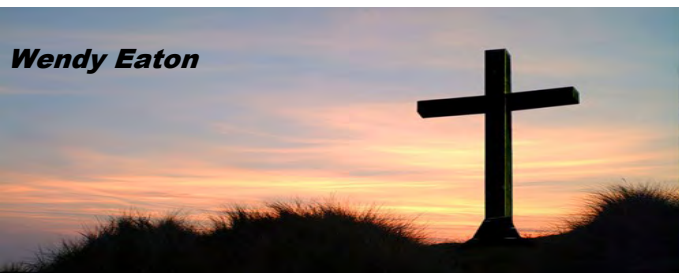
cured the spiritual malady which is unto death everlasting. This penitent woman became one of His most steadfast followers. With self-sacrificing love and devotion she repaid His forgiving mercy." {DA 462.2}

Our brethren and leaders are not infallible. They will

make mistakes. "What can Christ, who is so forgiving, so patient with all our mistakes, so rich in mercy and love, think of our hardhearted criticism and fault-finding? Love for your erring brethren will produce far greater effect in reforming him than all your harsh criticisms. Let all the thoughts and emotions of the heart be after Christ's order. Let self be put out of sight. The Lord would have the thoughts and the language and the experience of Christian life far more attractive than it is today. If they are not more like Jesus, they can never be the light of the world." {15MR 151.2}

King David would have had a lot of negative things to say about the man (King Saul), who was seeking his life. Yet do we hear anything negative being said by him? His men wanted him to kill King Saul and even went as far as to say that the Lord had delivered the king into his hands. But David refused to lay a hand on the Lord's anointed. No, God placed him into that position and he (David) would wait patiently for God to remove him from that position. (1 Samuel 26:8-11). The king was the leader of the nation (anointed by God), yet what an example he was being for the subjects of his kingdom. Yet God permitted him to remain in office for many years still.

It is my prayer that we throw away our stones, love our enemies, help our leaders and assist the weaker members in the church. In this way there will be perfect unity and the Latter Rain can finally be poured out amongst God's people. Those who refuse to throw away their stones will leave the presence of Christ, as did the Pharisees when Jesus pointed out their sins by writing in the sand. They will soon find that they have severed their connection with God. Today there is still time. Let us love one another in the true spirit of Christ. Remember Jesus' words. They were spoken to you, and to your fellow man. May God help us to have this spirit in our relationship with others. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." AMEN



Wendy Eaton



FAITH IS THE VICTORY

Satan will desire to test God's people to the brink, to see whether that bond is stronger than any other bond that can exist. We now enter into a time period, which is one that has never been before or after. It is the time period when the embassy is in lockdown and evacuation is imminent. It is a time period described as a very troublesome time. It's the time where God's people have made it through tests and trials in an era when the time is very worrisome to them.

"And these [are] the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day [is] great, so that none [is] like it: it [is] even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jer. 30:4-7

The time period here referred to is that of Jacobs's trouble. It's a particular experience which needs much preparation to meet it. As it says in the hymn, will your anchor hold in the storm of life? If your anchor doesn't hold, what will happen? The chain might break. Our anchor is hooked to the rock Jesus, which can't break. Will our anchor hold in this time of trouble? For us to answer, we need to know if our anchor is strong enough, our ship. The time period referred to is the close of probation. A time when God's people have been sealed but they don't know it yet.

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward [is] with me, to

give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:11, 12

This solemn moment in time is one that can bring fear, trepidation and uncertainty. One that no doubt will make our faces turn pale as is described in Jeremiah. To understand more about the time of Jacob's trouble, we read of the time as relating to our imminent future: "Jacob's night of anguish, when he wrestled in prayer for deliverance from the hand of Esau (Genesis 32:24-30), represents the experience of God's people in the time of trouble. Because of the deception practiced to secure his Father's blessing, intended for Esau, Jacob had fled for his life, alarmed by his brother's deadly threats. After remaining for many years an exile, he had set out, at God's command, to return with his wives and children, his flocks and herds, to his native country. On reaching the borders of the land, he was filled with terror by the tidings of Esau's approach at the head of a band of warriors, doubtless bent upon revenge. Jacob's company, unarmed and defenseless, seemed about to fall helpless victims of violence and slaughter." {GC 616.2}

In man's warfare Jacob was unarmed, he had nothing. He wasn't a warrior. He had a family and little children. But he was armed with the weaponry needed for spiritual warfare. He was filled with fear that Esau was coming with his warriors. This is applicable to us, as threats are given against our life also.

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Rev. 13:15

The governments of this world will receive power from that one beast which is described as the church originating from the Seven Hills of Rome. As governments unite together with the churches of the world, a death decree will be given upon those who are faithful and keep the commandments of God. "And to the burden of anxiety and fear was added the crushing weight of self-reproach, for it was his own sin that had brought this danger. His only hope was in the mercy of God; his only defense must be prayer." {GC 616.2} That is all he had. He didn't have anything else. Prayer was his only defense.

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Gen. 32:24-26

Was this presumptuous? Why not? Wasn't the blessing already given to Jacob?

“Having sent his family away, that they may not witness his distress, Jacob remains alone to intercede with God. He confesses his sin and gratefully acknowledges the mercy of God toward him while with deep humiliation he pleads the covenant made with his Fathers and the promises to himself in the night vision at Bethel and in the land of his exile. The crisis in his life has come; everything is at stake. In the darkness and solitude he continues praying and humbling himself before God. Suddenly a hand is laid upon his shoulder. He thinks that an enemy is seeking his life, and with all the energy of despair he wrestles with his assailant.” {GC 616.3}

This is nothing unusual. Anyone in Jacob’s situation would have done the same, but we’ll see how Jacob manifested his faith.

“As the day begins to break, the stranger puts forth his superhuman power; at his touch the strong man seems paralyzed, and he falls, a helpless, weeping suppliant, upon the neck of his mysterious antagonist. Jacob knows now that it is the Angel of the covenant with whom he has been in conflict. Though disabled and suffering the keenest pain, he does not relinquish his purpose. Long has he endured perplexity, remorse, and trouble for his sin; now he must have the assurance that it is pardoned. The divine visitant seems about to depart; but Jacob clings to Him, pleading for a blessing. The Angel urges, ‘Let Me go, for the day breaketh;’ but the patriarch exclaims, ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.’” {GC 616.3}

What was the blessing Jacob was seeking at this time? Something different to what he had already received. He received the blessing that through his line the Messiah would come. The deception he received in Laban’s household was a result of the wrongs he had done previously.

“What confidence, what firmness and perseverance, are here displayed! Had this been a boastful, presumptuous claim, Jacob would have been instantly destroyed; but his was the assurance of one who confesses his weakness and unworthiness, yet trusts the mercy of a covenant-keeping God.” {GC 616.3}

This is important for us to understand and take with us. Jacob had relied wholly upon God. The particular trait of God was that He was merciful and covenant keeping. If we seek the promise in humility God will fulfill it.

“And he said unto him, What [is] thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked [him], and said, Tell [me], I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore [is] it [that] thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” Gen.

32:27-30

Here finally Jacob received the blessing. What a privilege for Jacob. In the darkest hour of his life he was able to see God face to face and his life was preserved. Because his life was preserved, he was forgiven for the guilt he had committed. He is called here a prince and he had power with God and man. Aren’t we also sons and daughters of God? Heirs to the kingdom? Doesn’t that make us princes and princesses of that kingdom?

“Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. As Jacob was threatened with death by his angry brother, so the people of God will be in peril from the wicked who are seeking to destroy them. And as the patriarch wrestled all night for deliverance from the hand of Esau, so the righteous will cry to God day and night for deliverance from the enemies that surround them.” {CC 68.3}

The righteous will cry to God day and night. Will God hear them? He will. What about the wicked? He won’t.

“When in his distress Jacob laid hold of the Angel, and made supplication with tears, the heavenly Messenger, in order to try his faith, also reminded him of his sin, and endeavored to escape from him. But Jacob would not be turned away. He had learned that God is merciful, and he cast himself upon His mercy. He pointed back to his repentance for his sin, and pleaded for deliverance. As he reviewed his life, he was driven almost to despair; but he held fast the Angel, and with earnest, agonizing cries urged his petition until he prevailed.” {CC 68.4}

Have we learned that God is merciful? Now is the time to learn this. If we don’t learn it now we will crumble at that time. Jacob laying hold of the angel with such a determined manner is similar to God’s people in the hour of trial. There are many promises in the word of God we need to learn now. Scripture should be committed to memory. When we are in flight, we won’t have a Bible in our hand. We need to be able to give reason for our faith. Satan will bring before us the sins of our life. No man but Jesus has gone through this example before; we can only look at Jesus. Jesus’ experience was really one which was quite horrifying and He was the innocent one.

“To the chief Musician upon Ajeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [why art thou so] far from helping me, [and from] the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou [art] holy, [O thou] that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our Fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I [am] a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.” Ps.

22:1-6

This was Jesus' experience. On the cross, with almost His last breath, He cried, my Father my Father why have you forsaken Me? Jesus felt that His Father had forsaken Him. Why are You so far? You've helped Me all My life, all 33 years. Where was the Father?

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.' Not only did the darkness enshroud the immediate vicinity of the cross, but 'there was darkness over the whole land.'" {ST, December 8, 1898 par. 6}

"God dwells in the thick darkness; He hides His glory from human eyes. The Father, with His heavenly angels, was enclosed in that thick darkness. God was close beside His Son, though not manifesting Himself to Him or to any human being. Had one ray of His glory and power penetrated the thick darkness that enveloped Him, every human spectator would have been destroyed. And in that thick darkness God hid from prying eyes the last human agony of His Son. He clothed nature with sackcloth, that she might not look upon her suffering, dying Author in His last humiliation." {ST, December 8, 1898 par. 7}

The Father was right there with His angels in the darkness. The angels desired to help Jesus on the cross but they were told, no, this must happen. Jesus suffered and died alone for our sins.

"I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou [art] my God from my mother's belly. Be not far from me; for trouble [is] near; for [there is] none to help. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look [and] stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns." Ps. 22:10, 11, 15-21

The Father was not in a position where He could help Jesus as He had to pass through this. Jesus went through 33 years of character building to pass that trial.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he [was] wounded for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for

our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:3-5

Do we have peace today? It is a nice day, birds are singing, the government is good to us, we have peace because Jesus suffered. Otherwise there would be no peace.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, [and] shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him [a portion] with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Ps. 53:11, 12

He shall see the travail of His soul and He shall be satisfied. This is such a beautiful promise that all his life Jesus prepared Himself for what was going to come. I'm not going to focus on the trial but the end result. He knew that perseverance of His Father's unending love would help. In Gethsemane He said, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. In Isaiah 63 He said, I have trodden the wine press alone. He bore the burden of our iniquities. This describes what the faithful few will experience in the time of Jacob's trouble. It will be self-awareness. Jesus felt like the sin placed upon Him was separating Him from His Father, and we also in the time of Jacob's trouble will have a greater degree of self-awareness. Satan will bring all kinds of things to our awareness, telling us how great a sinner we are. We know, but Jesus died and He conquered. This needs to be our confident answer. Not in our self but in Christ.

"Such will be the experience of God's people in their final struggle with the powers of evil. God will test their faith, their perseverance, and their confidence in His power to deliver them. Satan will endeavor to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless; that their sins have been too great to receive pardon. They will have a deep sense of their shortcomings, and as they review their lives their hopes will sink. But remembering the greatness of God's mercy, and their own sincere repentance, they will plead His promises made through Christ to helpless, repenting sinners. Their faith will not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. They will lay hold of the strength of God, as Jacob laid hold of the Angel, and the language of their souls will be, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'" {CC 68.5}

Jesus, on the cross when enveloped in darkness and when separated from His Father could have thought, I've done something wrong, the Father has separated from Me, I have to get off the cross; this is not where God wants Me to be. But He remembered His Father's mercy. It says we remember our own sincere repentance otherwise we can't remember it at that time. We see here Jesus focus. Where did He

turn His eyes to? What did He contemplate? He was despised and afflicted, forsaken of everyone.

“I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel. For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.” Ps. 22:22-24

How did Jesus know that the Father heard? He didn't. It is a thing called faith. Only by faith did He know, “My Father hath heard My affliction and is with Me through the trial.” We read in Isaiah 53, He saw the travail of His soul and was satisfied.

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Heb. 12:2

That was a shameful death. Something I wouldn't wish upon my enemies, but yet we are so thankful that Jesus went through it. After Jesus' death and resurrection, the first one to see Him was Mary. A dear friend of Jesus. She didn't recognise Him at first, thinking He was someone else. He was resurrected in new flesh. When she recognised Him she went to embrace Him but He said, “not yet as I've not seen My Father.”

Jesus wanted to return to heaven to see that His sacrifice was sufficient. When Jesus returned to heaven, the picture is given.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” Ps. 24:3, 4

That applied to Jesus “He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This [is] the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.” Ps. 24:5-7

We understand from different passages in the Bible, especially Ezekiel, that when God creates things, He creates living creatures. It is speaking to the gates, “lift up, the King of Glory is coming in.” What is the reply?

“Who [is] this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift [them] up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he [is] the King of glory. Selah.” Ps. 24:8-10

Why was He the King of Glory? He was strong and mighty in battle. He had fought the battle to every last degree and was victorious. Praise to Him. That tells us the experience of Jesus going through that darkest trial and the victory afterwards. What about during the trial? Where was He? What were His thoughts? What encouraged Him? It is no coincidence that Psalms 23 is placed between the two Psalms, 22 and 24. It is so precious that when Jesus was in His darkest moment, this Psalm was dear to Him. It will also encourage us countless times.

“The LORD [is] my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk



through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou [art] with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparast a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” Ps. 23:1-6.

Did Jesus go through the valley of the shadow of death? Darkness? Will we go through the same? Yes, we also will. Jesus knew by faith that he would dwell in the house of the Lord forevermore. It was these thoughts that encouraged Him through that moment of trial. When we are thrown into the same confusion and experience feelings of guilt, uncertainty and insecurity, Satan will bring these things to us. We need to know how to deal with him. We need to know how to hold onto the promises that strengthened Jesus.

“Alas! for that day [is] great, so that none [is] like it: it [is] even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jer. 30:7

Did Jesus know that he would be saved out of it? Only by faith. No one had actually been there before. There was no guarantee, it was faith alone. Here we have the assurances of God's word. We know that when we go through that experience that the righteous will be righteous still. So great is that time of trouble that our heart will be wondering. Uncertainty

coming in? Insecurity? No, we have to banish those thoughts. "For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, [that] I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make [him] afraid." Jer. 30:8-10

None will ever again make Jacob afraid because that will be the ultimate test and trial. The ultimate victory that will be won. We know the lessons that we can learn from the eagle-- a very simple bird that God created. It has a brain smaller than a pea and yet we can learn so much. When a storm comes about the eagle rises upon very strong wings. The wind is strong also. When the wind comes up he has to fight for hours. Knowing by faith and experience that above the storm is sunshine and no more wind. We need to have this experience from the storms of life today; they give us assurance that in that time of Jacob's trouble we shall be able to rise above the winds of strife. Ellen White was given a dream which she refers to as an impressive dream.

In the dream she saw a company travelling along a pathway. It was reasonably comfortable. They were travelling along with horses. On one side the cliff and on the other side the sky. As they travelled, they realised there is no more room for the wagons. So they took the precious things on the horses and off the wagons. Then they continued and they found it was difficult to let the horses stay so they continued on foot. They continued carrying what they could until the burden on their backs wouldn't let them continue. Finally they were walking in single file, one foot, one in front of the other. Then as they went they realised they had to take off their shoes to get a better grip. As they continued they saw a small thin cord in front. As they continued they placed more and more weight on that cord. Eventually they were relying on that cord quite a bit. Then they came to a chasm with beautiful green gardens on the other side, and they knew they had to get there; but they knew the only way was by faith. Then one of the people in the company asked, what are these cords anchored to? These cords are cords of faith. We need to put our whole weight on them in order to make it through the time of Jacob's trouble. They did. Ellen White recounts that great drops of sweat beaded up on James White's brow. They were fearful, but faith won out and they swung across. The experience in that dream is very applicable to us.

We are going along that path way. As that cord comes across our pathway, we need to use it more and more. No matter in what position on this pathway we find ourselves. No matter, practice exercising faith. Otherwise we'll come to the end at the precipice saying, "No, I can't go on." Let us never be of

those that turn back for they will miss out on the reward. At the time of Jacob's trouble, what lightens their faces? What brings joy to the heart again? Isn't it the voice of God? Isn't it the realisation that Jesus is coming only days away?

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken [it]. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this [is] our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this [is] the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25:8, 9

We all profess to be waiting for God, but a profession is not a saving faith. We need a saving faith that is the only thing that will bring us through that final trial. My wish and prayer for each one of us is that the Lord will bring the right circumstances into our lives, often unpleasant, to try our faith, to show us where our failings are. This is never pleasant. It is not something naturally we would look forward to. Praise be to God that we have been given the promises and assurances. He is a merciful God for all who will come to Him. As we increase in faith we will be found in that day. Amen.

By Markus Dammasch

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?

"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3

The Bible is the book where we find the words of our living God, showing us the meaning of our existence.

Like a ray of light it illuminates the way to the truth and to eternal life, and God has given us the privilege to read it.

It is a gift of immense value that we cannot refuse.

May the mercy of
with all of us.

God be
AMEN.

Alina Anca





“YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!”

“Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.” 1 CORINTHIANS 8: 1 (KJV).

STRUGGLING CHURCH

All of Chapter 8 of 1st Corinthians, but especially verses 1-13, in essence states that we should not abuse our Christian liberty to the offense of our brethren. As we read on we can see how the sensitivity of conscience, thereby, can manifest itself. Fine and extensive notions in our heads, without love to God and man in our heart, do but only puff us up with self-conceit, and render us detestable to God! And nothing more plainly manifests our want of solid knowledge than our contempt of others as weak and foolish! Read on for a clearer understanding.

The Apostle Paul was faced with such a special problem, but with food, in the early pioneer Church of Corinth when asked whether or not he could eat food sacrificed or offered to idols. “Things offered to idols” were the remainders of animals sacrificed to heathen gods; whether an animal was offered as a private or a public sacrifice, portions of the meat remained for the one who offered the sacrifice. The meat left after the magistrates or officers took what they wanted might be sold to the markets for resale to the people of the city. Evidences of such market stalls still persist today in Ancient Corinth.

Corinth, firstly, was the most prominent city of Greece at that time; a bustling center for trade and commerce serving as the crossroads between the East and what was considered Europe at that time (today only one hour from Athens). But like any large port city, it was disreputable; decrepit, evil, wicked, dangerous! In fact the classical ancient Greek dramas portrayed the drunkard on stage as “the Corinthian!”

The Corinthian church of Christians was in the doldrums; disputing, doubting, struggling. Imagine a church composed of converted idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, thieves, drunkards, and swindlers! (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Just think that such a church, furthermore, made up of people from such backgrounds soon encountered a mass of prob-

lems. For one, Paul faced a huge challenge; not only diet or food, but to convince these believers, for one thing, of the immorality of sexual activities that had been a part of everyday worship under their old religion. In that church of Corinth—its local situation and its culture, as in Muslim countries today—whether or not to wear a veil was a major issue for women (1 Cor. 11:3-10). In the Middle East, a woman who appeared in public barefaced, without a veil, showed loose morals. Some Muslim countries today still retain that custom. Paul’s advice applied directly to the cultural situation in Corinth, where unruly women were disrupting the worship services. (1 Cor. 11:5).

MEAT

The problems posed to Paul, then were:

- 1.) Could a Christian partake of meat offered to a false god in a heathen feast?
- 2.) Might a Christian buy and eat flesh offered to idols?
- 3.) Might a Christian, when invited to a home of a friend, eat flesh which had been offered to idols?

These were very ticklish problems for Paul, but he did set forth certain principles to guide the believers in Corinth.

The question or questions posed involves a believer’s “liberty” in non-moral questions. They were worried about offending God and about offending the conscience of the weaker Christian in this matter. Although we are no longer troubled by the problem of whether we ought to eat meat offered to idols or not (as animal sacrifices ended with the crucifying of Jesus Christ on the cross, and the tearing of the curtain between the Holy and Most Holy places of the ancient Sanctuary—sacrificial worship being abolished); we are still, however, confronting this same principle today.

We have Christian taboos about many other issues that may not be directly addressed or clearly stated for many, but are clearly detrimental to our health and salvation: smoking, drinking, eating of meat, dancing, dress, hair, and other issues, but are adequately spoken of and explained in the Spirit of Prophecy. But in fact, God’s diet for man; man’s original diet is clearly stated in Genesis 1:29; simply, a vegetarian diet; “flesh is excluded” (CD 375).

“Daniel and his companions showed the benefits of such a diet.” (CD 155) This dissertation, however, is not expounding this facet of Paul’s problems with the Corinthian Church which was concerned with Christian liberties and choices.

Ah! Yet, again, for many we are faced with the “free-spirit,” liberated man and woman of today. Many who are still struggling to break free from the bonds imposed by evil and sin. One great principle of life, however, mankind has today, a precious gift from God, is the complete freedom of choice, a free will (animals do not have it).

Man was created perfect in the image of God, but at the same time gave man a free will, and God in His mercy, to restrict man, to do good and not evil, gave him a Law, but this Law man transgressed; it was his own will (his choice) to do so, and thus, though he was subject to it, yet it was not the will of His creator that he should sin (Romans 8:20).

Yet, for many in this popular, but misdirected New Age 21st Century, this free-spirited attitude is filled with anxieties! Many poor souls reflect, in retrospect, what their lives would have been like if they had taken another course or path in life; made another choice. They ponder on their choices of the past, actually regressing rather than progressing and prospering in the Lord and dwelling on spiritual things, but rather choosing the defunct (“flesh offered to idols!”).

CHOICE

Consequently, the mind “feeds” on itself, growing into a state of doubt, confusion, and even terrifying thought at times; negative thinking (Type D) which replaces wholesome, noble, edifying positive thoughts (Type A). Guilt stealthily creeps in to worsen matters, gradually affecting sleep, appetite, performance, efficiency, and... holiness. They morosely dwell on their past choices in life and thereby kill the person they really wanted or wished to be! They’re haunted, grim, worn, and can find no escape... “No remedy” (2 Chron. 36:16; Prov. 29:1; 6:15; Isa. 1:5,6). But why?

Well, many reasons, but one prominent one is, interestingly, shown in a survey which reveals that 22% of American Christians read their Bible through every year, but 35% don’t read the Bible at all because they believe it is irrelevant to their daily problems, conduct, goals, personal matters, and comfort. Well, they are wrong, wrong, wrong! The Bible is as realistic, alive, and practical book as you are likely to read, and its many inspired-by-God writers know the power of choice, and Christian liberty--God’s gift to our humanity that makes us who we are. “Man can

make the choice of Christ or the world.” (2T 494).

You see, one of the problems you and I have in these closing days, is that we have too many choices. We are bombarded, pulverized, with thousands of competing and contradictory options – from consumer goods to careers to religious faiths – and we are terrified of making the wrong decisions, of missing out, of committing ourselves to someone or something, or some church or school, friend, or family that we will later regret.

But, do not consider it any different for a moment; that it was any different for a Christian in the 1st century. When you consider the choices available to us, living in 1st centu-

As for me and my house ,we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15.



ry Corinth, it was not all that different from living in 21st century Athens, New York, London, or Atlanta. In visiting Corinth today, it is a beautiful, sophisticated thoroughly secular city committed to land development, commerce, capitalism, threats, strikes, protests, jovial children, abundant parks. But, the choices of religious faiths and various gods still persist and flourish with abandon! In fact, however, in the end, “all men decide their destiny by their own choice.” (PK 536). “God saves no man against his choice.” (3T 457).

The problem the 1st century Christians had is the same one you and I face; how to live one’s life in ordinary times (no longer ordinary) while awaiting the extraordinary promises of God. What are these promises? Well, many! The choices are many! But, dwell on these pertinent choices for now: (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). When overstressed, in a crisis, asking how long, then read these blessed promises.

Again, the immediate topic for discussion in Paul’s long letter to the Corinthian Christians in the thoroughly pagan city of Corinth was about food (and will be in the end days – and music!). If you wanted to buy meat in 1st Century

Corinth you went to the butcher shop, which was a problem as the meat was sacrificed in the Temple of Apollo or Osiris (which remnants remain today); or to some other pagan deity.

The question arose in which it was conjectured going through the ancient streets of Corinth, how many Christians resided there? It was found that less than 1% of the population, because most of the citizens worshiped in pagan temples that offered prostitution, alcohol, and all kinds of debauchery – in marked contrast to the strictness of Christianity.

TWO SCHOOLS

Thus, you had two schools of thought in the Corinthian church. One group, the “intellectuals”; pushing Paul’s view of “freedom in Christ” too far! Their liberty to eat whatever they wanted was interfering with those who had a more traditional view. The radical individualists who knew what they believed were undermining the morale of the church. The liberals were intolerant of the conservative – reformers. They knew that there is only one God and that idols were nothing more than lifeless objects, so why not eat whatever you want? What was said, (and is often said today); “If you confess Christ as your Lord, all things are permissible.” And how did Martin Luther, Paul’s greatest disciple, state the case fifteen centuries later, “Love God and sin boldly.” Many argue and rationalize today, thusly; “it’s a matter of conscience.” or “it’s not a matter of salvation;” eating meat, drinking, military service, dress, etc.

Ah! But that was precisely the problem. Knowledge does not automatically produce consideration for others. In fact, quite often it leads the person “in the know” to become impatient with the one who doesn’t “know as much.” Paul, himself warns them, “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (1 Cor. 8:1). What is more: knowledge is so often self-deceiving and illusory; “If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.” No matter how much you know there is still much beyond your comprehension. Socrates, the famous Greek philosopher stated, “I know one thing – I know nothing.” But, “If one loves God, one is known by God” (1 Cor. 8:2).

The task of a Christian is to choose oneself, to become that person that is a true follower of Jesus Christ. This means both emulating as much as one possibly can, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ; but it also means being obedient, completely obedient to God’s Ten Commandments (all Ten!). The only way to be related and to accept God’s Truth is through a process of ethical – religious striving! It is through this persistent striving that we be-

come Christian followers, and... saints! (Rev. 14:12).

Ah! But, for some it might seem difficult to be a Christian in Christendom; a believer and follower of the Truth. Just look and ask around you, the people like you: the people who worship on Sunday (or Sabbath) morning, are basically good people. We or they might say, “we don’t steal, lie, cheat, kill.” And, “We try to live good decent lives.” Moreover, “we have a certain amount of concern and compassion for the poor, homeless, downtrodden, and the oppressed.”

But, that is exactly the problem! We think being good, going to church occasionally, lighting a candle, giving an offering, living nice, unthreatening lives is all that is required. But, something else must be realized; the very act of being “good enough” precludes us from accepting God’s grace, mercy, protection and strength! You see, we are just prideful enough, just enough convinced that we can make it by doing a few good things on our own, that we forget that it depends on faith and earnest faith alone; but with prayers of faith, obedience and works will follow. (James 1:25; 2:10).

Accept what you are, instead of denying it. Recognize who you are. For we come to Jesus the way we are with all our faults, and shortcomings. God says, “I love you with all your ways, with all your fears and doubts. I am the one who created you and loves you more than you can imagine. Just give it all to Me; come to Me; let us reason together.” (Isaiah 1:18). That is the joy of the Gospel; confession, repentance, forgiveness, renewal, acceptance, and newness of life.

But, with tender and exact care ought Christians to avoid dubious or even innocent and indifferent practices, which may grieve their fellow believers and occasion their stumbling into sin. Tread lightly!

Paul wrote the most wonderful and most troublesome promise of the Bible: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28). You see, things work together for God because we are held in God’s love.

“YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!” What choice are you making? “Each soul is left to his own, to choose Christ or Satan.” (1 SM 96). Amen

John Theodorou
U.S.A.



CHILDREN'S CORNER

In 1819 near the village of Banbridge, County Down, Ireland, a baby boy was born. His Irish mother called him Joseph.

The parents of Joseph made sure that he received a good education. In 1842, he graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, with a bachelor of arts degree.

Now, a young man with a quarter century behind him, Joseph felt the sharp pangs of tragedy strike for the first time. The young Irish woman whom he intended to marry was thrown from a horse while crossing the Ban River... and was drowned.

In his sorrow, Joseph turned his life course away from his native Ireland and by the middle of the 1800's had emigrated to Canada. In a little rural village called Bailieboro, Joseph became the private tutor to the children of a family called Pengelly.

The two thousand acre Pengelly Farm on the banks of Rice Lake was the scene of many happy moments for him, teaching the Pengelly children, ministering in the farm's log chapel built for the pioneer families (for Joseph was a Christian) and he found the love of a beautiful lady, the niece of Commander Pengelly. But, that love was to be short-lived. After her conversion, and subsequent baptism in the icy waters of the lake, pneumonia developed... and then tuberculosis. At the age of 23, she was laid to rest, waiting to see her new found Saviour at the resurrection.

Though a Christian's heart does not sorrow over death,

JOSEPH SCRIVEN— FRIEND OF JESUS

as those without hope, one can fully sympathize with the young Irishman over this second tragic loss of a sweetheart. He was so grieved by this tragedy that left teaching.

Joseph never married. He spent the last twenty five years of his life with winters spent in Bewdley and the summers in Port Hope. Here he performed hundreds acts of Christian charity, giving the needy his clothing, money and his labour. He was often seen walking the streets of Port Hope carrying a saw and sawhorse. He cut wood for the destitute, delivered milk for his landlady and cared for the sick without payment. He could quote scripture for any occasion, and he even preached on Walton Street, Port Hope's business thoroughfare. He gave away his money and most of his possessions and worked to help the poor and the destitute

On an August night in 1886, he became ill, and flushed with fever wandered out of the house. On the morning of August 10th, after an all night search, his friends found him on the banks of Rice Lake... in an attitude of prayer... but his spirit had fled his body. Tenderly he was laid to rest in the little Pengelly cemetery beside the remains of her whom he loved so well.

During 31 winters, the snows of Ontario covered the graves on the hill. And no one seemed to notice. But, one day an amazing thing happened.

The Premier of Ontario, and 6,000 people gathered by the graves of Joseph and his sweetheart Eliza Catherine, to dedicate a monument to the



memory of the Irish immigrant: whose name was Joseph Scriven. On that occasion, Premier E.C. Drury of Ontario paid this tribute:

“He did not build a railway or amass a fortune. But he did more than that. He contributed a thought that will outlive railroads and fortunes. It will go on enriching the lives of men, when other things of a material nature have crumbled and perished.”

What was the thought he contributed? Out of life’s tragedies he had discovered the greatest truth of all! Just prior to his death, a friend found among Joseph’s belongings, a bit of paper... on which a poem was scrawled.

You may not remember the name Joseph Scriven... but you will remember the mes-

sage he left to the world. To us, he leaves a legacy of one of the world’s most beloved hymns and the example of a lifetime of Christian service



Scriven originally called his poem, “Pray Without Ceasing;” written after the death of Eliza... and particularly to comfort his grieving mother in Ireland. It was later called, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.”

Someone at this very moment may be going through great struggles... and heartache. You can find the same assurance in the friendship of Jesus that caused Scriven to write the song that has blessed millions for over 100 years. The truth of it is still there... for you right now



What a Friend

***What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry, Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry, Everything to God in prayer!***

***Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; Take it to the Lord in prayer.***

***Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there.***

CANADIAN FIELD WORKERS' SEMINAR January 23 to February 3, 2011



Front row (L to R): Jerry Eaton, Elder Watts, Oscar Oviedo
Back row (L to R): Elder Hernandez, Raquel and Eldercito, Nicholas Anca, Conrad Bosse

The worker's seminar, 2011 was a time of spiritual, mental and physical encouragement and blessing. The Canadian workers had a chance to open up about the challenges in our work, and be challenged by books such as *Evangelism*, by Ellen G. White, and "I don't have enough faith to be an atheist," which showed us how to counter many of the challenges to our faith today. We look forward to being a blessing to the cause of truth and righteousness even more in the future, since we have had this seminar. We solicit the prayer of all the members in Canada for the truth to advance into new areas in Canada, and perhaps in new ways. Since the workers have had this time together to bond and grow, perhaps we are standing at the crossroads of great things in 2011. Let us pray for wondrous triumphs of the cross this year as all the church becomes active in this work. AMEN *Jerry Eaton*

"The winter meeting was one of the best seminars I have attended. First, Elder Larry Watts shared with us his experiences and concepts regarding missionary work. It is wonderful to be able to learn from men of God who can help us to increase our vision and can also guide us to have a better understanding of God; to see as He sees. Second, sharing with colleagues and friends allowed us to learn through the experiences of others how to improve our own work for the salvation of souls. In addition, we started to develop teamwork as labourers in God's vineyard. This is a very important element in order for the remnant church to develop and reach its full potential. Finally, the activities conducted on Sabbath, February 5, opened the minds of the members of the Toronto church to think seriously about using the gifts that God has given them in His infinite grace, and to apply them, like many colours, in beautifying Christ's church, preparing her for His soon return. In conclusion, the



Sister Raquel preparing delicious meals

worker's meetings brought us nearer to our Lord, giving us new strength as we return to the field of harvest. Soon momentous events will take place on this earth and the Lord is waiting for us to be ready. We thank the Lord for all His kindness." *Elder Hernandez*

I personally can say that the Lord in His mercy bestowed us with many blessings during the retreat. We know from the Bible that Jesus sometimes needed to be with His disciples in a place where nobody could disturb them in order to teach and instruct them for the work set before them. We are involved in this great commission today; we are Jesus' disciples and we need unity and prayer today more than ever before. I thank the Lord that this worker's retreat was a great blessing for me in the sense that I was able to learn from Larry Watts, who has a lot of experience in missionary work. He taught us the principle of success and how to be more efficient in winning souls for Jesus. This was a time of learning and prayer and now I have the opportunity to practice what I have learned. Also the experiences from all my co-workers there made me realize how great the God is that we serve, full of mercy and compassion. I am thankful to the Lord for this experience and for all the sisters and brothers, whose contribution allowed this seminar to take place. May the Lord help us that we can have more of these meetings in the future, and may our Father give us the power to accomplish all what we planned together, for the edifying of the church here in Canada. I give glory to Jesus who loves us. God bless you. *In Christ.*
Br Nicholas Anca

For me, the retreat was necessary and needs to be repeated every year. It was especially interesting to learn more about the book of *Evangelism*. I also found it valuable to for us to share our experiences with each other.

God bless. Br. Conrad



BAPTISM IN GHANA



EAST AFRICA YOUTH COMMITTEE



YOUTH CONFERENCE IN MOMBASA KENYA



STEP BY STEP

**He does not lead me year by year
Nor even day by day.
But step by step my path unfolds;
My Lord directs the way.**

**Tomorrow's plans I do not know,
I only know this minute;
But He will say, "This is the way,
By faith now walk ye in it."**

**And I am glad it is so.
Today's enough to bear;
And when tomorrow comes, His grace
Shall far exceed His care.**

**What need to worry then or fret?
The God who gave His Son
Holds all my moments in His hand
And gives them, one by one.**