


The Reformation
Messenger

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 7, JULY 2011

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



**“The heavens declare the glory of God; and
the firmament sheweth His handywork.”**

Psalm 19:1



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.

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- Tel: 905-876-2518
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*“The heavens declare the glory
of God; and the firmament sheweth His
handywork.” Psalm 19:1*

“The things of nature upon which we look today give us but a faint conception of Eden's beauty and glory. Yet much that is beautiful remains. Nature testifies that One infinite in power, great in goodness, mercy, and love, created the earth and filled it with life and gladness. Even in their blighted state all things reveal the handiwork of the great Master Artist. Though sin has marred the form and beauty of the things of nature, though on them may be seen traces of the work of the prince of the power of the air, yet they still speak of God. In the briars, the thistles, the thorns, the tares, we may read the law of condemnation; but from the beauty of natural things, and from their wonderful adaptation to our needs and our happiness, we may learn that God still loves us, that His mercy is yet manifested to the world.” – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 256

“The Creator has given abundant evidence that His power is unlimited, that He can establish kingdoms, and overturn kingdoms. He upholds the world by the word of His power. He made the night, marshaling the shining stars in the firmament. He calls them all by name. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork, showing men that this little world is but a jot in God's creation. . . .

“The inhabitants of the unfallen worlds look with pity and reproach on man's pride and self-importance. The wealthy and the honored of the world are not the only ones who glorify self. Many who profess to revere God talk of their wisdom and their might. They act as if God is under obligations to them, as if He cannot carry on His work without their

aid. Let such gaze into the starry heavens, and with admiration and awe study the marvelous works of God. Let them think of the wisdom He displays in maintaining perfect order in the vast universe, and of the little reason that man has to boast of his attainments.

“All that man has—life, the means of existence, happiness, and other blessings unnumbered that come to him day by day—is from the Father above. Man is a debtor for all he proudly claims as his own. God gives His precious gifts, that they may be used in His service. Every particle of the glory of man's success belongs to God. It is His manifold wisdom that is displayed in the works of men, and to Him belongs the praise.

“By and by the gates of heaven will be thrown open to admit God's children, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall on their ears like richest music, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’ (Matthew 25:34).

“Then the redeemed will be welcomed to the home that Jesus is preparing for them. There their companions will not be the vile of earth, liars, idolaters, the impure, and unbelieving; but they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and through divine grace have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection, that afflicts them here has been removed by the blood of Christ, and the excellence and brightness of His glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, is imparted to them.” – *Lift Him Up*, p. 54

Ellen G. White

CHILDREN OF GOD



“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”
Matthew 5:9

During the Vietnam War, American protesters coined the phrase, “Make peace, not war.” There was so little support for that conflict that the United States eventually withdrew in defeat – having lost the will to win, it was overcome by less sophisticated but more determined foes. “The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. . . .” Ecclesiastes 9:11

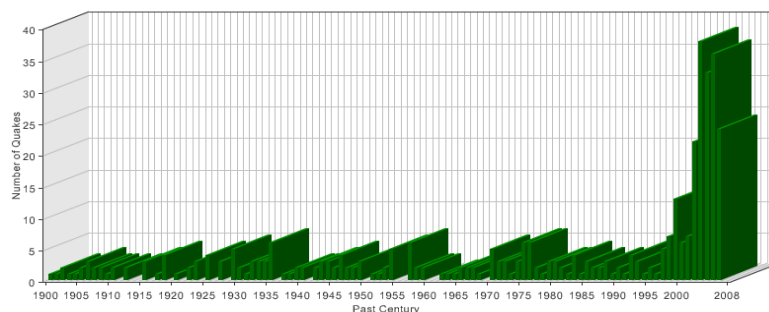
Human wisdom argues for ever greater force – more deadly modern armaments, more sophisticated generals, and better-trained troops – to gain the victory and maintain peace. In international relations, leaders of state often justify the buildup and maintenance of a strong military with such arguments as: “You don’t ever want to enter negotiations with an adversary from the standpoint of weakness,” or, “A strong military is the best defense and most potent weapon in keeping the peace.” Yet a military must do more than rattle its swords; it eventually needs to use them or become a “paper tiger,” a wasted investment, an empty argument.

The problem with force is that one always needs more, and more is never enough. Jesus stated: “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matthew 26:52. While worldly empires come and go by force, it is recognized by historians that most nations fall first through inner corruption. Peace and prosperity generally lead to apathy and pleasure seeking. That’s how it was with Ancient Israel – an experience that has been more or less repeated in the history of the church. “In every age seasons of spiritual revival and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit have been followed by spiritual darkness and prevailing corruptions.” –*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 129–130

CONTINUAL UPHEAVAL

While Jesus’ first coming was associated with a time of peace in the world, He said that at the end of time, before His second coming, we would “hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Matthew 24:6. The world has hardly experienced a day of peace since 1848. That year is sometimes referred to as “the year of revolution” or the “storm year.” “Throughout the spring and summer of 1848, crowds of working-class radicals and middle-class liberals in Paris, Milan, Venice, Naples, Palermo, Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Krakow, Munich, and Berlin toppled the old regimes and began the task of forging a new order. In many ways the year of revolutions continues to shape the modern world.” –Mike Rapport, *1848: Year of Revolution*

Yes, “nation shall rise against nation . . . and [with that] great earthquakes shall be in divers places. . . .” Mark 13:8. The USGS (United States Geological Survey) has produced a chart showing the last one hundred years of “Worldwide Deadly and Destructive Earthquakes between Magnitudes 6 and 8.” It is very interesting.



<http://www.thehorizonproject.com/earthquakes.cfm>

Jesus also associated the end-time “distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.” Luke 21:25. *The Aberdeen Journal* of Wednesday, August 23, 1848, reported that terrible storms at sea on August 18–19 resulted in great tragedy and loss of life. Probably the most intense hurricane ever to hit Tampa, Florida, U.S.A., occurred in that year, on September 25. It was so intense that the tide rose 15 feet above low water, destroying all the vessels in the port. A second hurricane hit Tampa one month later in October, causing a 10-foot tide in the Bay (James B. Elsner, Department of Geography, Florida State University).” Many other examples could be given, but even the examples cited here seem insignificant when compared with what has occurred in just the last two years. And what are we to say about these things? Simply this: “Study the Revelation in connection with Daniel; for history will be repeated.” –*Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers*, no. 7, p. 55

PEACE AND GOOD WILL

Now is not the time to be lukewarm. It is when men's hearts are “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21:26), that many of those same hearts are open to the Prince of Peace. Many have never heard of Him, and relatively few know Him, His message, what is coming upon the earth, and how to be ready for the day of judgment. Ignorance, fear, and the dread of the unknown are fueling the actions of many. But God's word is clear. He has told us what to do. Our work is to teach men and women and even children how to fear God alone – the first angel's message. Knowing and trusting the Saviour gives peace. Without knowing Him we will never be able to face the coming storm, much less bring others to the rest in Christ that is the essential preparation for that time. “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Isaiah 28:16

“In obedience to God's law there is great gain.” And just what is that great gain? “In conformity to the divine requirements there is a transforming power that brings **peace and good will** among men.” –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 192 (emphasis mine)

But to be truly obedient, a “new moral taste has to be created before man will love to obey the law of God.” –*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 183. That is another way

of saying that there must be a transformation, a new birth. “The converting power of God can transform inherited and cultivated tendencies; for the religion of Jesus is uplifting. ‘Born again’ means a transformation, a new birth in Christ Jesus.” –*The Adventist Home*, p. 206. Receiving Christ as the Word of God brings this about.

“When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is ‘born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.’ **This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the Word of God.** When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to cooperate with God.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 520 (emphasis mine)

To be peacemakers, children of God, we “need to be converted from our faulty lives to the faith of the Gospel. Christ's followers have no need to try to shine. If they will behold constantly the life of Christ they will be changed in mind and heart into the same image. Then they will shine without any superficial attempt. The Lord asks for no display of goodness. In the gift of His Son He has made provision that our inward lives may be imbued with the principles of Heaven. It is the appropriation of this provision that will lead to a manifestation of Christ to the world. When the people of God experience the new birth, their honesty, their uprightness, their fidelity, their steadfast principles, will unflinchingly reveal it.” –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 251

“MAKE PEACE, NOT WAR”

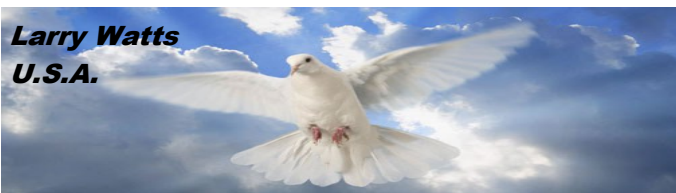
“Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy.” –*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1075. Even ministers have been known to “preach Christ of contention, not sincerely.” Philippians 1:16. We are not to take our example from war protestors who resort to public demands, character assassination, hatred, and disrespect of anything and anyone in authority, especially those who may hold other opinions. These “whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.” “They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.” Psalm 64:3, 6

-8. It should be obvious that those who engage in such practices are not peacemakers or "called the children of God." They have another father.

But what is not so obvious is why we do not have more power to inspire others to stand with the meek and lowly Jesus. Both Isaiah and Paul taught that God is our Father when we separate from unbelievers and unclean things and practices (Isaiah 52:11; 2 Corinthians 6:15, 17). We usually think of these words as applying to contracts or partnerships with unbelievers or those of other faiths. Those things are clear, and we cannot expect God's blessings when we compromise in such areas of life. But that principle also applies to other things, such as the games we watch and play, the music we listen to and even sing, the events we attend, and the amusements we participate in.

Wonder no longer. "If those who profess to believe the present truth did love God supremely, and their neighbors as themselves, would there be so little done in representing the truth to others? Every soul is to be a blessing to others. Souls are perishing for the word of life; but because the professed people of God have left their first love, they are in blindness, and are destitute of the blessings it should be their privilege to impart. Lacking the power of God, professors fail to accomplish the work of God. When we gather about the great white throne, before the Judge of the living and the dead, what excuse shall we be able to render to God for having failed to obey His word, to represent Christ before the world?" *-The Youth's Instructor, June 14, 1894*

Recently I stood on the rocky west coast of Aruba and was fascinated by the pounding surf. Time and again the angry waves beat with enormous force and noise against the rocky cliffs. The picture is a lesson for us. At best, the foaming sea can only polish the peaceful stones. And so it is with the children of God. We cannot prevent the wicked from casting up mire and dirt. But we can stand unmoved by being in Christ. Those in the world who are honest will see the difference and take their stand with the remnant - the peacemakers who are called the children of God. Let us determine to be such followers of God. AMEN!



Beginning in the month of March 2011, problems arose in the University of Malawi, starting at one of the constituent colleges. Lecturers began a sit-in, demanding that the Inspector General of Police, who came to interrogate their colleague over an alleged political example he gave in class, must apologize to the lecturer for traumatizing him and his family. They requested that they be given the assurance that such an incident would not happen again to them. Little did I know that this strike would spill over to our college as well. Our lecturers at The Polytechnic also joined by laying down their tools in what they described as acting in the spirit of solidarity with their colleagues at Chancellor College. It was total confusion; days passed with no classes whatsoever. Then I remembered the following testimony:

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

"The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full

of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. **Strikes are common.**" –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 11 (emphasis mine)

Not long after our college joined (when the sit-in was coming to its third week), we were sent packing. The two colleges were closed indefinitely and everyone was required to leave by 12 noon Friday, April 1st, 2011. (This situation continues to exist up until now). This was a big blow for me as I was expected to complete fourth year (my last one) by September 23rd; thus several plans of mine were frustrated. However, I quickly realized that it might be Providence. These things were happening close to me as a wakeup call. As in the testimony quoted above, time is far spent and signs of the times are quickly fulfilling throughout the world. It may not be long now before Christ's kingdom of glory begins. At this time, I prayed to God, asking whether I should unite with Brother Raphael Tembo for intense missionary work during this unexpected holiday. Brother Raphael works as a Bible Worker and is also the current leader of the Northern field. I called him and he was very glad that together we would be working for God in His vineyard. Amidst resource constraints we happily stayed together, always believing in the great treasure God has kept for us in heaven where we will live better lives.

On the day I arrived in Mzuzu from Blantyre, we immediately began discussing issues of missionary work. Brother Tembo told me of the joy of missionary work and the numerous contacts he had made, but more on this later. A beginning point for me was to learn more about how to witness to the Bible Believer's Church. Brother Raphael has their books that expose their falsehood. Among the most difficult people to understand the truth are those from this faith because of how they have complicated their doctrine and twisted the plain statements of the Bible. Since these people are all over the world, you frequently meet them. In this article I wish to share with you on how you can witness to these people more effectively. I believe that perhaps this group is a ploy of Satan to create a counterfeit religion to the Adventist Message, as in most cases they understand some doctrinal points the Adventist way. (see beliefs number (d) first part and (e) below)

First of all, let me explain some of their beliefs. They believe that:

(a) In heaven there is Jesus only and there is no Father

(major doctrine).

(b) The serpent in Eden that beguiled man was not the snake we know today; it no longer exists but that it was a certain creature in human form, such that Eve did not eat the actual fruit.

(c) God created two kinds of people – what they call the 'spirit man' without the body – they say; and the 'physical man,' with the body.

(d) They are the 7th church of Revelation 3:14–21, the Laodicean church, which began in 1906.

(e) God's church needs to have a prophet to deliver the message for that time.

The first important counsel I will give is to never argue with them for any length of time on any of the first three points. If possible, listen in silence. You will speak to them later on regarding these matters. Then if they have not tackled points (d) and (e), draw their attention to them. Establish whether they are still the Laodicean Church or not. Establish also that a true prophet of God speaks the word of God and never lies, all his/her predictions must come true or otherwise he/she is from the devil. (Deuteronomy 18:21–22; Jeremiah 28:9). Let them agree on these matters squarely; and



no doubt they will as they have much trust in their prophet. Meanwhile, you should have their book on the predictions of their prophet William Marrion Branham that he wrote. It talks about the seven churches of Revelation. Its title is: "An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages." Then read with them about the explanation of the 7th church. The following prediction is made and it is false.

"The Laodicean Age began around the turn of the Twentieth Century, perhaps 1906. How long will it last? As a servant of God who has had multitudes of visions, of which NONE has ever failed, let me predict (I did not say prophesy, but predict) that this age will end around 1977. . . . Based on these seven visions, along with the

rapid changes which have swept the world in the last fifty years, I PREDICT (I do not prophesy) that these visions will have all come to pass by 1977. And though many may feel that this is an irresponsible statement in view of the fact that Jesus said that 'no man knoweth the day nor the hour.' I still maintain this prediction after thirty years because, Jesus did NOT say no man could know the year, month or week in which His coming was to be completed. So I repeat, I sincerely believe and maintain as a private student of the Word, along with Divine inspiration that 1977 ought to terminate the world systems and usher in the millennium." – William Marrion Branham, *An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages*, pp. 345, 347

Now you can plainly see that these are false prophecies. Are not the words of Christ fulfilled in Matthew 24:5, 11, 23, and other texts? To those who understand, they will heed this warning. Is that church not completely in error? Do we not have to thank God for discernment of truth from error?

When we scheduled a meeting with their top pastor they later on resented us, for they knew their falsehood would be exposed and they would consequently be faced with a decision. Enough with this, as space is limited.

I will now give a brief account of the other work in Mzuzu. I mentioned previously, that numerous contacts had been made. From Brother Tembo I have learned that door-to-door missionary work is not effective here. With the Watchtower doing this work, it has created prejudice in the minds of many people. Once people see you wearing a jacket and necktie they simply say, "You are from The Jehovah's Witnesses, and we belong to our church"; others will enter into a discussion just to be polite. Thus door-to-door missionary work seems no longer to be promising in our country, so we do not use it. We just go out, trusting in God's guidance, and wherever people are, we go there and start a discussion out of the blue and they think we are just merely making conversation. We show them no Bible at all unless the discussion becomes deeper and they start asking more questions. Then we take our Bibles out of our bags. Once a person shows an interest we lay hold of them and start visiting him or her at home. However, such methods need a lot of courage and tact in devising what story or question should be posed to arouse the interest and attention of the people.

I remember one time while on a bicycle, when I started with a bold heart, witnessing to the one that offered me transport. My colleague, Brother Raphael, did likewise on the other bicycle at the same time. Overall, there are many souls that are receiving lessons, and sometimes we fail to meet appointments because of limited time. Some attend our church services on Sabbath. One person has made a decision for God and comes to Brother Tembo's house to learn more with us. I encourage you to try this method of labour also! There is a lot that Providence has done to guide us in this work, but space does not allow everything to be put down. All we hope is that this will encourage you as well.

So, brethren and sisters, let us pray for the work here and all over the world, so as to hasten our Lord's return. The signs of the times are fast fulfilling, and we ought to be awake.

"When sinners are led to give themselves to the Saviour, angels bear the tidings heavenward, and there is great rejoicing among the heavenly host. 'Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.' Luke 15:7. A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host." – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 154. See also the reward in Daniel 12:3. Yes, there is joy in working for the saving of souls. AMEN

Joel Jungubawa Msiska
Mzuzu, Malawi

"God has stamped His image upon every work of His hand. In every object in nature, we see evidences of His mighty power. . . .

"Who can behold the wonders of God in the starry heavens, and yet deny that an infinite Power gave these jeweled lights their place, and upholds them there by His omnipotent arm? God has left His own witness upon the canvas of heaven and upon nature everywhere." –The Youth's Instructor, December 24, 1896

PRAYER: THE SACRED JOURNEYS

**“And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you.”
Luke 11:9**

ASKING

Many are not sure that God is listening to their prayers. Many, furthermore, do not want to weary God with their repeated requests. The Lord’s teaching on prayer in Luke 11 contradicts this notion. He told a parable about a man who went to his friend’s house at midnight and asked for some bread to feed his unexpected visitors. At first the friend refused, for he and his family were in bed. Finally he got up and gave him the bread – not out of friendship, but because the caller was so persistent (Luke 9:5–10).

You see, Jesus used this parable to contrast this reluctant friend with our generous heavenly Father. If an irritated neighbour will give in to his friend’s persistence and grant his request, how much more readily will our heavenly Father give us all we need! Yes, it is true that God, in His great wisdom, may sometimes delay His answers to prayer. It is also true that we must pray in harmony with the Scriptures and God’s will. Ah! But Jesus moved beyond those facts to urge us to persist in prayer. He told us to ask, seek, and knock (v.9) until the answer comes – either yes or no, either Urim or Thummim (Exodus 28:30). God never tires of us asking.

But wait a moment. Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him (Matthew 6:8). Then why ask? The whole meaning of prayer is that we may know God. But God does not tell us what He is going to do. He simply reveals to you who He is. Those who are not born again must ask and receive; but when we have received and have become rightly related to God, we

must maintain this simplicity of belief in Him while we pray.

HOLY SPIRIT

Furthermore, we have to pray relying on the Holy Spirit – what has been revealed to us. “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.” Jude 20

Firstly, prayer is important because He has told us, because of His redemption, it is the mightiest factor He has put into our hands.

Second, it is important because of the personal presence of the Holy Spirit in the day in which we live. We receive our knowledge of the Holy Spirit, not by experience first, but by the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. The testimony of Jesus Christ regarding the Holy Spirit is that, not only is He here, but also, the real, living experience the Holy Spirit works in us is that all His emphasis is laid on glorifying our Lord Jesus Christ. We know the Holy Spirit first by the testimony of Jesus, and then by the conscious enjoyment of His presence.

Therefore pray (Matthew 9:38).

Ah! But the first revelation is that we do not know how to pray, but “likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26. We need to learn to have a close relationship with Jesus Christ. As we do, we realize that the Holy Spirit

keeps us in a simple relationship with our Lord while we pray.

Our minds must be saturated by the revelation of prayer until we learn in every detail to pray in the Holy Spirit. You see, **prayer is not an exercise, it is life!**

SEEKING

But in our prayers with our endeavours, we must not only seek, but also ask. Then, in asking and seeking we must continue pressing, still knocking at the same door, and we shall at length prevail, not only by our prayers in concert, but by our particular prayers. Every one that asketh receiveth, even the weakest saint that asks in faith. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. . . ." Psalm 34:6

When we ask of God those things which Christ has here directed us to ask (that His name may be sanctified, that His kingdom may come, and His will be done), in these requests we must be importunate – persistent! We must never hold our peace day or night; we must not keep silence nor give God any rest until He establishes, until He makes Spiritual Jerusalem a praise in the earth (Isaiah 62:6–7). **Prayer, therefore, is the Truth for today!**

BURDENING

There was a poor man in Ireland, plodding along toward home, carrying a huge bag of potatoes. A horse and wagon finally drew up alongside him on the road, and the driver invited the man to climb aboard. After getting on the wagon, he sat down but continued to hold the heavy bag.

When the driver suggested that the man set the bag down in the wagon, he replied, "I don't want to trouble you too much, sir, you are giving me a ride already so I'll just carry the potatoes." How foolish of him! Yet, sometimes we attempt to bear the burdens of our lives in our own strength. No wonder we become weary and overwhelmed with anxiety and fear.

So, rather than trying to bear your burdens all by yourself, set them down in God's hands – with prayer. God invites you to burden Him with what burdens you – in prayer. Give Him each perplexing problem and make known to Him all of your needs. Bring to Him your daily burdens – never carry them alone! "Cast thy burden

upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. . . ." Psalm 55:22

A BATTLE

Ah! Well said and done – but prayer is the battle! It is a matter of indifference where you are. Whichever way God directs or engineers circumstances, the duty is to pray! Never allow the thought – "I am of no use where I am" – because you certainly can be of no use where you are not. Wherever God has put you in circumstances, pray to Him all the time. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you." John 16:23

Oh! But the fashionable idea that prayer is not essential is one of Satan's most successful traps to destroy souls. He has foisted this blasphemous idea on a drowsy and custom-laden world. "The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray." –*Steps to Christ*, p. 94. Prayer is a privilege. "Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. . . . Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him." –*Steps to Christ*, p. 93

Prayer, in reality, is communion with God. It is the fountain of wisdom; a **sacred journey**, and a gate to heaven. Moreover, it is the source of strength, peace, and happiness. Why? Because, "The Bible Tells Me So" (Hymn by W. Bradbury, 1862). The Bible is a gift from God, a gift of Jesus. Although the Bible is still the world's No. 1 Best Seller, it lies idle most of the time, replaced by the pleasures and glitter of the world.

One day a little girl went to her mother and asked, "Mommy, what is that large black book on the top of the bookshelf covered with dust?" The piouslike mother replied, "Oh, my dear child, that is God's Book!" The little girl answered back, "Well, Mommy, maybe we ought to give it back to God, because nobody in this house reads it."

"Pray" and "Praying" is mentioned over 500 times in the Bible! (James Strong, Thomas Nelson, *Strong's Concordance*, 2001). Jesus prayed to the Father with strong crying and tears (Hebrews 5:7). Paul says, Pray constantly (1 Thessalonians 5:17). James says, "Pray one for another." James 5:16

Every house in these troubled times needs to be a house of prayer, more now than ever before. Why?

How? When we pray for ourselves we must never forget our brethren. In the afflictions, sickness, or down-trodden souls, pray for the removal of these infirmities. Although we are to pray for our enemies, pray against their wickedness!

PRAYER GLORIFIES

How long must our prayers be “to be heard?” Well, John Wesley began prayer at 4 a.m. and prayed for two hours. His face was shining as he left his closet. John Fletcher’s walls of his room were stained with the breath of his prayers. His whole life was a life of prayer. Luther said, “If I don’t pray two hours every morning, the devil takes the victory throughout the day.”

In the account of the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus Christ was praying, all the sins of the world’s burdens were about to be placed upon Him. He was perspiring great drops of blood (this is a physiological phenomenon where the capillaries actually rupture due to undue stress) (Matthew 26:36–39). The temptation was exceedingly great! He lay prostrate to pray. Jesus Christ often went there to pray with the disciples.

Jesus said to His disciples in the Garden, “Tarry ye here, and watch with me.” Matthew 26:38. He continued to pray, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: not as I will, but as thou wilt.” Matthew 26:39. This cup was from the Father, not Satan!

Humanity would have died here if an angel had not come to support Him. Jesus knew completely what the cost would be; He voluntarily paid it!

SLEEPING

“And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Matthew 26:40–41. Instead of watching with Jesus Christ, who was burdened with sorrow, and

lending strength, sympathy and an alert presence, they were sleeping. Jesus imperatively needed them!

But they lost much by sleeping. Jesus Christ, in fact, wanted to strengthen them; to unite into the spirit of prayer, by their fervent support, and prayers. “He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.” Matthew 26:42

What does all of this represent? A sleeping church – someone who is not watching. Sorrow, trials, and afflictions are not reasons to be careless – to not be watching. If one is alert – watching – the signs of the Lord’s second coming can be envisioned clearly. Peter tells us, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the

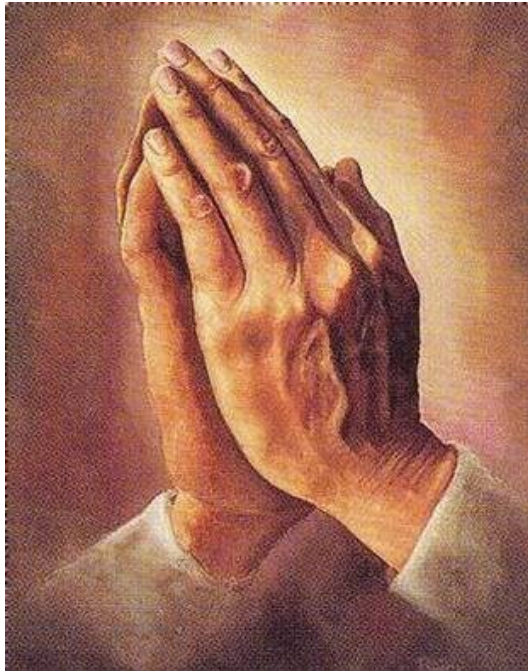
fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” 1 Peter 4:12

It all means – be awake, alert! Watchfulness, furthermore, means that people in the church of God, the remnant church, are distinct from the popular apostate churches, namely the Ecumenical Movement. For many churches many of the signs and doctrines are merely symbolic, ritualistic, and traditional.

We can show others that we are merely pilgrims and strangers on earth – on a sacred journey!

“And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.” Matthew 26:44–45. The crisis had passed – the opportunity to be useful had passed.

If His disciples had been watching – praying – they would not have lost their faith when they saw Jesus Christ on the cross, but they would have gained an unfathomable power! They would have had hope to light up the darkness in that trial ahead to keep their faith in that terrible hour. A Chinese saying states that when there is “opportunity, there is danger – and this equals a crisis.” Jesus clearly told them these things were to



happen – trials, surprises, sudden changes, etc. That is why He said, “Watch and pray.” For us too, trials await us; the plagues, for which we need astounding strength and faith to pass through. Are you willing?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Many homes have signs saying, “**Prayer Changes Things.**” Here is a secret I want to share with you; maybe a revelation? After we have prayed and believed (believed and behaved) remember that “**Praise Changes Things.**”

A pastor found a baby pigeon with a broken wing. He tenderly bound and splinted the wing, and slowly tamed it until it was able to go outdoors again. The pigeon, however, attempted to fly after seeing other pigeons flying about. But the wing was not completely healed; it was still bound. We too have “one wing” but we are not bound – tied.

Here is a revelation for us, and perhaps new to many, to cherish and ponder over daily: a new weapon against Satan, for the victory is ours – promised to us:

We Need Two Wings To Fly Heavenward:

- 1. Prayer – Prayer Asks!**
- 2. Praise – Praise Takes – Gets An Answer!**

In the book of 2 Chronicles chapter 20 we read of Judah being invaded by the armies of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites. Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah prayed to the Lord for victory as the enemy armies were far stronger. “And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for His mercy endureth for ever.” 2 Chronicles 20:21

“And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.” 2 Chronicles 20:22. The Lord answered Jehoshaphat’s prayer through Jahaziel, upon whom “came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation; And he said, ‘ . . . Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for **the battle is not yours, but God’s.**” 2 Chronicles 20:14–15 They sang in battle! The enemy armies destroyed one another; not one was left – not one escaped; a miraculous conquest! The conquest of self requires unceasing

prayer (*Steps to Christ*, p. 95). We need prayer and praise that Christ is always ready to hear and answer (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532).

AROMA OF PRAYER

In Romania there is an immeasurably breathless valley in which distinctively fragrant roses are grown for the Viennese market. One who passes through this valley will exude the perfume of the roses for hours afterwards. People will know, even the next day that you have been in that fabled valley. “All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.” Psalm 45:8

With Jesus Christ, also, when we are well related to Him and in His Holy presence, the fruits of our prayers and praise will emanate and pervade unto others. The weakest saint can experience the power of the deity of the Son of God once he is willing to “let go.”

Any strand of our own energy will blur the life of Jesus. We have to keep “letting go” and slowly and surely the great fullness of the life of Jesus will pervade and invade our entire bodies with His fragrant essence, because men will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus – the Flower of all flowers. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.” Psalm 50:23

Jesus Christ is the rock; and rocks do not shake. They do not run; do not panic! Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. “Be still, and know that I am God. . . .” Psalm 46:10

UNANSWERED PRAYER

Finally, our Lord, in His teaching regarding prayer, never once referred to unanswered prayer; He said God always answers prayer. If our prayers are in the name of Jesus, that is, in accordance with His nature, the answers will not be in accordance with our nature, but with His. We are apt to forget this and to say without thinking that God does not always answer prayer. He does every time, and when we are in close communion with Him, we realize that we have not been misled. God’s people need the spirit of wrestling in prayer (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 534).

In closing, there was a delightful little girl who loved

Jesus dearly; she was about to celebrate her birthday. She prayed fervently to God that it would not rain the next day, the day of her birthday, and that it would be clear and sunny. The following day, however, it unexpectedly rained torrentially. A professed Christian man cynically asked her, "Where was your God? It rained! He did not answer your prayer!" The docile little girl confidently answered him, "Oh! Yes, God answered me – He said NO!"

Ask in faith and you will receive God's answer (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 426). Do not be discouraged if you do not receive an answer to prayer (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 202). God knows how and when to grant an answer to prayer (*The Story of Redemption*, p. 247). Furthermore, God knows better how to grant an answer to prayer than petitioner (*Counsels on Health*, p. 375). Moreover, true prayer accepts in advance the will of God, whether known or unknown, whether to grant or withhold. Prayer may be hindered when the fellowship with their Father is broken because of sin (Matthew 6:12, 15). The children of God must be divinely taught how to pray (Luke 11:1). In any sincere prayer, before personal requests are made, we first need to pray for the kingdom of God and its coming down from Heaven.

CONDITIONS OF ANSWERED PRAYER

"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. He has promised, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.' Isaiah 44:3. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who long after God, may be sure that they will be filled. The heart must be open to the Spirit's influence, or God's blessing cannot be received. . . . If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. Our own merit will never commend us to the favour of God; it is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, His blood that will cleanse us; yet we have a work to do in complying with the conditions of acceptance." – *Steps to Christ*, p. 95

The Lord said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear

from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

Remember, the door handle is on our side, not God's. As soon as we "say so" the door opens and the salvation which we believe in is ours! Too often we are like the child who does nothing but murmur; we complain and refuse to consent. As soon as we "say so," and open the door, we are set free, the door opens to a higher and better life that awaits us. If you have not received, ask; if you have not found, seek; if the door is



shut, knock! (John 10:9)

What a surprise it will be to find, when the veil is lifted, the souls that have been reaped by you simply because you had been in the habit of taking your orders from Jesus – in prayer. Remember, however, to sow the "Real Seed" (Leviticus 26:16).

Prayer is simple to us because it cost Him so much to make it possible. May God grant that we may work for His victories in our lives by following His Way by **PRAYER: THE SACRED JOURNEYS**. A hearty AMEN!

John Theodorou
USA



OUR THOUGHTS

The Bible gives a clear definition of a person and his character. “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” Proverbs 23:7

We can change our way of thinking, and then we become a different kind of person. We hear stories that a sinner changed and became a saint. Paul changed from a persecutor of God’s church to its greatest advocate. These stories thrill our hearts, but there are more stories of the opposite type: how often a saint becomes evil. Certain angels in heaven turned into demons, and the highest of them became Satan. These changes happened when they changed their way of thinking.

Jeremiah saw these kinds of changes taking place among the people of God. He writes, “How is the gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.” Lamentations 4:1–2

The Hebrew title for Lamentations means “How?” Who can answer this question? How does this change take place? It is a mystery. Why does a Christian boy or girl change from faithfulness to God to the love of the world, and to gratify the lust of the flesh, and to lose his salvation and eternal life?

In the time of Noah the whole world had changed to be so evil that God had to destroy them all in the flood, except the family of Noah.

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

Because the thoughts were evil, the words and actions were evil accordingly. Therefore, Satan is winning souls to himself by contaminating their thoughts by wrong kinds of literature, images, movies, and conversations. What we see and hear affects our minds and thoughts. One condition for receiving eternal life that God has given is for us to avoid seeing and hearing wrong things. “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high.” Isaiah 33:15–16

Then how important it is to hear what God is speaking to us, and this we can do by attending religious services in God’s church and in reading His word and the Spirit of Prophecy books. “Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” Isaiah 55:3

When we listen to God and obey His counsel, we will do right. Our own mind and thoughts are not good. “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.” Proverbs 28:26

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8–9

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Isaiah 53:6 It is very clear that if we follow our own thoughts and wisdom we will

go astray, and we will be fools to do it.

Paul writes, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Romans 1:21

What can God do with the people who have become vain in their imaginations? Paul continues, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts to dishonour their bodies between themselves." Romans 1:24

God will not go against our thoughts. He gives us freedom to choose what we want to think, and this – our decision – will determine if we will be holy and fit for life in heaven, or corrupted followers of Satan.

Jeremiah also gave the same message to the people of Israel. "And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, neither walked therein; But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them." Jeremiah 9:13–16

All these disasters came upon them because of walking after the imagination of their own heart.

Terrible are the results of evil thinking. By following their own thoughts, wars have been started, murders have been committed; millions of broken homes are also the result of wrong thoughts. Sins of every description have been committed by letting the imagination wander in wrong channels. Their thoughts betrayed them. This is the reason why Jeremiah writes, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it." Jeremiah 17:9

The mind can be developed, without limit, to the perfect image of God; or the powers of the mind can be paralyzed by sin, perverted, and darkened.

Sister White writes, "The perils of the last days are upon us. *Satan takes the control of every mind that is not*

decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God." – *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 79

When we understand that our thoughts do change us, then we will make sure that no evil thought will enter into our minds.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18

We need to decide what we want to be, and then start thinking about it and it can happen. If our decision is to be God-like, and we think about it constantly, it will happen. God will cleanse the world of all pollution, so that nothing that is defiled will remain.

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." Jeremiah 3:17

When they do not walk in the imagination of their evil hearts, then their works are pure, their actions are good.

Paul writes about the people who love God, that they do not think evil thoughts, "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Corinthians 13:5

It takes an effort to train our minds to dwell on holy thoughts. The same way an alcoholic and a smoker with great effort can overcome their bad habits, we can also overcome vain and evil thinking. What is necessary is to follow the advice of Paul, "Pray without ceasing." 2 Thessalonians 5:17

When we do this, the Holy Spirit will dwell in us and the fruit of the Spirit will be seen in our lives; perfect peace will fill our hearts and sweet comfort will take the place of worry and anxiety.

May the Lord help each one of us to have pure minds and hearts, and then we can see God face to face. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8. AMEN.

Timo Martin



MOTHERHOOD

Part 1: WHY DID MOTHER PRAY AND CRY?

I always find it amazing how God created the woman, to have a new life inside our bodies and give life, even if it is with pain. The same day a woman gives birth, both the mother and the baby start on a career in which one day both will graduate. It is one of the longest careers; and when you see in your children a good citizen, a good Christian and a good example, then the graduation is coming. The fifth commandment reads, "Honor your father and your Mother." Exodus 20:12. This commandment comes with a promise, "that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth you." When my children were born, I missed feeling that little body inside me; I missed seeing the little movements, and to know that a little heart was beating, growing and getting stronger for the big day. It is a miracle when the mother and the baby finally meet, even though it is painful. It is painful when they have their first teeth. Many children grow up experiencing pain. Mothers are always going to be there to dry their tears, to clean their cuts, and to help them when they fall.

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Romans 8:22. Pain is a word that we learn. Since we were little children, our parents, and especially our mother, often said, "Don't touch the oven, don't touch the iron, you can get burned and you are going to be in pain. Don't climb the tree; if you fall you can get hurt." Pain is not a word that God wanted for Adam or for Eve. At the end of the six days of creation, God said, "It was very

good." He then blessed the seventh day, the Sabbath, and rested from all His work. Everything God created was good. Pain was not part of God's creation. God loved Adam and Eve; they were part of His creation. God did not want pain or sorrow for them. After the fall the pain started. To the woman God said, "In pain you will give birth to children." Genesis 3:16

"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Genesis 3:17-19

Now both man and woman had to suffer the consequences of disobedience. Not only did the pain begin, but also death. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12

In life we experience different kinds of pain – physical and emotional – and even though no one likes pain, we learn to live with it. With physical pain you can feel it, you can touch it and you can see it.

The Bible mentions many women that went through

different types of pain. Early in Moses' time it was decreed that all the male babies should be killed. "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive." Exodus 1:22. In Jesus' time, again many women that had babies went through the same pain. The Bible says that there was a cry of sorrow. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Matthew 2:17–18

Mary, the mother of Jesus, went through such pain that there are not words to describe it. In Luke 2:25 it says, "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Luke 2:25–26. The spirit of prophecy was upon this man of God and, while Joseph and Mary stood by wondering at his words, he blessed them and said unto Mary, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Luke 2:34

Jesus, the Son of God, came to this world to suffer pain in order to bring us salvation. "It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. He became 'a Man of Sorrows,' that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory, to a world marred and blighted with sin, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. 'The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.' Isaiah 53:5. Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God – it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God." –*Steps to Christ*, p. 13

Mary and Jesus suffered terrible pain; on the cross Mary saw her Son dying, hanging and being mocked,

suffering a painful death. Jesus saw His mother having to endure all this. "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." John 19:26–27. Jesus was dying on the cross for our sins, for our transgressions. Even in His pain, Jesus did not forget His mother. How many of us forget our mothers and our children in Jesus Christ.

Whenever Sister Leila McTavish returns from Africa, she always mentions the orphans, the widows, and the mothers that need help. This message, "Behold your mother, and behold your son," is for us also, and it is our duty not to forget. Remember our dear Sister Cecilia, who recently lost her husband. She was always an independent lady and now she has lost her freedom also. Sometimes we have our own struggles, problems, sicknesses, and emotional pain; it is easy to forget the struggles that others have. The Bible says that we have a cross. "And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23. We should ask Jesus to teach us how to carry our cross if it is heavy. We shouldn't ask God for a lighter cross. We should ask for strength and strong shoulders to carry our cross, and not only our own cross, but we should also help others carry theirs. Remember, our cross is never going to be the same weight as the one that Jesus was carrying. He was carrying the sins of each one of us.

Before my mother passed away in November 2007, I prayed for something really hard. God answered my prayer. First I travelled to see my mother in August 2007. I was with her for two weeks. By November my mother became sicker. I wanted to be with her to say good-bye and to give thanks for everything she had done for me. It is not easy when I live so far away, not only because of money, but because it is really hard to travel without my children. It is very painful when you have your mother sick and far away. My sister in Mexico and my aunt told me that my mother appeared to be in a coma; she had been sleeping for three days, and my mother's wish was not to be taken to the hospital. I prayed and asked God to be able to visit Mexico again, to be with my mother when she was going through this hard time, when this sickness was killing her. God answered my prayer after the three days in which my mother was sleeping. We were at my sister Angeles' house in Mississauga; my sister called to Mexico and they gave us the news that my mother had woken up.

Angeles told me that my mom wanted to talk with me. The first words that my mother said were, "Are you coming?" My mother didn't know that we had already started looking for tickets to travel to Mexico, and her question really surprised me. "Are you coming?" My answer was, "Yes, mom, are you going to wait for me?" She said yes. That was Monday. On Wednesday my sister and I arrived in Mexico. When we got home my mother was sleeping. I just stood beside her bed; when she woke up she said, "You came." And I said, "Yes, I told you that I was coming." My mother needed to have dialysis three times a week. To take her to the hospital and to have dialysis was very painful for her; she didn't want to go to the hospital anymore. For us it was very hard to see her without the medical attention that she needed, but my aunt really wanted to honour my mother's request. On Thursday we couldn't take her to the hospital for her dialysis. By Friday, Angeles and I decided to do something. We started making all the arrangements for the doctors and nurses to come to my mother's home if she was not able to go to the hospital. We had to help my sister in Mexico arrange all the paperwork; it took us all morning. It seemed that the doctors were not interested in doing this. Finally they said that if we bring our mother on Monday to the hospital where they felt she belonged, they were going to assess to see if she could have the needed medical attention at home. We agreed. By Saturday I started getting very anxious and frustrated, seeing my mother in pain and not being able to do anything, so I called the doctor and he told me to bring my mother to see him right away. We were just about to take her when my aunt arrived and said, "Your mother is not going to handle more dialysis, please don't take her to the hospital." We decided to stay, but we told her that on Monday we were going to take her to the hospital, because the doctor needed to see her. On November 12, 2007, we were happy because the doctors agreed to send the medical services that my mother required; doctors or nurses were going to visit my mother at home. She didn't need to go to the hospital anymore. It was sunny but a little bit cold; I was waiting with my mother outside the hospital while my sisters, Lupita and Angeles, went to the parking lot for our friend so he could come take us home. Suddenly my mother started choking. I didn't know what to do, I got really scared. I started screaming. My sister Angeles came back because she heard my scream and, in less than a minute, two paramedics were taking my mother to the emergency room. My mother was with me but I didn't realize that she was dying. It was time to say goodbye.

My prayer was answered. I was with her but I didn't have the strength to see her dying. I was so sure that when the time came I would be able to give comfort to my mom and I failed. It was not easy to see my mother in pain; it was not easy to see her dying; it was not easy when we saw our aunt who blamed us for taking my mother to the hospital and to let her die in the hospital. It was like a bucket of cold water and ice cubes that she dropped on us over and over again.

After my mother passed away I started feeling emotional and physical pain. I was getting irritated very easily. I remember one day when I was feeling very sad, guilty and sick because of all this. I prayed to God; I was feeling so weak that I didn't want to open the Bible. My Bible was in my room and something inside me was telling me, "Open your Bible." I took my Bible and I opened to Proverbs 4:20-23, "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issue of life." Pain is a very short word, but it has a lot of power. God doesn't want us to be in pain all the time. There are beautiful promises in the Bible. "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you." 1 Peter 5:10. "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:4

Recently, in Canada, it was Mother's day; in many other parts of the world they also celebrate this day. Many people spend hundreds of dollars to show they love their mothers with a gift. The fifth commandment says, "Honour your father and your mother." Show your mother that you love her, be nice and kind, give her a kiss, tell her that you love her, write a poem; don't wait until it is Mother's Day. Celebrate the 365 days that God made a woman to be a mother, to be a sister, or to be a daughter.



Why Did Mother Pray and Cry?

When I was young and in my prime
For Jesus, I had no time.
My Mother would pray and cry;
I would only wonder why.

Always seeking pleasures in sin,
Caring nothing for my life within,
My Mother would pray and cry
And I would wonder why.

I would go out at night;
Coming home, there'd always be a light.
My Mother would pray and cry
And I would wonder why.

Now that I am grown
Have a family of my own

So it is that I know why
Mother would pray and cry.

Thank you, Mother, for your prayer,
And all the love you share.
Now it is I that pray and cry
No longer do I wonder why.

Now Mother that you are gone
All the battles fought and won
You no longer need to pray and cry
For I will see you there by and by.

Jesus, new life to me He gives,
For in my heart I know He lives.
That is why you would pray and cry
And I no longer wonder why.



Part 2: The BEGINNING OF PAIN

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast.” Psalms 33:6, 9

God created the earth perfect and beautiful. There was perfect peace and harmony. Then God said, “Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion . . . over all the earth.” Genesis 1:26. Man was to bear God’s image, both in outward resemblance and in character. The Spirit of Prophecy

states that Adam was the son of God even though he was formed from the dust. Adam’s nature was in harmony with the will of the Father. He was in perfect obedience to the will of God. He placed the first pair, Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden. Here they had everything they needed and wanted. How beautiful it must have been!

In the Spirit of Prophecy we read, “The creation was now complete. The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And God saw every-

thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good. Eden bloomed on Earth. Adam and Eve had free access to the tree of life. No taint of sin or shadow of death marred the fair creation.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 47



Adam and Eve, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of disobedience or wrong doing. God gave Adam and Eve the freedom of choice. He wants no forced obedience. God desires the service of love that springs from appreciation of His character. If God wouldn't have given Adam and Eve the freedom of choice, they would have been like robots.

There was one, though, who saw this as an opportunity; he lost no time in deceiving Eve. She believed the words of Satan and disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. Now she was Satan's agent; she quickly sought Adam and he also disobeyed. This one insignificant act was the beginning of the end. Their sin opened the door to sadness, sorrow, pain, and eventually death. Their love and peace was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread for the future. Adam reproached Eve for leaving his side and allowing herself to be deceived by the serpent. This was probably their first argument.

“And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Genesis 3:12. Can you imagine Eve's shame and guilt as she heard Adam cast blame on her? These were her first feelings of sorrow and pain. Then God said to her, “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire

shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” Genesis 3:16. “In the creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God – in harmony with His great law of love – they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve had been the first in transgression. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 58

“And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return.” Genesis 3:17–19

They now saw the true character of their sin and its consequences. Eve had been perfectly happy in her Edenic home but now she would be subject to disappointment, grief, and pain. The Spirit of Prophecy says that their sin opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. In the moment of temptation, who can know the terrible consequences that will result from one wrong step?

So, Adam and Eve were banished from Eden. Their new



life of sorrow began. I think that it is safe to say that Eve was the first woman to suffer different types of pain: physical pain, emotional pain, and spiritual anguish. She felt the sorrow and grief of having to leave the beautiful Eden to never return. Eve felt the difference in the atmosphere, once mild and uniform in temperature. When they witnessed the first drooping flower and falling leaf, they mourned deeply. For the first time in her



life, she felt spiritual anguish. Eve felt the sorrow and pain that only comes from sin. She felt the need of forgiveness. She felt the separation from God. Adam and Eve had been in close communion with God in Eden and now

they were far away from Him.

To Eve was given the pain of childbirth. With pain was she to bring forth her children into the world. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." John 16:21. How wise is the Bible! This is very true. I remember when I had my own children. All the pain and the tears are wiped away and forgotten once that baby that has been so longed for is held. Once you look into those eyes, once you hold those tiny hands, you forget everything else! What joy she must have felt as she saw her children grow. But her happiness would soon turn to disappointment, sorrow, grief, and anguish. When Adam and Eve left Eden, the thought of dying was horrifying. They were both brought to the reality of death in their own family when Cain, their firstborn son, became the murderer of his brother. I am sure Eve was filled with deep remorse for her sin. She was doubly bereaved that day in the death of Abel and in the rejection of Cain. She was bowed down with terrible anguish. She lost both her sons in one day. One was dead and the other had become a vagabond, a fugitive. Cain would leave to begin his life elsewhere, away from his parents and away from God.

Adam and Eve witnessed the fall of Cain. He lived only to harden his heart, to encourage rebellion against God, and to become the father of an awful line of sinners. We can see Eve's great pain of loss as she bore Seth. The Bible does not say how long after the death of Abel Seth was born, but we can read in Genesis 4:25 that Eve was still thinking of Abel. "And Adam knew his

wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew."

In the book *Patriarchs and Prophets* we read that for nearly a thousand years Adam lived and saw the results of sin. We do not know how long Eve lived but she must have lived a long time also. So they saw the consequence their sin brought to their children and children's children, to the "ninth generation."

Today we see such pain everywhere we turn. We hear of famines, earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, and pestilences; all these cause pain to the inhabitants of this earth.

Once a friend of mine asked me, "Why does God allow so much pain and sorrow?" She was telling me her story. Her sister had been murdered by her husband and soon afterwards, two months later in fact, her mother passed away of a heart attack. Her father was living in Malaysia and she was left alone. She had a brother but he was very difficult to live with and so she was desolate. It was then she asked me, "Why does God allow these things to happen? Why so much pain and suffering?" I briefly explained to her that, from the beginning, good and evil existed, yet God did not want any of this suffering to befall His creation. But because of this evil, sin entered the world and we live with the consequences.

God is love. In His mercy, He gave us a free will to choose to obey Him because we love Him. "But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God: and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." Jeremiah 7:23



AMEN

Sesciah Newby



WAITING FOR THE GRAIN

It is impossible to measure the influence which may be exerted by a single act, a word, or even a look. It was the simple act of a complete stranger that changed the course of the whole life of young Henry.

When he was a boy, his father moved to the Far West – Ohio. It was before the days of steam, and no great mills thundered on her river banks, but occasionally there was a little grain mill by the side of some small stream.

To these little mills, the surrounding neighbourhood flocked with their sacks of corn. Sometimes Henry's family had to wait two or three days for their turn. Henry was generally the one sent from his house, for, while he was too small to be of much use on the farm, he was as good as a man to carry the grain to the mill. So he was not at all surprised one morning when his father said, "Henry, you must take the horse and go to the mill today."

But he found so many of the neighbouring farmers there ahead of him, that he knew there was no hope of getting home that day; but he was not at all concerned, for his basket was well filled with provisions, and Mr. Saunders always opened his big barn for them to sleep in.

That day there was a new young man in the crowd, in addition to the usual group of men who had been in the habit of gathering from time to time in the old Saunders barn – a young fellow about Henry's age. His name was Charlie Allen, and his father had bought a farm over on the Brush Creek Road. He was sociable and friendly, but somehow Henry felt that he had "more manners" than the rest of them.

The evening was spent, as usual, in relating coarse jokes and playing cards. Although Henry lived in a Christian home and was not accustomed to such things at home, he had become so used to it at the mill, that it had long ceased to shock him, and, indeed, he was getting to enjoy watching the games of others.

When bedtime came, they were all so busy with their own affairs that they did not notice Charlie Allen, until a rude, profane fellow exclaimed:

"Heyday! We've got a preacher here!" Sure enough, Charlie was kneeling by the oat bin praying. But the jest met with no response. The silence was broken only by the drowsy cattle below, and the twittering swallows overhead. More than one rough man wiped a tear from his eyes as he went silently to his bed on the hay.

Henry had always been in the habit of praying at home, but he never thought of such a thing at Saunders Mill. No, not in front of his friends.

As he lay awake that night in the old barn, thinking of Charlie Allen's courage and what an effect it had on all the men, his conscience began to bother him and at that moment he firmly resolved that, in the future, he would *do right* no matter what the consequences may be. Little did Henry realize how soon his courage would be tested.

Just after dinner the next day Henry got his grain, and started for home. When he arrived at Squire Albright's gate, where he turned to go home, he found the old squire waiting for him. He saw in a moment that something had gone terribly wrong. Henry had always stood in the greatest awe of the old gentleman, because he

was the rich man of the neighborhood, and, now he felt his heart beginning to beat very fast. As soon as Henry came near the squire said:

“Did you go through this gate yesterday?”

Henry could easily have denied it, as it was before daylight when he went through, and he sometimes took the other way to the mill that was not through that gate. But the picture in his mind of Charlie Allen kneeling in the barn came to his mind like a flash, and before he had time to listen to the tempter, he replied:-

“Yes sir; I did.”

“Are you sure you shut and pinned the gate?” he asked.

This question caught Henry off guard. He remembered distinctly that he did not. He could pull the pin out without getting off his horse, but he could not put it in again; so he carelessly rode away, and left it open.

“I- I- I-”

“Out with it; tell just what you did!”

“I left it open,” he said abruptly.

“Well, you let the cattle in and they have destroyed all my early potatoes – a terrible piece of business!”

“I’m very sorry, I’d--”

“Talking won’t help matters now; but remember, boy, remember that sorrow doesn’t make potatoes –sorrow doesn’t make potatoes.”

Henry felt very bad about the matter, for he was really

sorry that the old gentleman had lost his potatoes, and now he expected to be severely reproved at home. But he soon found that they knew nothing of the matter at home, and after several days had passed, he began to rest quite easy.

Alas for human hopes! One rainy afternoon Henry saw the squire riding down the lane. He ran off to the barn to hide. He was ashamed to face him, and afraid to meet his father. They sat on the porch and talked a long time.

After a long time Henry’s curiosity overcame his fear and he quietly stole back to the house, and went into his mother’s room to see if he could hear what they were talking about.

“Why, the boy could be spared well enough, but he doesn’t know anything about the business,” said Henry’s father.

“There is one thing he does know,” said the squire, “he knows how to tell the truth, even when he

made a mistake, and that is the kind of honest boy I want to work for me.” He then related the circumstance which Henry so much dreaded to have his father hear.

After the squire had gone, Henry’s father called him, and told him that the squire was going to open a store in the village, and wanted a boy to help, and that Henry could go if he wished. Henry went, and remained in the village store until it became a city store. People say Henry got his start in life when he entered Albright’s store, but he will always declare that he got it while he was waiting for the grain, from the influence of Charlie Allen.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.” Matthew 5:14. “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a *lying tongue*. . . .” Proverbs 6:16–17



COOKING CLASS IN HAMILTON

On Sunday, June 5, 2011, we began our cooking class with a photograph taken of the attendees and then a welcome by Brother Evald Pedersen, who thanked everyone for coming.



Brother Jerry Eaton opened the meeting with a prayer, and presented a talk on health regarding radiation and its sources. He discussed nuclear radiation in Chernobyl and Japan. A handout was distributed to the attendees on the topic, which he referred to in his discussion. The handouts gave information on the various types of radioactive material and the protective measures one can take to overcome them. He also discussed the benefits of a vegetarian diet as opposed to an animal diet. After his talk, he had a question and answer period.



Then we began the food preparation portion of the cooking class. Brother Evald introduced Sister Wendy Eaton, who presented her recipes for Tofu Stir-Fry, Chick Pea Gravy, and a Cashew Roast. (The gravy was the garnishing for the roast). Everyone was pleased with her nutritious and easy-to-make recipes.



Brother Evald then invited Sister Franziska Pedersen to demonstrate her recipes. She presented her "Mother's Lentil Pattycakes" and discussed her recipe for Lentil Spread and also a dessert, Carob Nugget Fudge. Sister Franziska remarked on the benefits of quinoa and black sesame seeds.



Our last presenter was Sister Alina Anca, who illustrated a Soya Sauce recipe and White Cabbage. Sister Alina introduced the audience to the vegetable, yucca.

All the presenters received hearty applause from the audience.

There was a question and answer session before the food was served. Reformation cookbooks and other literature were sold to anyone who was interested. The visitors enjoyed the food tremendously. We pray that those who participated would incorporate their new knowledge into improving their diets and overall health.

LOOKING FOR YOU...

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ASLEEP IN JESUS

MARIA ROLIH

(1924—2011)

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.” Psalm 116:15

Sister Maria Rolih was born in Kulpin, Bački Petrovac, Yugoslavia, on November 21, 1924.

In the year 1943, Maria was joined in marriage to Mr. Gaidos in former Yugoslavia.

Approximately ten years into her marriage—in about the year 1953—she was accepted into the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Reform Movement while still in the former Yugoslavia.

In 1958 she fled the country together with her son, John. They lived in Salzburg, Austria, for almost a year, after which they traveled to Canada in the year 1959.

In Canada Maria lived in Toronto and worked at Toronto General Hospital as a ward assistant for many years.

Maria then got remarried to a man named Mike Rolih, following which they went to live in Australia for a year where he had family.

Upon returning to Canada they came to live in Vancouver in the 1970s. She worked in Vancouver General Hospital until her retirement.

While in Vancouver Mr. Rolih became very ill with cancer. Although they were already separated, because of his abusive behaviour toward her Sister Maria graciously allowed him back under the same roof and took care of him until he got so sick that he wanted to go and die in his motherland of Yugoslavia. There he passed away in 1987.

Sister Maria became a member of the International Missionary Society once again in Vancouver in 1989. She was a very faithful sister, and was very, very supportive of the other members of the church. She was always very happy to see the work of God go forward.

Sister Maria was kind, forgiving, very hospitable, always welcoming to people, and very gracious.

She was a very frugal person and saved her money well. She wanted to give her children a better life than she had had.

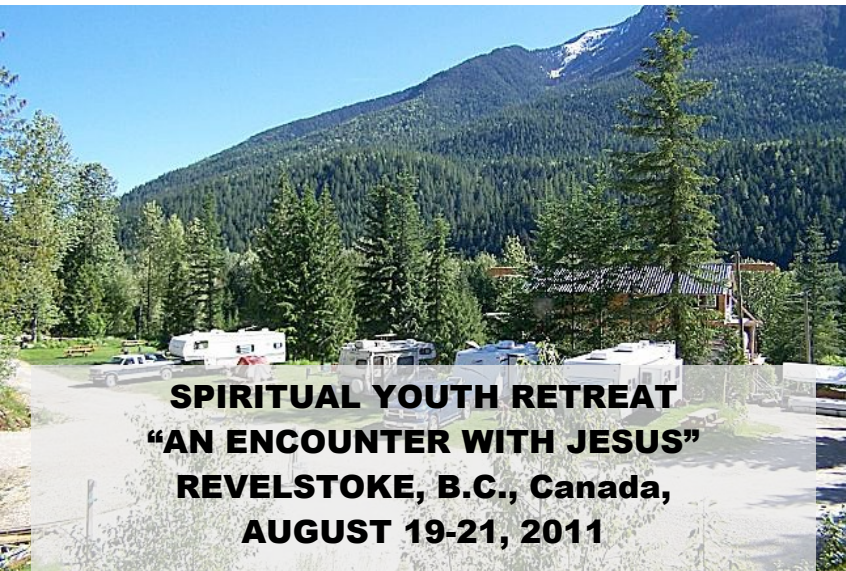


Sister Maria loved to sing. Some of her favourite hymns were: Nearer my God to Thee; What a Fellowship; I Come to the Garden Alone; What a Friend We Have in Jesus; Rock of Ages; On the Wings of a Snow White Dove; Trust and Obey.

Maria was a very active woman, and loved to ride her bicycle—even in winter time. Her attendance to church services was exemplary. She attended church no matter what the weather was like.

The Lord laid Sister Maria Rolih to rest on June 2, 2011, at 4:55 pm in the German Nursing Home. She awaits the resurrection of the righteous when she will meet her Lord in the clouds of glory. “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:51–52

Sister Maria will be greatly missed by her loved ones in both her physical family and her church family. Her faithful example will always remain with us, and will be an encouragement for us to also run the spiritual race and be faithful until the very end.



**SPIRITUAL YOUTH RETREAT
 "AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS"
 REVELSTOKE, B.C., Canada,
 AUGUST 19-21, 2011**

By the grace of the Lord, we will have a spiritual retreat in the Revelstoke, B.C., area. It will start on Friday, August 19, at 7:00 pm, and will end on Sunday, August 21, at 12:00 noon.

The main topic of our retreat is Jesus and how we can develop a lasting relationship with Him in light of the present time in which we live.

For more information, email Brother Oscar Oviedo at: gatoscar_2001@yahoo.com



Brethren in Jakarta, Local Church



Verandah church in Kisii, Kenya

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August 24 to 27, 2011. Cohutta Springs Campground in Crandall, Georgia. A youth retreat is being planned for several days prior to the conference.

more details see:

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The Reformation Messenger is currently in its 18th year of publication. More than 150 copies are print-

ed every month and sent to many countries in the world, as far away as Africa, Australia, some South Pacific Islands, Europe, and U.S.A. It is produced monthly by volunteer helpers and financed by your subscriptions and donations. Recently we received an email from one of our subscribers who stated: "Just to suggest, what about a photo of the staff behind the scenes of *The Reformation Messenger* the undaunted, faithful ones who produce a superb professional magazine; gets better each issue; along with a short dissertation on its workings. I would like to meet them, too, one day." Having read this we decided to take a series of photos to show how the Messenger is produced "behind the scenes", with some of the volunteers who are actively involved. We pray that you will continue to be blessed by reading *The Reformation Messenger*. **The Editors.** "Publications must be multiplied, and scattered like the leaves of autumn."

–*Review and Herald*, Nov. 21, 1878. "The great and wonderful work of the last gospel message is to be carried on now as it has never been before. The world is to receive the light of truth through an evangelizing ministry of the word in our books and periodicals." – *The Colporteur Evangelist*, p. 100



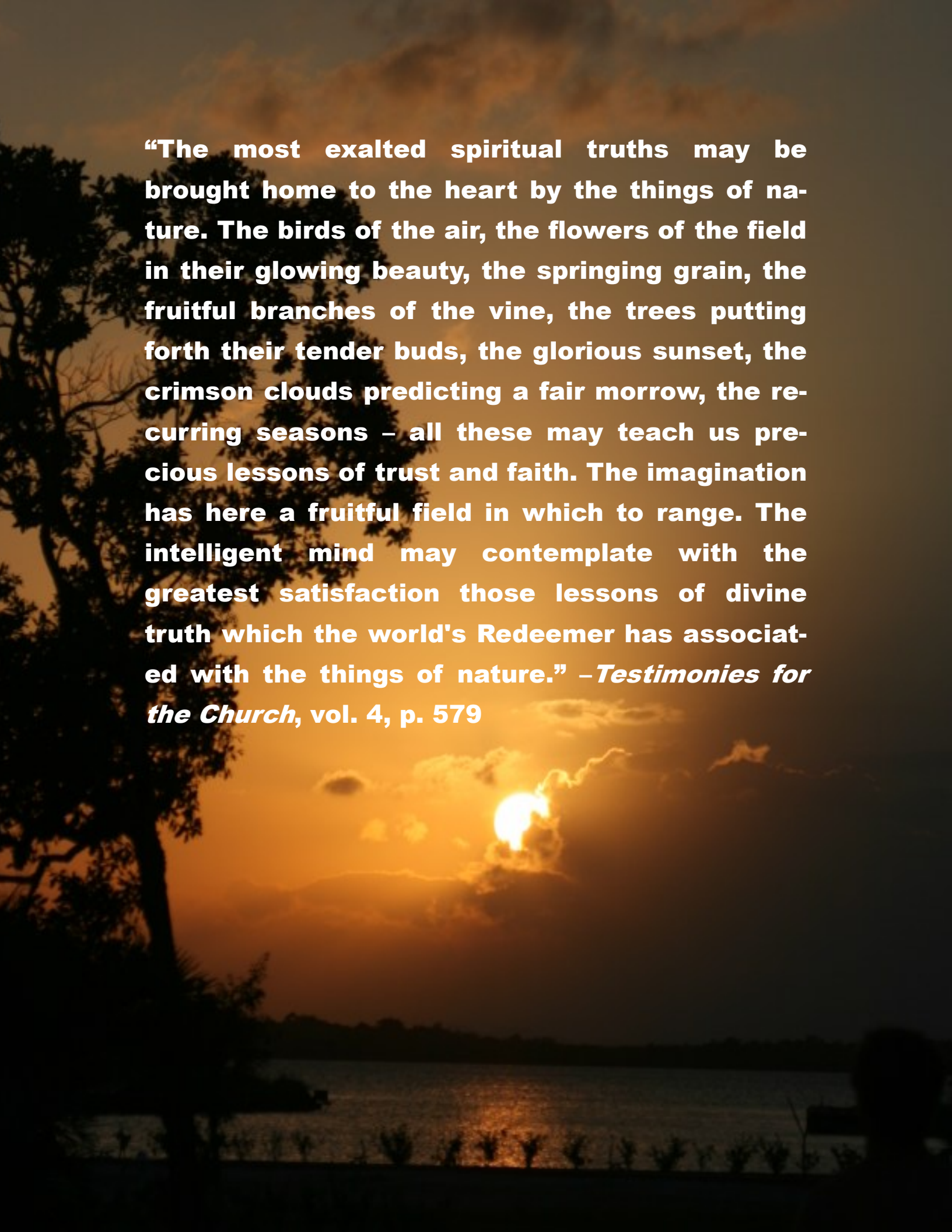
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A sunset scene with a bright sun partially obscured by clouds, casting a golden glow over a body of water. The sun's reflection is visible on the water's surface. On the left side, the dark silhouette of a tree is visible against the bright sky. The overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

“The most exalted spiritual truths may be brought home to the heart by the things of nature. The birds of the air, the flowers of the field in their glowing beauty, the springing grain, the fruitful branches of the vine, the trees putting forth their tender buds, the glorious sunset, the crimson clouds predicting a fair morrow, the recurring seasons – all these may teach us precious lessons of trust and faith. The imagination has here a fruitful field in which to range. The intelligent mind may contemplate with the greatest satisfaction those lessons of divine truth which the world's Redeemer has associated with the things of nature.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 579