



# *The Reformation* **Messenger**

VOLUME 19, NUMBER 8, AUGUST 2012

**“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.” Matthew 7:24–25**

**“Remember that you are building for eternity. See that your foundation is sure; then build firmly, and with persistent effort, but in gentleness, meekness, and love. So shall your house stand unshaken, not only when the storms of temptation come but when the overwhelming flood of God's wrath shall sweep over the world.” –*Our High Calling*, p. 84**



**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:** Wendy Eaton. Cape Point, South Africa

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# Put All Your Trust in Jesus

**“He only is my Rock and my salvation.” Psalm 62:2**

We human beings have been created by a Creator full of love. All people in this world have something special placed in his or her heart that no one can take or occupy. This is the place Jesus wants, in order to abide in us through His Holy Spirit. “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways.” Proverbs 23:26

Why do you think the Lord wants our heart? Here is what God’s servant, Ellen G. White says. “The heart must be renewed by divine grace, or it will be in vain to seek for purity of life. He who attempts to build up a noble, virtuous character independent of the grace of Christ is building his house upon the shifting sand. In the fierce storms of temptation it will surely be overthrown. David’s prayer should be the petition of every soul: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.’ Psalm 51:10.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 460

When Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten. Love to Christ will be the spring of action. Our tendency is to trust man more than our wonderful and compassionate Saviour, Jesus Christ, and many times we do it. I remember how many times I was disappointed just because I put my trust in someone else, other than in Jesus, my Lord.

Now it is true that we have to trust each other to counsel and advise, to have fellowship and to develop good relationships among us. Within our family, children should obey their parents, wives and husbands should love and trust each other, members in the church should have respect towards God’s messengers and so forth. But regarding our salvation, no human being can

take that place. The Bible says in Acts 4:12, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” See also Matthew 1:21; “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 2:5

So many people today follow their leaders without giving too much attention to the One that is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). I remember how one of my ex-Bible students, when I asked him if he would like to receive Jesus as his personal Saviour, said: “I don’t need Jesus because I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Salvation within you—that’s the teaching of the new age movement that has its root in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We can see how easily man can be deceived by Satan. The Bible says in Romans 6:16 “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Romans 6:16. Praise God He sent His Son to live among us, a perfect life, to give us an example of perfect obedience to Him, receiving power to overcome temptation and form a perfect character.

How can we be perfect in Christ?

Let the Bible give the answer. Do you remember that Bible text from Matthew 1:21? “And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.” This is the true salvation, from our sins. Millions of Christians today believe they are saved while they do sin until Jesus comes, and maybe then Jesus will change them into His image. But wait a minute, what is the only thing we take with us from this earth? Will we take possessions?

No, do not be deceived, the Bible is crystal clear regarding this issue. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:7–8.

Character, what every man and woman born in this world has, is the only treasure we will take with us throughout all eternity. That is how David understood it. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. Shall we not say with David the same words today? Shall we not have the same desire as David had, and as many other faithful people in the Bible? Read Hebrews chapter 11 and let the Spirit of God guide you, just as He guided those people. Their experience can be yours also. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

"Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.' When the Spirit of God controls mind and heart, the converted soul breaks forth into a new song; for he realizes that in his experience the promise of God has been fulfilled, that his transgression has been forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of the divine law, and faith toward Christ, who died for man's justification. 'Being justified by faith,' he has 'peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Romans 5:1." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476

What are the results and benefits of this walk of faith?

Let us look at this from God's perspective. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7. "If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Psalm 130:3–4

"The conditions of eternal life, under grace, are just

what they were in Eden—perfect righteousness, harmony with God, perfect conformity to the principles of His law. The standard of character presented in the Old Testament is the same that is presented in the New Testament. This standard is not one to which we cannot attain. In every command or injunction that God gives there is a promise, the most positive, underlying the command. God has made provision that we may become like unto Him, and He will accomplish this for all who do not interpose a perverse will and thus frustrate His grace." –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 76

We can clearly see that God never changes; the ones who should change are we, because of sin. Our heavenly Father wants to restore what was lost, and this restoration will be performed through men and women who accept Christ's sacrifice in their behalf. We have no merits to go to heaven, it is written, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23. Will you receive this gift? We don't deserve it but it is there, and it is just for you. Today acknowledge Jesus as your personal Saviour and He will change your life. Confess Him before people and He will confess you before the Father; make plans with Him and He will give you success in all things; share the good news with all around you.

Jesus tells us, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told



you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1–3. A wonderful promise. Jesus is coming soon, my friend, to take us home and put an end to this world. If Jesus promised it, I believe it with all my heart.



What about you, my friend, do you believe it? If yes, then you are on the right side; and one day the King of kings will come in His glory to reward us. Do not let anyone take away Jesus' promise from your life.

We live in such a wicked world, and many times we tend to forget about heaven. For example, let us just take an ordinary day, a common day in our life. Usually Christians wake up in the morning and the first thing that should be done is our personal and private prayer, which is followed by the family morning worship, reading a Bible text with the family and meditating over it during that day. Well, until this point everything should be ok; but then we go to work, and there we meet with people who are not Christians, as is mostly the case.

Today there are people who say that if you do not have fun, look good, go to parties, nicely dressed in the best fashion, seek for high society, for anything to be cool and so forth (the list goes on), they sometimes make you feel inferior. And then, in order to avoid these kinds of comments, you try to be cool, although you are a Christian and your duty before God is to show Christ in your conversation, dress, and diet. This is dangerous today, and many young people are tempted to follow the world's standards and fashions. Unfortunately, I have met lots of people in this situation; once they enjoyed Bible study, prayer and Church fellowship, then suddenly they left the church and finally, Jesus.

"I would ask the youth of today who profess to believe present truth, wherein they deny self for the truth's sake. When they really desire an article of dress, or some ornament or convenience, do they lay the matter before the Lord in prayer to know if His Spirit would sanction this expenditure of means? In the preparation of their clothing, are they careful not to dishonor their profession of faith? Can they seek the Lord's blessing upon the time thus employed? It is one thing to join the church, and quite another thing to be united to Christ. Unconsecrated, world-loving professors of religion are one of the most serious causes of weakness in the church of Christ." —*Messages to Young People*, p. 357

My dear sister and brother in Christ, for Jesus' sake, let us put everything away that causes a deficiency in our way toward heaven; I believe we are very late in earth's history and Jesus is coming soon. He wants to reach out to you, to embrace you, and to tell you how valuable you are, He wants to tell you He has a plan for your life and that He can restore everything that has been lost and destroyed by sin. He wants to tell you that He can remake your life today, even if it was blown up into

pieces—remember, He is able to do that. Believe me, I could see it in my life. Jesus did it for me and the same Jesus can do it for you if you let Him. Why not lift up your heart right now? Why not say, "Lord I want to be prepared for Your soon coming and I need You in my life?" Jesus is willing to do that, my friend. Certainly I want to live in that better world where no trace of sin will be ever be again, don't you? But let me ask you a question: how could you and I possibly accept Him being crowned as King of the universe if we are not willing to make Him the King of our heart right now? Do you remember that Jesus is saying to you and to me: "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways." Proverbs 23:26

May our loving Father in heaven give us power from on high to overcome evil, and to do His will. May His Holy Spirit guide us in all truth and prepare us for the most important and great event of our life, Jesus second coming in glory. AMEN..



**Nicholas Anca**

## LOOKING FOR YOU...

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# Our Rights

In every country, the citizens have certain rights—things that they are allowed to do, and also there are things that are illegal, that they are not allowed to do, and if they still do them, they are liable for punishment.

These rights are according to the laws of each country.

In the kingdom of God also we are bound by the laws which God has made. We have things that we can do, they are acceptable; also things that we are not permitted to do, they are illegal. They may be allowed by worldly standards, but not according to the laws of God's kingdom.

When we become citizens of God's kingdom we make a solemn vow to obey all the laws of His kingdom. After this we are bound by these laws, and if we do not obey them faithfully, we will receive punishment.

People in the world who have not made this solemn vow to obey God's laws are not bound by them. They can break them and not receive punishment immediately.

In the time of ancient Israel, the surrounding nations were sun worshippers; Sunday was the day of their worship, and God did not punish them for it. God's law said, "Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one who defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among His people." Exodus 31:14

In the Laodicean message we read, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." Revelation 3:19

People in the world speak lies freely, and they get away with it. But if we, the citizens of God's kingdom speak a lie, what can happen? Ananias and his wife had promised to give to the church the money they would receive from the sale of their house, but they decided to

keep part of the money to themselves; they lied to the church and to God that what they gave was the whole amount that they got for the sale of their house. As Peter rebuked them, they fell to the ground and died. (Acts 5:1–10)

The Bible is clear; the 144,000 have no guile in their mouths. (Revelation 14:5)

In the world some people have won millions in the lottery. But we read in the Spirit of Prophecy, "Satan sets in operation schemes that will produce in the minds of our brethren a great desire to try their fortunes, as in a lottery. . . . Then if one is successful, he is elated over the fact that he gained a few hundred dollars, that he decides to keep on getting money if he can. He continues to invest in real estate or in mines. The device of Satan is successful; in the place of increased funds flowing into the treasury, there is a withdrawal of means from our institutions, in order that the owners may try their fortunes in the mining business or in land speculations." —*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 238

"Then there is some lottery business connected with it, and one young man that goes there, obtains a gold watch. What then? The watch may be genuine gold, it may be no fraud, but ah, there is a fraud back of that, and that is the snare. If he has gained this once, he will want to try it again. Oh, I would rather, if it had been a son of mine, have him lying in his coffin than sporting that gold watch." —*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 241

The devil knows how to play his game. So vastly different are the laws of heaven than the laws of the world. We do not have the right to spend our money in lottery tickets or in the stock market, or in real estate, or in land speculations.

In the world, people hate one another. Friendships are broken and if offended, they try to get even. This right we do not have.

God will punish everyone according to their evil doing. We read, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Romans 12:19

Do not rejoice when God is punishing your enemy. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." Proverbs 24:17

"However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion rise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 171–172

Also we have no right to speak the language of this world. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians 4:6. "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Peter 1:15

We need to learn our rights in the kingdom of God which are so different from the rights in the worldly kingdoms.

We have the right to love, but we have no right to hate. We have the right to forgive, but we have no right to bear a grudge. We have the right to defend others, but we have no right to defend ourselves. We have the right to carry a cross daily, but we have no right to lay it down.

If someone hit us on the cheek, we have the right to turn to him the other cheek, but we have no right to hit back at him.

Do we consider the laws of the kingdom of God to be fair and righteous? If we do, then we need to keep them and practice them.

If someone does not obey them, then he has no right to be a citizen in God's kingdom. Someone can be a member in the church of God but belong to the kingdom of Satan, and God will not allow a lawbreaker into heaven.

What makes us a special people, and what is our greatness? We read, "And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deuteronomy 4:8

Our greatness is the law of God. Our greatness is to love our enemies, and forgive all men. Our greatness is to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.

If we obey the laws of God, and live by our rights, then we will have the right to go to heaven and a right to eternal life. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14. AMEN

*Timo Martin*

## **Canadian Field Conference**

**Camp Edgewood, Eden Mills, Ontario**

**August 9–12, 2012**

### **Accommodations:**

Per day attendance:

- \$12 each adult per day.
- Children 5 to 12 years old: \$6 each child.
- Children up to 4 years old are free.

Or

Per day & night accommodations:

- \$28 each adult per night.
- \$14 each Child 5 to 12 years old, per night.
- Children up to 4 years old are free.

### **Food:** (Vegan cuisine)

Per Person Charges:

- Adults: \$9 each meal (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner = \$27)
- Children 5 to 12 years old: \$5.00 each meal.
- Children up to 4 years old are free.

**Note:** On Sabbath, Per Day attendance and Lunch will be paid for by the Canadian Field. This will be offset by funds received from a conference collection which will be held on Sabbath afternoon.

A sign-up form will be sent with additional information in the next few weeks. Accommodations will be booked on a first come, first served basis.

**For information contact: John Formosa**

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# General Conference World Assembly 2012, South Africa

For the first time in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, the World Assembly was held in the continent of Africa. After the delegate's sessions, which took place in the city of Johannesburg, South Africa (June 24–July 11, 2012), the public conference was held at North West University in the small town of Potchefstroom, two hours outside Johannesburg (July 11–14, 2012).

**The theme of the conference was, “Surely I come quickly.” Revelation 22:20**

#### **WEDNESDAY:**

After the Conference was opened by the President of the South African Union, **BROTHER HENRY DERING (USA)** gave us a study on the current signs of the end of the world.

The year 2012 has been the focus for theories about the end of the world. If you do a Google search for “End of the World 2012” you would get 1,560,000,000 hits. Many have predicted the end of the world. Satan is creating many deceptions and will even impersonate Christ. The Bible, however, will enlighten us to the truth. The Bible speaks of the deceptions and the natural disasters which are on the increase, and we see this happening today. The Bible also states that Jesus will come when the world does not expect it. He comes as a thief.

The Three Angel's Messages are the gospel to the world today. It is a positive message; not a message of doom, but of hope. It is about getting ourselves right with God.

#### **THURSDAY:**

**BROTHER ANTON SALAVIOV (Australia)** began the day for us by encouraging us to be not only conscious of the time in which we live, but more importantly, we need to fulfill the conditions needed to be prepared for the Lord's coming.

He compared our days to the time of Ancient Israel. It was not God's will that they wander 40 years in the wilderness, however, due to their fear and lack of faith, they were required to do so. Prior to the conquest of Canaan, Joshua had gone apart to pray and worship asking for help, and he had an encounter with Christ. In order for us to be able to spiritually conquer we also need to have an encounter with Jesus. We can believe all the doctrines, but if we do not know Jesus, we will fail.

**BROTHER TZVETAN PETKOV (USA).** Most of us want Jesus to come and put an end to all the suffering and pain in this life so that we can enter into eternal life. But, what was the reaction of the people to Jesus' first coming? “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.” Matthew 2:1–3. Instead of rejoicing, it says they were troubled. Ask yourself—do you really want Jesus to come today or does the coming of Jesus trouble you?

The problem was that they expected a different Jesus—a powerful revolutionary, or at least someone born in the house of the High Priest or King. When Jesus came, they did not recognize Him since He came from the poorest area of Judea.

This did not only happen in the Jewish nation. It is the same today. Churches are preaching Jesus Christ, but it is not the Jesus in the Bible. Those of this class are described by, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?” Matthew 7:22. Even in God's church there is the danger that we do not accept the Jesus of



the Bible, but put our own conditions and expectations ahead of His requirements.

We need to accept His sacrifice and permit Him to enter our lives, otherwise we will be like the Jews. Jesus will come and we will not recognize Him. And He will not recognize us. We need to experience the miracle of accepting Jesus Christ.

**BROTHER LARRY WATTS (USA)** continued by speaking on the important subject of, “Saved to serve.” It is not as important what God does for me, but what is more important is what I do for God. If God wanted you in heaven right now, He could bring that fiery chariot as you walk out of the building today and take you to heaven as He did with Elijah. However, there is needful preparation. Paul encouraged us to, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” 2 Corinthians 13:5

In Jesus Christ is the certainty of our salvation. If we have Jesus we have all. Righteousness that brings us peace is not of ourselves. Was Jesus in need of salvation? No, He is the Saviour. He came to serve. He brought us salvation and we have then been “saved to serve.”

**BROTHER PARMENAS SHIRIMA (Tanzania).** We need to be ready for the Lord’s coming today because it has been delayed due to our lack of faith. We are living in a terrible world that is full of sin, that has been taken captive by the devil, but still in this situation we can have patience and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Philippians 2:5–6. We need to have the mind of Jesus. His joy was to come and save us. He took the form of a servant/slave. He came to this enslaved world and took our nature—human nature, in all its condition, except without sin. Now, Paul says let us have the same mind. Regardless of your position in the world, take the mind of Jesus and you will be ready.

**BROTHER JOEL BARNEDO (USA).** Paul was a happy missionary. He was stoned and imprisoned yet he was singing. On the resurrection day, Jesus did not talk about the crucifixion; rather He was talking about peace, as He walked on the way to Emmaus.

Jesus is coming. Let us not talk about the persecution. Let us sing. Jesus is coming soon. It is easier for God to bring people to heaven, but it is harder for Him to bring

heaven into people’s lives.

If we focus on negative things, we will get negative results. If you came here to focus on the sermon and the beauty of the gospel, you will go home happy. You will learn to start to do missionary work. We are not here to preach to you; we are here to motivate you—that you will enjoy canvassing, and when you go to your church, you will go to church early. You will help the pastor with missionary work. This is the fruit of the conference. Those that do missionary work are the happiest people on earth.

**BROTHER HENRY ANDRADE (Australia).** “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son.” Galatians 4:4

Brother Andrade briefly outlined details regarding important prophecies for the Advent people, as recorded in the book of Revelation. He began with the Seven Trumpets and went through the history of the Advent message as recorded in Revelation 14:6–7. God’s time schedule never fails. On Oct 22, 1844, the people were waiting for the coming of Jesus, but He never came. It was a great disappointment for many. Brother Andrade reviewed important events up until the coming of Jesus and beyond the millennium, events which we should be familiar with.

God loves the sinner and wants the sinner to be saved, but the sinner has to change. Only this way can he be saved. No one knows the date or the hour, but we can form an idea in our minds that the time is close.

**BROTHER DANILO MONTERROSO (Guatemala)** shared with us some of the signs of the times that have occurred. Some of the physical signs have taken place (sun darkened, moon not giving its light, and stars falling). Other signs such as distress in an unstable society, social problems, family problems, political problems, problems in the church, men’s hearts failing them for fear, social crisis, and economic crisis all point to the fact that Jesus is coming soon.

Is the church ready to say, “Jesus come?” Are you ready? Do you remember what happened with two and one half tribes in the time of Moses? They said, we don’t want to enter the Promised Land. We want to stay on this side. How many today don’t want to taste the fruit of Canaan? How many are living comfortably and not preparing for Jesus coming?

Christ has not yet come, even though all the signs have been fulfilled. What is He waiting for? He is waiting for you and I to reflect the character of Christ and when



we do reflect His image, He will come. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

**BROTHER ALFRED NGWENYA (Ethiopia).** Maranatha! Christ is coming. I want to see Jesus Christ appearing. There is no joy in this world. Today, if Christ is in you, you shall be a happy man, a happy woman. The coming of Jesus should be fruitful for you.

Brother Ngwenya then went on to explain how several barren women in the Bible produced champions of truth. Something that could not produce became productive; something fruitful came from these barren women. There is Sarah (Isaac's mother), Hannah (Samuel's mother), the wife of Manoah (Samson's mother), and Elizabeth (John the Baptist's mother). Finally, the mighty preacher, Jesus Christ, came from a virgin woman. Barren women produced generals.

If you have been unfruitful, come to Jesus and He can make you fruitful. He is waiting for you.

**FRIDAY:**

**BROTHER VANGARRAL CHENGBE (Sierra Leone).** Abraham was told by God to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. (Genesis 22:2)

Abraham obeyed, leaving in the early morning, without telling his wife. An appeal was then made for each one of us to sacrifice our best for the Lord—our talents, our time, and our money. If you can sing, glorify God through your song. God has blessed us with a variety of talents so that we can use them for His honour and glory. Make your sacrifice for your God.

**BROTHER STEFANO LA CORTE (Italy)** has now taken over the Good Samaritan Department. He gave us a summary of the 20 years that the Good Samaritan Department has been running:

Sister Santina Mascera has sacrificed many years of her life for the Good Samaritan Dept. and she remains the honorary president.

The Good Samaritan Fund has been supporting various projects all over the world from Africa, to Central and South America, Asia, Oceania, and Eastern Europe. The headquarters are in Casalguidi, Italy. Funds are collected from donations made through the church and also from the public.

In Italy, booths have been set up at some festivals and

people walk by and donate. May God put it in our hearts to help support the Good Samaritan Fund as we are able.

**BROTHER FRANCESCO CAPUTO (Italy).** There was a little four-year-old boy that was very hungry, and he was with some other children on the street. He was looking for a piece of bread. He knocked on the door and a well-dressed man opened the door. He asked, "What do you want?" The boy said, "I am really hungry. I just want a piece of bread." The man went into his house and came back with a piece of bread. Then he gave it to the boy. The child took the bread and thanked the man. Then the man started to talk with the boy, "Boy, do you know that you have a Father in heaven, and that Father loves all and He loves you too, very much." The little boy was listening carefully, "Man, so we all have a Father in heaven? And so my father is your father?" The man said, "Yes, sure." "So then if we have the same father, you are my brother. And you, my brother, are you not ashamed to give me this hard piece of bread and you are my brother?" The man was even a Pastor, and he gave an old stale piece of bread to the little boy.

Religion is not passive. It is not saying, "No, no, don't" or, doing nothing. The love of Christ is action. True joy will be found when you do good actions. True happiness is not limited to "don't," although sometimes the Lord starts us off this way.

May God help you to allow the living water flow through you. The sweetest words a person will hear will be, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40. He doesn't want to lose you. He wants you to stay with Him in heaven. The greatest sin is to reject salvation. Don't do it. God loves you, and through you He wants to love others.

**BROTHER MARTIN LAGUNAS (Mexico).** "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 4:12. The coming of the Lord is at the door. Do you believe it?

Ask yourself if you are in the process of being ready for heaven, or if you are in harmony with the world. The church needs to be pure. Many that profess to be Christians, dress, eat, and behave like the world. The only possible way to find out who they are is to hear what they say. Grace is coming to an end, and we need to behave like Zaccheus. He decided to go and meet





Jesus, and he removed all obstacles by climbing a tree. We need to remove obstacles.

Your works need to be in harmony with your faith. All your faith needs to be in God. Your heart is either with God or with the world. If you wish to see Christ and be with Him for eternity, you need to achieve sanctification in Christ today.

**BROTHER ROLANDO DE LA PAZ (Philippines).** An important training for church members is that of Medical Missionary Work. Medical missionary work is to free the suffering. Those that are helped are filled with gratitude and then God works upon the heart.

We all have different talents. Some have talents in the medical lines, others have different talents, but all our talents should be used for the glory of God. Before Jesus comes, we must be blameless. If we fully understand the plan of salvation, we will not dare to sin. Only through His grace, those that keep His commandments are made free.

The Lord is appealing to all of us to humble our hearts to Christ. My Redeemer lives and because He lives, I shall also live. If we lose heaven, we lose all. If we gain heaven, we gain all.

**SISTER RAQUEL ORCE (USA)** took us back in history to the time when the Passover was instituted in the nation of Israel while they were still in Egypt. Prior to their departure, the Lord instituted this celebration to help them remember the exit from Egypt and look forward to the coming of the Lord. This feast is a family feast, to be celebrated as a Sabbath by the entire family in ancient Israel. Some preparation had to take place for the feast. The Lamb was carefully chosen. All the yeast was put away from the house. The house was to be thoroughly cleaned also. With the unleavened bread they also had to eat bitter herbs.

The important elements that were necessary to follow during the feast were: 1) with your loins girded; 2) your shoes on your feet; and 3) your staff in your hand.

We no longer keep the Passover, however the three elements are symbolic for us today. The loins represent the truth, the shoes—the gospel, and the staff—faith.

The shoes were on their feet, because they were to go out at any moment. And this is the attitude that we should have about our home. We should not have a home, thinking we will always remain. We have a new

home—a heavenly home; and we have to be ready to go at any moment. This is by accepting the gospel and the Three Angel's Messages—all church members must have loins girded, with their staff in their hand.

**BROTHER PABLO HUNGER (USA).** I am missing home. When you have been gone for some time, it is always nice to come home. When I visit the brethren they are so friendly and kind, but still, it is not like home.

Soon we are going to our heavenly home. In reality we are pilgrims on this earth. In Hebrews 11 we read of many faithful souls who considered themselves pilgrims on this earth. Moses had great privileges in Egypt, but he refused this luxurious lifestyle because he wanted something better.

Jesus is coming soon and He wants to take you to a better home for you to enjoy for eternity. Everything will be in harmony there.



Enoch enjoyed communion with the Lord, and this is the preparation that we need. When we have this desire in our hearts and put all our energy into the work of the Lord, then God will bring us home.

In the beauty of the heavenly home there will be no more sickness, sorrow, or death. This should be our message. Humanity needs comfort. They need hope. We need to bring the eyes of the people to the heavenly home.

How thankful we can be to the Lord for His love and pardon that made it possible for us to inherit this new home.

#### **SABBATH:**

During Sabbath School, **PABLO HUNGER** gave a missionary report regarding the new areas that have opened up for missionary work in the last five years. These countries include: Cuba, Haiti, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Senegal, Gambia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Japan, and Malaysia among others. Let us support these new mission fields with our prayers and funds. We need to be united for this missionary expansion.

**BROTHER IDEL SUAREZ (USA)** presented the divine service using the conference theme as his title: "Surely I Come Quickly."

He shared evidence proving the second coming of Jesus and spoke about how we can hasten the coming of



Christ.

Peter said that in last days scoffers would arise (2 Peter 3:3–4). These have heard that Jesus is coming since they were children, and now they are old and He still has not come. Noah preached for 120 years. And now the Reform Movement is nearly 120 years old.

Brother Suarez took us back into history to the city of Constantinople, which had, for 1000 years, been ruled by Christians. The founder was named Constantine. The Anatolian Turks attacked using cannons, the Moslems came by land and sea, and the city fell.

Like this city, our planet cannot endure much more. In Revelation it says that Jesus will come, riding a white horse, then Babylon will fall. With the fall of every city, it is proof that human society cannot endure.

Jesus said, “Surely I come.” He will come in glory. He will be beautiful.

Many famous scientists who were sincere have been led to acknowledge that God is the author of all true science.

We need to open the books of Daniel and Revelation. Paul says that prophecy is for unbelievers so that they may believe. Many do not know Jesus and yet we have a personal letter signed by Him. We need to read it, to live it, to share it.

If you want to be at the well of Christ, Jesus said, “I give you My coat of righteousness. I am your substitute. I am your guarantee.”

The afternoon was spent in testimonies and special songs in praise to the Lord.

**BROTHER DOUGLAS FRANCIS (Sri Lanka).** “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.” 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

What is this price? God paid the price. He emptied Himself. He emptied His pockets. He paid the price—Jesus Christ. He paid the price for our redemption. He paid the ransom money and now He wants something back. He wants our hearts. He wants us to keep His commandments. He wants us to love Him. But, in turn, some ask a question. Does it pay to serve God? What do we gain from keeping the commandments? (Read Malachi 3:13–14)

When we encourage our members to faithfully pay their tithes and offerings, some start to make excuses, but, remember, He bought us with a price. So how will you pay Him back? You have to be the best stewards of your talents, which include our time, body, everyday living, and money.

We are blessed with a wonderful truth. We are blessed to be in the Lord’s church. We are blessed to be His children. He paid His price for us. So, it is our duty to show gratitude. We should pay stewardship and pay attention to our lives in order to fulfill His will in our lives.

All too soon it came time for the final farewell meeting. All the board members came and gave a few closing words of thanksgiving and encouragement. We will be going back to our respective churches now with the blessings we received from the conference and with new courage and zeal to push forward the work of the Lord.

Beautiful unity and fellowship was shared amongst the 906 people in attendance on the Sabbath.

Brother Chileshe, the leader of the South African Union, closed the meeting with thanks and praise to the Lord.

**Wendy Eaton**

## DELEGATES



## *General Conference Officers 2012 - 2017*

**President:** Idel Suarez, Jr. (USA)

**Vice President and First Secretary:** Pablo Hunger (Austria)

**Treasurer:** Douglas Francis (Sri Lanka)

**Second Secretary:** Woon San Kang (Korea)

### **Executive Subcommittee**

President, Vice President and First Secretary, Treasurer, Second Secretary, rotating member from the regional leaders (each of the five leaders serves one year as a member of the Executive Subcommittee)

### **Finance Committee**

Treasurer and Director: Douglas Francis (Sri Lanka)

Other Members: Hans Rekker (Holland), John Bescec (Canada)

**Auditors:** Timo Martin (Canada), Rachel Austria (Philippines)

### **Ministerial Department** (one member per continent)

**North America and Director:** Tzvetan Petkov (Sweden/USA)

**Asia:** A. Cortez (Philippines)

**Central America:** Martin Lagunas (Mexico)

**Europe:** Antonino Di Franca (Italy)

**South America:** Alfonso Reto (Peru)

**Africa:** Parmenas Shirima (Tanzania/England)

**Oceania:** Henry Andrade (Australia)

### **Missionary Ministry**

**Publishing Leader and Director:** Larry Watts (USA)

**Evangelism Leader:** Alfred Ngwenya (Zimbabwe)

**Multimedia Leader:** Noe Chappa (Argentina)

**Canvassing Leader:** Raquel Orce (Spain)

### **Health Ministry**

**Health Leader and Director:** Rolando de la Paz (Philippines)

**Engineer:** Gerhard Köbele (Germany)

**Good Samaritan:** Stefano La Corte (Italy)

### **Social Ministry**

**Family Leader and Director:** Raquel Orce (Spain)

**Youth Leader:** Joel Barnedo (USA)

**Education Leader:** Danilo Monterroso (Guatemala)

### **Regional Leaders**

**Pacific:** Leader: Anton Salavyov

Secretary: Henry Andrade

Other: Jan Karinda

**Asia:** Leader: Dai Chun Kang, (Korea)

Secretary, Arnolfo Cortes (Philippines)

Other: Rolando De La Paz (Philippines)

**Europe:** Leader: Franco Caputo (Italy/Greece)

Secretary: Daniel Serban (Germany),

Others: Daniel Garcia (Spain), Hans Rekker (Holland),

Anton Tanucsev (Hungary)

**Africa:** Leader: Parmenas Shirima (Tanzania/England)

Secretary: Sevith Moyo (Kenya)

Others: Alfred Ngwenya (Zimbabwe)

Bright Fue (Tanzania), Lencha Tekle (Ethiopia/Ghana)

**Latin America:** Leader: Martin Lagunas (Mexico)

Secretary: Alfredo Fiscaro (Chile)

Others: Cristoba Lozada (Peru), Adalicio Fontes (Brazil), Julian Guilarte (Venezuela)

**Full General Conference Committee:** Idel Suarez Jr., Pablo Hunger, Woon San Kang, Douglas Frances, Anton Salavyov, Dai Chun Kang, Martin Lagunas, Parmenas Shirima, Franco Caputo, Rolando de la Paz, Larry Watts, Danilo Monterosso, Tzvetan Petkov













# Happiness

Everyone wants to be happy. Happiness is being filled with laughter, smiles, and a general satisfied feeling within a person. Many people look for external sources to make them happy. These people become very disappointed because there is little happiness to be had in this world.

The devil creates many deceptions to deceive people into what they think will bring them happiness. He started with Eve. From the beginning he told Eve that God is not looking out for their best interest. If she truly wanted to be happy and have a fulfilled life, she should eat from the forbidden fruit. Eve believed . . . and we know the history of the ruin that followed.

The devil has been sharing the same lie ever since. He presents the ways of the world, the parties, the entertainments, the immoral lifestyle, and tells people they will be happy with these things. He lures them into his trap. He does not tell them that they are in peril of becoming an alcoholic, or of losing all their wealth in the gambling casinos, or the unhappiness that follows an immoral, unfulfilled lifestyle. No, he hides these facts until he has trapped the person in addiction.

In the Bible we are shown the way to true happiness.

Happiness comes in ways and forms we don't always understand, but we need to trust in God. He knows what is best.

One meaning of the word "Blessed" is "blissfully happy or contented." Is this not what God wants for His children, to be blissfully happy? Yes, that is what He wants. That is what He wanted for Adam and Eve; He gave them the Garden of Eden to live in and He provided everything they needed to live a contented life. However, the devil told them something different and they believed the devil . . . ruin followed. The devil lied.

It would behoove us to follow the counsels in the written

Word as to the way to be truly blessed—blissfully happy. Recently in our Sabbath School Lessons we studied through Matthew chapter 5, the Beatitudes. These are the most famous verses that begin with "Blessed" . . . showing God's way to true happiness, peace and contentment. There are many other places in the Bible also where God is showing us the way to be blissfully happy. This article will explore a few.

***"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:1-2***

Is the devil saying something opposite to this? Does he tell the world that you will NOT be happy unless you DO walk in the counsel of the ungodly, sit in the seat of scornful or stand in the way of sinners? Yes, he does. Peer pressure has led many young people astray. At Home they are taught that the ways of the world are not the ways of God, but their peers mock them and tell them that the only true happiness and freedom is to throw off the yoke and do as you please. They can drink, smoke, party, do drugs, have illicit relations, and be filled with blissful joy. The Christian life is boring, while their life is exciting. Many Christian young people have believed this lie and have gone after the ways of the world, and met ruin at the end of their lives, unhappiness.

The only true happiness to be found is to delight in the law of the Lord and to keep it—to stay away from the ungodly, sinners and scornful (whether inside or outside the church—yes, you will find some in the church who are not converted). That is the truth and anything else is a lie from the devil.

***"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no***

**guile.” Psalm 32:1–2**

When your sins are found out by someone else and they counsel you regarding them, what is your reaction? Do you try to make excuses like Eve and make fig leaf garments? “The fig-leaves represent the arguments used to cover disobedience. When the Lord calls the attention of men and women to the truth, the making of fig-leaves into aprons will be begun, to hide the nakedness of the soul. But the nakedness of the sinner is not covered. All the arguments pieced together by all who have interested themselves in this flimsy work will come to naught.” *The Review and Herald*, November 15, 1898. On the other hand, do you thank the person and then go to Jesus for forgiveness and healing? What a wonderful God we serve that is willing to forgive us all our sins, no matter how terrible our past life has been. And then when we repent, the iniquity will not be imputed in us and there will be no guile (crafty or artful deception) in our spirit—nothing hidden. All will be brought out in the open and confessed—no cover-up. “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Proverbs 18:13

This person is truly happy, blissfully happy. In the Bible are recorded many instances where Jesus said, “Go and sin no more.” And the person left full of happiness and hope.

**“Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” Psalm 41:1–3**

“My appeal to the rich is, Deal liberally with your poor brethren, and use your means to advance the cause of God. The worthy poor, those who are made poor by misfortune and sickness, deserve your special care and help.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 481

The Lord blesses some of His servants with wealth, and to what purpose? So that they can share with the poor, and give to His cause. Many rich have heaped to themselves their riches and spent them on material goods for themselves. There are some genuine ones who have followed this counsel in Psalm 41, and they are truly blissfully happy. “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” More happiness is found in giving rather than receiving.

The Lord has promised an added blessing to those who help the poor.

They will be:

Delivered in a time of trouble.

The Lord will preserve and keep them alive.

They shall be blessed (happy) upon the earth.

They will not be delivered to the will of their enemies.

The Lord will strengthen them on the bed of languishing.

The Lord will make their bed in their sickness.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” Ecclesiastes 11:1

**“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.” James 1:2**

Can you be happy in the face of temptation? Temptation is difficult to bear. Many fall when tempted. They cannot endure. They complain. They finally give in. The promise is that, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13. Do you believe in an Almighty God? One who has the power to create the heavens and the earth? Then does He not have the power to keep you from sinning when tempted? He most certainly does. What is the problem? Some lack faith and try to live the Christian life on their own and not with the help of God. They fail. “The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. No matter how severe the pressure brought to bear upon you, sin is your own act. The seat of the difficulty is the unrenewed heart.” *The Adventist Home*, p. 331. Temptation will come, that is inevitable. What you do with that temptation is your decision. Give in to it? Or ask God to help you overcome it? Make up your own mind.

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” James 1:12

**“Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!” Ecclesiastes 10:17**

Gluttony is a major problem in society today, especially in affluent countries where food is abundant. This all began with the first sin—appetite. Disease in this modern world is very rife and the majority of illnesses stem from the foods that people eat. The happy man is the healthy man—whether poor or rich. Eating healthy foods and denying hurtful lusts, is the only way to happiness.

“Those who use flesh foods little know what they are eating. Often if they could see the animals when living and know the quality of the meat they eat, they would turn from it with loathing. People are continually eating



flesh that is filled with tuberculosis and cancerous germs. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 388. And, how many people in the world eat meat? Do we wonder why there is so much cancer? Happy is the man that is free from disease.

***"Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in His commandments." Psalm 112:1***

***"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." Isaiah 56:2***

Ask a teenager or child if they love rules. Many will say no. But true happiness comes only from obedience. God has given a law and those who follow it will be truly happy. Imagine the type of world we would live in if everyone kept the Ten Commandments. It would be heaven on earth. It will never happen, so therefore this earth will come to an end and we will have to wait to get to heaven to enjoy heaven on earth. Although many in the Christian world today claim to love the law, ask them about the Sabbath. Some have said it is a "yoke of bondage" and find some feeble excuses as to why they believe it is not necessary to keep. Some youth and children can't wait for the Sabbath hours to be over so they can get on with the "fun" things of life—their own pleasure. But the truly happy person is the one who keeps the Sabbath in its truest sense; keeps the Sabbath as God intended. That is where you can find rest and happiness.

***"Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law;" Psalm 94:15***

Who likes chastening? If your employer, a friend, a neighbour, an enemy chastened you, would you smile and say "thank you"?

What is chastening? It is "to restrain; subdue and to inflict suffering upon for purposes of moral improvement; to chastise."

No, not many people like chastening, but "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall

we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Hebrews 12:5–11. Praise God when you are chastened by someone. God loves you and wants to correct you of the defects in your character.

***"The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also." John 15:20***

***"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified." 1 Peter 4:13–14***

Paul and Silas sang in prison when they were suffering for Christ. Many martyrs in the Dark Ages died rejoicing in Christ. Yes, Christ gave His all for us, what shall we give in return? To be happy when suffering is opposite to what the world would think, but suffering for Christ brings great joy to the Christian. We do not deserve anything from God, but yet He gave us His most precious possession (His Son) so that we would be saved.

So if you are searching for happiness, continue to study the Word of God. There are many other counsels and suggestions that were not mentioned here. There is hidden treasure waiting to be discovered. Jesus wants you to be happy and He has shown the way—"It is written." Go find it. You will not be disappointed. No Christian ever came to the end of his life thinking, "I wish I had lived more for the world—I would have led a much more fulfilled life." But how many worldly people on their death bed have stated, "I wish I had lived more for Christ—I would have led a much more fulfilled life." True happiness is to be found in the ways of Christ. Believe. . . trust. . . "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psalm 34:8. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 34:5–6. AMEN

***Wendy Eaton***



# A Yoke for Your Neck

**“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28**

## **GALLING TO THE NECK**

This is a paradox of modern times! Each year we find ourselves receiving more mail; buy this, buy that—filled with false promises, spending more time with financial obligations, more time paying bills, planning budgets, figuring taxes, but in general, trying to survive. How much time is spent on the computer? Fixed on the TV? Cell phones, iPods? This is modern living! These and other devices are supposed to make life easier—less burdensome!

But, the exasperating thing is that all these things do just the opposite. They don't satisfy, but increase the burden. Men whose wearisome efforts to achieve spiritual rest have not eased the burden of man-made obligations (Matthew 23:4). “No one is safe from the vicissitudes of change that continually rock the industries in which technological earthquakes alter the landscape daily and sometimes even hourly! In government it is very difficult to explain the life cycle of a technology project.” (*Wall Street Journal*, R1, Monday, June 4, 2012)

## **VIBRATING OPPORTUNITY**

A yoke was worn by oxen to aid in drawing a load and to lighten the burden (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331). Also, “Take my yoke” is a Jewish metaphor for discipline and discipleship—“Put your neck under the yoke, and let your soul receive instruction.” But you don't have to be a scientist, economist, sociologist, or psychologist to see what the age of technology and information has done to mankind—moreover—a shorter work-week, financial security? Elusive as a butterfly! Families speak to each other on an answering machine, five-year-olds own cell phones, are schooled with computers and Power Point. Isn't it great? Are we or are we not having fun now? NO! To be honest we are fed-up! Who cannot identify with these feelings?

Ah! But into our lives comes a sound from Jesus, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened and I will

give you rest.” In view of the authority vested in Christ (Matthew 11:27), this invitation vibrates with opportunity!

Come to me, all of you who are fatigued and overwhelmed.

Come to me, all of you who are exhausted and weighed down beneath your burdens.

Come to me, all of you who are barely coping and need a break.

Jesus offers relief to tired people!

But, no matter how it is said or translated, it is pretty attractive isn't it?! He offers us rest! A lasting rest. Any takers? If you, like me, feel at times “burned out,” let us study this passage together. If you cannot, or are not interested, or have it “all together,” then spend the rest of the hour counting your blessings!

## **ON CALL**

“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” These first three words are very bold—daring! “Come to me!” Jesus doesn't say, “Come to God.” It is one thing to counsel someone who is hurting to say he or she needs God. But it is another thing to say, “I'm the One who can really take care of your troubles.” In Matthew we are told that Jesus is supremely confident of His divine capacity. No false modesty here—Jesus presents Himself—God clothed with skin on!

He Himself is the One and only author and representative of God and can make intercession for us (Romans 8:24). Whatever it is that troubles us—overwhelms us—Jesus can handle it! There is a basic Christian doctrine: If you need to get to God, come to Jesus. It's very simple—and exciting!

Next, notice that Jesus offers help to certain people—the weary and burdened; people that are having a hard time of it. These are the ones He wants! Martin Luther, in essence, said: what makes the invitation so strong is



that Jesus has implied that, “My Kingdom is a hospital for the sick and the invalids.” On the other hand, the church (a type of hospital), if inviting merely the self-reliant, the self-confident—would be empty! Karl Marx, communist leader, stated, that “religion is the opiate of the masses, a crutch for weak people.” He was partly correct; weak people need the church—a crutch, support, therapy, rest.

Now listen to the invitation of Jesus to the abnormal of society: in pain, broken legs, grieved, mourning, diseased, homeless, thirsting. He says, “Bring them to Me; I will take care of them!” There are two types of people in society: those who admit their failures and defects, and those who are liars! You see, Jesus invites the “sickies,” the “burnouts.” Now think about it before thinking of coming back next Sabbath. You’re in the company of a bunch of “weaklings,” “losers,” “failures,” “troubled ones” each week—those that seek and need help. If you are sick and tired of being sick, then this is for you! Everyday life is too much; you are depressed, discouraged, indecisive, fed-up, and wiped out! They all have a need!

### THE BLESSING PROMISED

Let us now see what Jesus offers you. “I will give you rest.” Christ is our Noah whose name signifies rest, for this same shall give us rest (Genesis 5:29; 8:9). Truly rest is good (Genesis 49:15); especially to those that are heavy laden (Ecclesiastes 5:12). Jesus Christ gives the assurance of rest to those weary souls, that by a lively faith come to Him for it; rest from the terror of sin, in a well grounded peace of conscience; rest from the power of sin, in a regular order of the soul, and its due government of itself; a rest in God, and a complacency of soul, in His love. (Psalm 11:6–7). This is that rest which remains for the people of God. (Hebrews 4:9). Namely, for a divine rest, one must mortify pride and passion.

Moreover, you can find in His company, refreshment, rejuvenation, and energy! But, He offers you in an unusual way—a yoke for your neck! Very strange! One would think a week on a Caribbean Island would be more interesting. But Jesus says “take My yoke upon you and learn from Me”—sit at the feet of Jesus. But, again to call those who are weary and heavy laden, to take a yoke upon them, looks like adding affliction to the afflicted. Strange again, if someone is worn out, why on earth would you offer him another load to carry? But the pertinence of it lies in the word “My”—“You are under a yoke which makes you weary—shake that off and try Mine, which will make yours easy.” The blessing promised is to those that do come: “I will give

you rest.”

### NO PAIN

Jesus Christ was a carpenter. He knew what a yoke was, having made many with His father. In the days of Jesus, they were quite common. There were two kinds: a single yoke for one animal, and a double yoke in which two animals were yoked side-by-side. I think once the yoke is on us, it is easy to “learn of Him.” Ah! This rest is to be had with Christ for all those who learn of Him! He says, in fact, “His yoke is easy—the burden light.”

The obligations involved in the Gospel are blessed ones, and strength to bear them is supplied with the yoke. The best way to learn is right alongside a good teacher, one-on-one—together! In Greece it is common for fathers to “read” or help their children study—“side-by-side.” Christ alone is the Teacher who by His person and work can instruct men regarding the Father, and bring them the rest of soul which is the very essence of true spiritual experience, a rest involving removal of sin’s guilt and the possession of eternal life.

The yoke of Christ’s commands is an easy yoke; it is (Greek—*chrestos*) not only easy but gracious, so the word signifies; it is sweet and pleasant; there is nothing in it to gall the yielding neck, nothing to hurt us, but, on the contrary, must refresh us. It is a yoke that is lined with love. Such is the nature of all of Christ’s commands, so reasonable in themselves, and so profitable to us, and all summed up in one word, and that sweet word is love. It is very easy to him that understandeth (Proverbs 14:6). It may be a little hard at first, but it is easy afterwards; the love of God and the hope of heaven will make it easy.

Now, if one were to ask me to move a piano and I am weak and tired, I would endeavour to find the biggest, strongest one to make the moving job easier, to lighten the burden. So, I think Jesus Christ is inviting us to “step into a double-yoke”—side-by-side to Jesus! Jesus Christ’s burden is light because He is right next to us bearing most of the weight!

The burden of Christ’s cross is a light burden, very light; afflictions for Christ which befall us as Christians. This burden in itself is not joyous, but grievous; yet as it is Christ’s, it is light. Paul knew as much of it as any man, and he calls it a light affliction (2 Corinthians 4:17). God’s presence (Isaiah 43:2), Christ’s sympathy (Isaiah 73:9; Daniel 3:25), make suffering for Christ “light and easy.” As afflictions abound and are prolonged, consolations abound, and are prolonged too. Let this therefore reconcile us to the difficulties, and help us over the dis-

couragements we may meet with, both in doing work and suffering work; though we may lose for Christ, we shall not lose by Him (by our side)!

### TAKE ACTION

Jesus Christ is meek, gentle, humble of heart. It still just doesn't seem right to bear our burdens. Ah! But Jesus turns things around, reverses things! When stress comes, we naturally try to escape—the "fight or flight syndrome." When we are wearied, tired, burdened, many of us simply want to flee. A restful escape—a vacation on a Greek Island—anywhere; just relief from responsibility, some form of relief!

When Jesus says rest, He means getting involved in the field-work! Wearing means to work as co-partner with Him (*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1092). Jesus wants us to pick up a new burden! What? Yes, His burden—and to take action. However, life's pressures drive some of us to fight back, to retaliate and react with a vengeance. But, Jesus says, NO! "Learn from Me for I am gentle and humble—not aggressive."

But, from a worldly point of view this may sound odd or ridiculous; yoking one's self to a humble teacher who died on a cross is going to help anything? It can be beyond one's reasoning. Ah! But look at what is promised to those who have faith in this method—"You will find rest in your souls!" The Greek word for "soul" is "psyche." If you bring your stress and weariness to Jesus, He promises to calm your "psyche." Ah! But He does not promise to relieve your schedule or your pain, and troubles away—but your state of mind, your "psyche" will be healed and restored!

While worldly promises relieve stress presumably by labour-saving devices, they compound the predicament! But, Jesus takes another way. He does not say to alter our outward world but to transform our inner person and give us peace in a chaotic, threatening world.

Only Jesus has the authority and power to change us—our fragile positions. Politicians, economists, sociologists, scientists, and others are trying to fix our predicaments, but with little success. Ah! And here comes Jesus offering to lighten our load, our burdens, with His yoke. By ourselves it is impossible. The only real solution to our inner weariness is to take on one more burden—the yoke of Jesus. Again, for "His yoke is easy and His burden light."

The pondering question again rears its bewildering head—how can the yoke of Jesus be considered light?

Well, just think this:

### THE FOUR IFS!

1. **IF** you think godly and moral living is a heavy weight, try living with acts of immorality on your conscience. Which is the heaviest burden? Try thinking for example—adultery.

2. **IF** you think the demand of loving others is heavy, try living in a state of lovelessness—no love for self, nor for others.

3. **IF** you think God's call for generous giving (tithes, offerings, donations) is too demanding, try keeping hold of every dollar (or Euro) and every possession you have.

4. **IF** righteousness is too intimidating (frightened into submission), see if godless living helps you sleep at night.

So, once you take up the yoke of Christ, to all the other yokes you've carried (above), I think you'll see how light it is. You see, dear friends and brethren, there is no release—no escape from our burden—apart from the meekness of Christ.

Good, keen, sharp, eager, strong reasoning may help slightly, but so strong is this vise that if we push it down in one place, it will come up somewhere else! To men, women, and children everywhere Jesus says, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."

### STOP PRETENDING!

Moreover, the rest He offers is the "rest of meekness," the blessed relief which comes when we accept ourselves for what we are and stop pretending! "Profession weighs nothing with God. Before it is everlastingly too late for wrongs to be righted, let each one ask himself 'What am I?' It depends upon ourselves as to whether we shall form such characters as will constitute us members of God's royal family above." —*The Review and Herald*, April 9, 1895. (Colossians 3:12)

It will take some courage at first, but the needed grace will come as we learn that we are sharing this new and easy yoke with the strong Son of God Himself! He calls it "My yoke" and He walks at one end while we walk at the other. It's easy because He carries the weight (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 81). If you are one of those—tired of walking it alone, consider becoming Christ's "yoke-mate" with **A YOKE FOR YOUR NECK!**

Amen and Amen. <><

*John Theodorou,*  
USA







**Left: Michael  
Right: Stephen**

## **CHILDREN'S CORNER**

### **DAVID**

David was Jesse's son and Israel's second king. One day, Samuel the prophet was told by God to go to Jesse's house to look at his sons. God had chosen another king for Israel, someone better than King Saul. So seven of Jesse's sons were presented to Samuel, but he asked if these were all the sons. One, the youngest, was out in the fields looking after his father's sheep. His name was David. He came before Samuel and God told him to anoint David as Israel's new king.

David was then taken to the palace to play the harp for King Saul to soothe his troubled spirit, and Saul loved him. One day, as David brought food to his brothers, who were in the army, he heard the challenge of a giant Philistine warrior, Goliath, who was well over 9 feet tall! David wondered why no one went to fight him and so he bravely declared that he would go up and defeat Goliath. The Spirit of God was with David and he fought Goliath with only five stones and a sling. This was David's first victory over the enemy. When Saul heard of this, he asked David to stay at the palace and he was not allowed to go back to his father's house.

God was with David and he was very victorious. One day as he returned from fighting the Philistines, the women of the city began to sing "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." Saul became very jealous of David even to the point of wanting him dead. Once he threw a javelin at David as he played the harp, but missed him.

David had to run away from the palace and hide out in caves and in the wilderness because he was declared an enemy of Israel by Saul. He had been anointed king, but yet he was as if he was a criminal in hiding. He had the opportunity to kill Saul on several occasions but he

# *Kings of Israel*

said, "The Lord forbid that I do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him." Here we see David's character. His kindness and also how he was afraid to displease God. We must remember that he would always consult God before he would go somewhere or do something. We must learn from David and always go to God in prayer and consult Him before we make a decision in our life.

Many of the beautiful psalms we read today were written by David while he was in hiding, running for his life.

Once Saul had died, David was able to return to the palace and reign as Israel's second king. God was still with David and he was a great warrior. But as it happened, David once stayed behind from battle and he became idle. He was not busy, so he got into trouble. He committed several sins because of his idleness; murder, adultery, and deceit, etc. David was punished by losing four of his children and he deeply repented of his sin.



David is truly one of the greatest examples of true repentance and forgiveness from God. When pleading with God for forgiveness he wrote this beautiful psalm. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me

thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:1-2, 10

God in His great mercy forgives us when we don't deserve it. It is my wish and prayer that we may truly repent of our sins and be forgiven by the grace of God. Let us ask God to give us a new heart and to renew a right spirit within us. AMEN.

**Stephen Newby**

## SOLOMON

Solomon was born to David and one of his wives, named Bathsheba. Not long after Solomon was proclaimed king he had a miraculous dream. In his dream God asked him what he wanted. Solomon could have asked for money or land or a new chariot, but instead he asked for wisdom that he may lead the Israelites wisely. Then God said that because he hadn't asked for anything for himself, He would give him wisdom and much more.

One of Solomon's greatest acts of wisdom happened when two women came rushing into the palace, screaming and yelling at one another, each one claiming that the child was hers. Solomon's wisdom allowed him to determine who was the real mother of the child. "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment." 1 Kings 3:28

News about what happened in his palace reached people far and wide. Solomon began to build the temple. Before David had died he had gotten some supplies but Solomon knew that they would need more to build the magnificent temple that David had dreamed of building while he was yet alive. So Solomon sent a letter to David's old friend, Hiram, king of Tyre, asking him for cedar and fir trees out of the forests of Lebanon. Solomon said he would pay him back by giving him 20,000 measures of wheat and 20,000 measures of pure oil per year.

All the walls and ceiling of the temple were made out of cedar. The floor was made out of planks of fir wood. Then Solomon overlaid all the wood with gold. On the golden walls Solomon engraved Cherubims. Finally, after seven years of building, the temple of God was finished and dedicated to God.

News of the temple and Solomon's wealth reached people near and far. One of those people was the Queen of Sheba. When she heard how wealthy and wise Solomon was, she did not believe it. She wanted to find out for herself all that her messengers had told her. So she left her country and set out for Jerusalem, bringing with her spices, gold, silver and precious gems. When she arrived at Jerusalem she spoke with Solomon. She asked him many hard questions and Solomon answered them all. Then she rejoiced and praised the God of Solomon which made Solomon rise as king and Israel prosper. She then gave Solomon 120 talents of gold and other gifts.

More and more kings and rulers came to Solomon, each bringing their own gifts. With some of his wealth he made a throne of ivory and overlaid it with the best gold. His throne had six steps with golden lions on either side of each step. He also had two more beside the seat of his throne. All of his

words of wisdom can be found in the books of Proverbs, Songs of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. As the years went by, wisdom flowed out of Solomon. He wrote 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs. Two examples of his proverbs are as follows: "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." Proverbs 4:27. "As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool. As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come. A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." Proverbs 26:1-4

One of the first self-confident mistakes Solomon made was to marry an Egyptian princess, going against the word of God which the Lord gave to Israel. After losing his hold upon God and in order to keep the peace with other nations, Solomon married the daughters of the other nation's kings. He also married them to increase trade with these heathen countries. This is what God told the kings of Israel not to do. God had warned Solomon numerous times not to add riches to his already great wealth, because if he did he would destroy the temple that Solomon had built. After so many warnings, people would think that Solomon would quickly turn back from his erroneous ways but he didn't. Instead of going closer to God he drifted farther and farther away, valuing his own ideas as supreme. Soon Solomon had completely turned away from God and started to worship idols. He started to send his children through the fire and make unnecessary sacrifices to heathen idols such as Molech and Baal.



Solomon nearly lost his salvation but in his old age he turned back to God. He then wrote these verses in Ecclesiastes. "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" Ecclesiastes 1:1-3.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Ecclesiastes 12:1. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. In these verses Solomon explains to us that riches, wealth, fancy clothes and costly things are all vanity. They all mean nothing. Thus the wisest and richest man who ever lived died in Christ. It is my wish and prayer that we may know that all is vanity and that we may ask for wisdom as Solomon did, but unlike Solomon that we may never falter from the path of righteousness. AMEN.

**Michael C. Newby**





## Today or Tomorrow?

God in His mercy has granted us the gift of time. Often we have wasted this time for that which is not bread and for that which satisfieth not.

“Of no talent He [God] has given will He require a more strict account than of our time. The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 77

“This life is man’s time of preparation for the future life. Should he neglect present privileges and opportunities he would suffer an eternal loss; no new probation would be given him.” —*The Acts of the Apostle*, p. 424

We know however, that time exists in three dimensions. These are yesterday, today and tomorrow. Put differently, the past, present and future, respectively. It is also clear that “time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 77. Many times we have wondered why some people in the past made grave mistakes and thus perished outside God’s path. They did not use their time wisely. Today, however, we may be repeating the same mistakes as they did. Therefore, the past has been left for reflection and from which to learn.

On the far end of the continuum is another group that put their salvation for tomorrow. In many offices, trays labeled “Pending” are full of files and papers waiting to be acted upon. In a similar way, many leave their salvation to a later date. But doing such is suicidal.

“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4: 13–14

“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Proverbs 27:1

The apostle Peter, without doubt quoting the prophet Isaiah, writes:

“For all flesh [is] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.” 1 Peter 1:24. “Surely the people is grass.” Isaiah 40:7

Today we can be there, but tomorrow we may not be, just as the grass of the field. In light of this, it is important for us to take care lest we perish outside God’s path. We have lived waywardly for so long. Yet still there is hope.

“The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption. In him who does this, a transformation of character takes place. He becomes a son of God, a member of the royal family, a

child of the heavenly King. He is fitted to be the companion of the angels.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 77

This we can only do today, not tomorrow, for reasons aforementioned. If we continue to slight God’s calls to repentance and confession we will finally be left alone. The call(s) we hear through the conscience is the voice of God through His Spirit. Of the Spirit it is written:

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

The Bible tells us of people whom God left alone for hardening their hearts. “Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim, nor by prophets.” 1 Samuel 28:6

“And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” Acts 24:24–25

“A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him. . . . That was his heaven-sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. But he said to the messenger of God, ‘Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.’ He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427

“Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts.” Hebrews 3:7–8

No one knows what time is still remaining to him in this life, so “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” Hebrews 12:1

In the verse just quoted, “The writer leaves it to each reader to discover what may be hampering his spiritual progress as a Christian runner.” —*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 480

The question remains: Today or Tomorrow? May the Lord sharply point out our hidden sins that today we may return to Him and find salvation before it is forever too late. AMEN.

*Joel Msiska, Malawi/Tanzania*

When God created the earth, it was a beautiful sight. He not only created the trees and the flowers but also jewels and precious stones—gold and silver. All these shined brightly for all to see and enjoy.

But these jewels were soon to be hidden deep underground. “By the same means the silver and gold, the choice wood and precious stones, which had enriched and adorned the world before the flood, and which the inhabitants had idolized, were concealed from the sight and search of men, the violent action of the waters piling earth and rocks upon these treasures, and in some cases even forming mountains above them.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 108

Isn't this true? Nowadays, people must dig deep underground to find jewels, and precious stones of gold and silver. These treasures are hidden from us, but yet we search and search to obtain a tiny diamond or a small piece of gold, even at the risk of death in a mine.

About a month ago the young people visited the Royal Ontario Museum; they visited a gallery called “Earth's Treasures”. There they saw precious stones such as diamonds, garnet, opal, jade and many more. They also saw gold and silver. All these were encased to keep them safe because they are most valuable.

In the Bible, we find many stories of jewels and gold. In Biblical times, gold, silver and jewels were also greatly desired and sought after. When the Israelites left Egypt they were to take their spoils. Nothing was kept from them. The Egyptians gave up their jewels and gold. “And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.” Exodus 12:35–36

So the Israelites left Egypt with great treasure. A treasure that was freely given to them and that later on, they would freely give as well. “And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, And oil for the light, and spices for anointing



oil, and for the sweet incense, And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate.” Exodus 35:4–9

God has entrusted us with means. It is His, not ours, to do with as we wish; but it is His and He can ask for it back. In the book, “All we possess is the Lord's and we are accountable for the use we make of it.” *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 152. And now the Israelites were to be tested.

Would they part with their jewels, their gold and silver? Could they return to God that which was His? And yet God does not force but asks, “Whosoever is of a willing heart let him bring.”

“And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the LORD. And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought them. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the LORD's offering: and every man, with whom was found shittim wood for any work of the service, brought it. And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate,” Exodus 35:22–24, 27. Sister White says that old and young men, women, even children bought their offerings to Moses. This giving spirit is worthy to be imitated; the people gave so much that Moses had to stop them. “And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.” Exodus 36:6–7. The Israelites freely gave these jewels—gold, silver and precious stones for the House of God. They laid up their treasure in heaven instead of on this earth.

Jewels and gold are of great value for people in this world; they show off their diamonds and jewelery. There is even a saying, “diamonds are a girl's best friend.” People go to great lengths to obtain some sort of jewel. Some may even rather go hungry in order to obtain gold. Years ago, I had a manager whose aunt died and he was to go with his sister and mother to Hong Kong to collect what his aunt had left to him for an inheritance. He told of how his aunt was a very rich woman. He now owns a condo in the city worth millions of dollars, and his sister has several small jewel bags of diamonds and



other stones. I remember him saying that his aunt was a very simple woman. No fancy clothes, no fancy cars, she kept every shopping bag to reuse later, she even kept envelopes and gift bags to reuse and yet she had a treasure stored. But when she passed away, this treasure she had, she left behind, never to see again. Many idolize these jewels and forget about God. Their whole lives are spent in search of earthly treasures and they forget God.

“The treasures that should have led them to glorify the Bountiful Giver had been worshiped, while God had been dishonored and despised.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 108

As Christians, we do not strive to own jewels or gold, but we have a great treasure to seek after. “The Bible is a field where there are heavenly treasures and they will remain hidden until, by diligent mining, they are discovered and brought to the light. The Bible is a casket containing jewels of inestimable value, which should be so presented as to be seen in their intrinsic luster. But the beauty and excellence of these diamonds of truth are not discerned by the natural eye. The lovely things of the material world are not seen until the sun dispelling the darkness floods

them with its light. And so with the treasures of God’s word; they are not appreciated until they are revealed by the Sun of righteousness.” —*Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 421. AMEN.

*Sesciah Newby,*  
*Toronto*

**General Conference  
World Assembly 2012,  
South Africa.  
Photos on back page**

### *Baptism, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada*

**On Sabbath, June 23, all heaven rejoiced as sister Giovanna Femia made her covenant with the Lord through baptism. One more lost sheep has been found. One more name written in the book of Life. One step closer to the coming of the Lord. It is our prayer that her witness will be a testimony for her earthly family and for her spiritual family, and that she truly will be a pillar in the house of God.**







**NADA JEREMIC,  
AUSTRALIA**



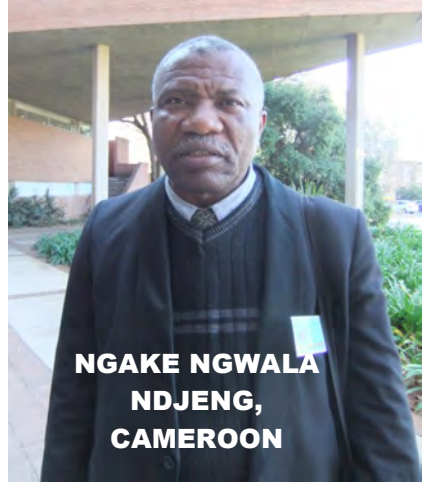
**SAMUEL LOPEZ, COLUMBIA,  
JACINTO GALVIS, VENEZUELA,  
HUMBERTO AVELLANEDA, COLUMBIA**



**MORNE & MILLICENT  
FRIESLAAR,  
SOUTH AFRICA**



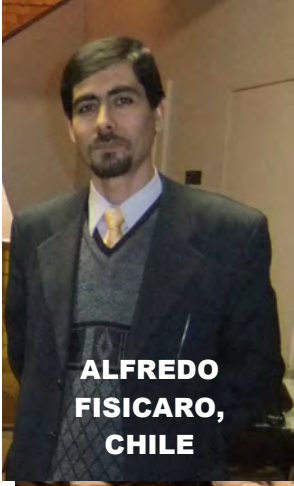
**LEMEUL TIBAY,  
PHILIPPINES**



**NGAKE NGWALA  
NDJENG,  
CAMEROON**



**EBERHARD SANDOYA AND FAMILY,  
PANAMA/ZAMBIA**



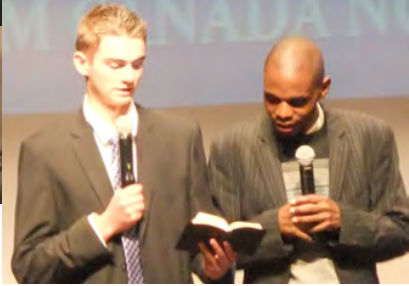
**ALFREDO  
FISICARO,  
CHILE**



**INUSAH MOHAMMED,  
BENIN**



**SPECIAL MUSIC**





**“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” Romans 13:11**

**“The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly, like the noiseless approach of a thief in the night. May the Lord grant that we shall no longer sleep as do others, but that we shall watch and be sober. The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God, will triumph with it. The time is short; the night soon cometh when no man can work.” –*Maranatha*, p. 27**

**“Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”**

**Ephesians 5:14**

