



*The Reformation*  
**Messenger**

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**“The wilderness and  
the solitary place  
shall be glad for  
them; and the desert  
shall rejoice, and  
blossom as the rose.”  
Isaiah 35:1**

In the Wilderness

**Page 10**

Escape from Prison Camp

**Page 20**

**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

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### Volume 21, Number 10, October 2014

- 3 Think of What Jesus has Done . . .
- 6 How Are the Mighty Fallen?
- 9 Prayer for West Africa
- 10 In the Wilderness
- 14 The Bible
- 16 Justification by Faith
- 18 Health Matters: Cool as a Cucumber
- 20 Escape from Prison Camp
- 24 Children's Corner: Business Transactions . . .
- 26 London, Ontario Youth Retreat

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# Think of What Jesus has Done for You and Tell Others

Deep in our hearts we should always be thankful to our loving Father for what He has done for us through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I believe with all my heart that every single person born on this planet has had, does have, and will have, the opportunity to know about God's love manifested through His Son. Meditating on Paul's words in Ephesians 3:20–21, we need to ask God to bestow upon us His precious blessings, and prepare us for that great day when Jesus will come in glory to take us home. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

The Bible relates the account of God's gracious endeavors to save man from the pit of sin. In this article we will study one of the most wonderful chapters of the Old Testament: the story of Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, the dream of the mighty tree. God comes to us with the tender pity and love of a father and stretches out His hand to rescue us. It is sad to say that so many times His efforts are received with opposition and resistance just as we will see from the example of King Nebuchadnezzar.

In the book of Daniel, chapter 4 we find recorded the event about a man who was called to acknowledge that there is a God up there in Heaven, the Creator of the entire Universe, including earth. Chapter 4 is Nebuchadnezzar's conversion story—a heathen king transformed by the grace and power of God. This story teaches us that if there is hope for Nebuchadnezzar there is hope for us too. He was wicked, idolatrous, evil and rebellious, but he was transformed by the Lord.



The Lord can call your name, and change your life also if you permit Him.

As we look around the world today we see the sad reality of a world in rebellion who is forgetting their Creator and dismissing Him from their lives. Often God reveals Himself to us in surprising ways. Sometimes His taps on the shoulder are gentle and He uses a still small voice to guide us in the right direction.

Lacking faith in God from the youngest to the eldest person, this world is heading towards collapse. People are looking at their leaders who promised them solutions to their problems. Unfortunately, many end up in a worse condition. I have never heard one world leader acknowledge the real problem that exists in their country. I assume that they do not know, or if they do they are hesitant to admit it. The reality is that the problem today with this country and the rest of the world, with every nation, every leader, every council, every committee, every assembly or every group that comes together is written in Romans 1:21. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful." Also in verse 28, they did not think it necessary to acknowledge God any longer. This is the problem. The problems in the world are not economic, financial, social, or military-related. The problem is they do not see it necessary to acknowledge God any longer. This is the point the Apostle Paul is bringing out in Romans chapter 1. There is no political answer to the

problems in this world unless the world leaders will accept God and His counsel. This is the sad reality of the condition of our world today. Nebuchadnezzar was in the same situation. In his pride he did not recognize his Creator as the ruler of Heaven and Earth.

This unique chapter is the testimony of a Gentile king and how God changed his heart. Nebuchadnezzar is a good example of a person who shares his testimony regarding what he has seen and experienced. In Hebrews 12:6 we read, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." There are times when God's voice is very loud. He startles us. He interrupts the routine of our lives. He stops us in our tracks and shakes us up. Our lives may be falling apart, everything may seem to be upside down, but suddenly God surprises us. He breaks into our lives in a remarkable way. As it happened to King Nebuchadnezzar it can happen to you and me.

In Daniel chapter 4 we read a first-person account of what happens to a world ruler who sets himself in opposition to God. This is a powerful example of what happens to those who try to eliminate God from their lives. "Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you." Daniel 4:1. The chapter begins with Nebuchadnezzar wanting to say something internationally. He wants to speak globally, to all the peoples and nations in the then-known world. This is his personal testimony; "I want to tell you all something, all you nations, all you people, all you languages, all you leaders. This is what I want to tell you, words that refer to the miraculous workings of God. I want to declare the miracles which the Most High God has done for me. How great are His signs, how mighty are His wonders. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His dominion is from generation to generation."

This is our wonderful Saviour and Redeemer. He is the God who gives a second chance. Nebuchadnezzar found the source of inner peace that comes only from Jesus. He discovered the One who provides internal stability and calm. Isaiah puts it this way, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3. The king was overflowing with gratitude towards God because his life had been changed. What about you? Has your life been changed and are you full of gratitude also? Do you have inner peace? We have seen already that inner and perfect peace comes only from God. Jesus is the answer if you want to have perfect peace in a trouble world.

Why did Nebuchadnezzar write this chapter? What does he desire to tell us? He says, "I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me." Daniel 4:2. Nebuchadnezzar is a changed man, transformed by the grace of God. He must tell his story, and share the greatness of God who changed his life. If God changed Nebuchadnezzar, He can change your life too.

As I said before, there is a time when God intervenes in our life in a specific way. This was my case and the case of many others. I know what my life was like before I knew Jesus, and I thank God for the transformation He has brought into my life. For this reason I like to share my personal testimony of how Jesus saved me from the pit of sin with every person I meet, wherever I go. I have a few favorite Bible verses that I want to share to encourage you. Although these are Messianic psalms, referring to Jesus, these words can encourage us also. David said; "I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise You." Psalm 22:22. "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, Thou knowest." Psalm 40:9. There are many other Bible verses with encouragement to do the same, such as in Hebrews 2:12 "Saying, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." The question is: do you have something to say about Jesus your Saviour? Has He changed your life? Do you feel the joy of salvation so much that you cannot keep silent when people are around you?

Nebuchadnezzar describes his life before he came to know God like this, "I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace." Daniel 4:4. It is extremely easy to become complacent when things are going well in our lives. God allows hardship and adversity into our lives to draw us to Him. By rest he does not mean he removed his sandals and was lying on a couch. He means "I was at rest" in the sense of peace, prosperity, tranquility in his empire. There were no fears. There were no apprehensions. There were no enemies on the border. He had conquered the world, so it seems. He was resting in a time of peace and great prosperity. But, there is a "but" now. "I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me." Daniel 4:5. What was the dream all about that troubled him? "Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew large, and was strong,

and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.” Daniel 4:10–12. Trees, very commonly in ancient times, were used to symbolize great rulers. Ezekiel refers to Pharaoh as a tree. There is a similar reference to an Amorite ruler in Amos 2. But this is only the first part of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The second part is what frightened the king. In verse 13–14 we read, “I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one.” It was an angel, or whatever his perception of an angel was, as God delivers this vision to him, “came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches.” The Lord then even gave Nebuchadnezzar the purpose for this dream “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.” Daniel 4:17



Daniel, God’s servant, came in with the interpretation of the vision and you can read of it in Daniel 4:19–27. In the vision of the tree, Nebuchadnezzar saw the collapse of his own reign as king. The cutting down of the tree represented Nebuchadnezzar’s fall from divine favour and the loss of his kingdom. For seven years (seven times) the king would experience an insanity which made him think and act like a wild beast. What a contrast with his former life in the palace. His life was a total disaster; an absolute ruin for that time. There was no place to look, but up. There was no one to turn to, but God. And thankfully he did turn to God after all those years.

While I was in Romania I remember how one friend of mine who is a Minister, talked about his brother-in-law who was an unbeliever. Many times this Minister talked about Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for sinners, to him. The man seemed not to be interested in what Je-

sus did for him, however the Pastor never gave up. He continued telling his brother-in-law about God’s love and undeserving mercy towards sinners. Then suddenly, one day, this man fell over a bridge into the water of a fast-flowing river in Romania, landing on his back on a stone. This resulted in the man being paralyzed. When he heard about this incident, this minister took a flight from United States where he lived, to Romania, to be with his brother-in-law at this difficult time. He wanted to comfort him and tell him that Jesus still loves him and accepts him just as he is. The Pastor came into the room where the man was lying on his bed and they prayed together. When they finished praying the man that would remain paralyzed for the rest of his life said; “you know, there were many times you wanted to tell me about Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross and I did not have time to listen to you. I was so busy with my work and the worries of this life. Many times you wanted to let me know about this Jesus you love and proclaimed about, and I looked down to the ground just waiting for you to finish the conversation. But,

now after what had happened to me I understood one thing. . .” With tears in his eyes he said, “. . . I know Jesus loves me too much to renounce me, because when I was well I did not find time for Him, and now He has shown me how to look to Him at all times for the rest of my life.”

This was a tragic accident but at the same time we can learn a great lesson from it. Remember, whom Jesus loves He rebukes and chastens. Why not come to Jesus when He calls you today? I know that when Jesus calls you, it is best to answer right away and come to Him, just as you are. The Lord invites you to come to Him today. In Him we find the security we long for. Life is so fragile. Our jobs, our homes, our marriages, and our health provide little security. They all can be whisked away in a moment. In Jesus, and only in Jesus, can we find strength, meaning and purpose in our lives.

Would you like to flee to His loving arms today? Would you like to feel His warm embrace and listen to His reassuring voice saying; “You are Mine. I will never let you go?” May our loving Father melt your heart with His love and care through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is my wish and prayer. Amen! God bless you!



## How Are the Mighty Fallen?

### LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

In this article, I would like us to consider the fall of a strong man—Samson.

Our journey begins and ends in Gaza where we find Samson who, after having been a Judge over Israel for 20 years, decides to go. In Gaza he finds a harlot and sleeps with her (Judges 16:1) for reasons best known to himself. After some time, Samson meets a beautiful Philistine woman by the name of Delilah whom he supposedly falls in “love” with (Judges 16:4). Was it true love? Well we shall soon find out. The leaders of the Philistines, knowing the power of persuasion possessed by women, decided to bribe Delilah to lure Samson into revealing the secret of his strength. For what purpose? So that they could afflict him, or humble him, as it says in the margin. He is too “arrogant, too boastful with his strength, let us bring him down”, they said. In order to do this they use a “weaker vessel”, a woman (Judges 16:5).

Does Delilah accept the bribe to betray her “man”? Gladly! She seemingly is not allergic to money! She just cannot resist the offer of 1,100 shekels of silver from each one of the Philistine lords. Delilah then asks Samson, “Darling, what is the secret of your strength?” She even tells him the reason why he should reveal the secret of his strength—so that he may be “afflicted” or “humbled” (Judges 16:6). Unbelievable! Obviously, Samson does not suspect evil intentions from Delilah. Unfortunately, his infatuation has blinded him already. He

does not realize that the devil does not love anyone else apart from himself. When he shows you a smile, it is because with that smile he wants to get hold of you, and once he does, the smile changes into a mile to hell. If Samson had immediately separated himself from this woman, or at least cut off discussion upon this subject, he would have saved both himself and his country and especially the honour of God. But he, like Eve, decides to play games with the devil; he cheats Delilah three times. First he says, “tie me with seven green withs” (Judges 16:7) which did not work. The second time he says, “no, no, no, I was just kidding last time, tie me with new ropes” (Judges 16:11), but it

still did not work. Notice that the third time he gets closer to the secret, he says, “weave the seven locks of my head”, but this does not work either.

### GOTCHA!

Delilah then decides to change her strategy. Instead of using reason, she decides to appeal to Samson’s feelings; his emotions towards her. Maybe she knows that this was what worked for Eve with Adam! Anyway, she stages a funeral where she is the sole mourner and the deceased is “Samson’s love for her” so she claims (Judges 16:16). Days go by and the funeral continues. Samson cannot bear it any longer. At last, the mighty are fallen! The conqueror is conquered; the strong brought down by the weak. Samson decides to open up to her and reveal the secret of his strength. He says, “Chop off my hair and I’ll be weak like any other man” (Judges 16:17). Delilah knows she has got him this time. Before she even cuts off his hair, she sends for the lords of the Philistines, telling them to bring the payment for a job well-done by both her cunning and patience (Judges 16:18). She then makes Samson sleep on her lap like a baby. How Samson fell asleep, we may not know, but let us say that perhaps Delilah sung him a lullaby. So Samson fell asleep while some Philistine man was busy shaving off his hair—the sign of his obedience to God which was the secret of his strength. Immediately after this, Delilah decides to awaken Samson and fulfill just what she had promised him the moment he would reveal his secret, and what was that? Affliction! (Judges 16:19).

She exclaims, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!" He wakes up thinking, "Aah, I'm the strongest man, let me go out and attack them just like the other times." What he does not realize is that the LORD has left him (Judges 16:20). The Philistine lords are extremely happy and cannot afford to waste any more time lest his hair miraculously grows so quickly that they do not even have a chance to arrest him. They do to him physically what Delilah has done to him spiritually—they blind him (Judges 16:21). They then take him to Gaza where they make him grind the grain in their prison house (Judges 16:21). How tragic but true! Here was a man who, instead of going to Gaza to deliver the Israelites, went there to grind for the enemies of God's people. Not because he wanted to, but because he had created a way for this to happen. The end of the journey. Whew! What a journey it was.

Are you like Samson today who had forgotten his calling and lost himself in his infatuation for Delilah? Have you forgotten your obligations to your own family, your church and your God? Have you betrayed the secret of your strength?

### **WHERE IS THE STRENGTH OF A CHRISTIAN?**

There is no doubt that the secret of the strength of any Christian is found in union with Christ. This union is brought about and maintained in several ways. The apostle Paul says, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." Ephesians 6:10. (see also verses 11–18). "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zechariah 4:6. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30. How do we grieve the Spirit of God? It is by disobedience and refusing to hearken to His call. One common saying goes like this, "To be strong like a bull, you must not eat the bull, but eat what the bull eats." To be strong in the Lord and be strong like the Lord, you must eat what the Lord eats. Jesus once said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." John 4:34. If this is what you digest every day—God's will and His work—you will be strong in the Lord and you can say like Jesus, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18–19

### **A CLOSER LOOK AT YOU AND DELILAH**

Delilah mentioned something very important which is written in Judges 16:15, "How can you say you love me,

when your heart is not with me?" Luke 12:33–34 reads "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." I tend to think that the Lord would ask the same question, "How can you say that you love Me when your heart, when your treasure, is not with Me?"

Delilah comes today and asks, "Where is the secret of your wealth so that I may make you poor?" She is very honest with you. Your answer will be according to Deuteronomy 8:18, "But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." You will also be very honest and provide an extra text like the one from Malachi 3:10–11 "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts."

Delilah will then call the powers of darkness and tell them, "Come, I have him now. He has told me all his heart." She will then make you to lie on her lap, and sing you lullabies. She will sing one lullaby about how many problems you have to sort out and that you cannot manage to meet all your needs if you return your tithe to the Lord. With this lullaby, you will then fall asleep like Samson. What happens when you are asleep? You become unconscious of what is happening around you. In other words, sleep here signifies that you become indifferent to the requirements of God regarding you. You will not care what happens to God's work; who gets delivered or who perishes. With this indifference, Delilah will then completely shave off your source of strength and you will become like any other man, without hope and without God in the world.

After this, Delilah will ask, "Where is the secret of your wisdom and intellect so that I may confuse your judgment?" You will answer with all your heart, "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good." Isaiah 7:15. You will then go further and explain what this butter means according to Genesis 1:29. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Then you

will add “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endureth forever.” Psalm 111:10. And to top it all off, you will tell her that Christ Jesus is the one “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:3

To your responses she will again sing you a lullaby with her sweet voice, “there is no need to be so strict in your diet, look at you, you look skinny! Beef up your table; come on, you are still young, enjoy life.” Then you will sleep again and become indifferent to what 1 Corinthians 10:31 states. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” You will then indulge your appetite and before you know it, God’s protection would have left you. You will be boasting that you used to be a very serious and committed Christian at one point in time and that you had committed many scriptures to memory, but now most, if not all, are gone! I say, Wake up brother, check yourself in the mirror (James 1:25), Delilah has shaved off your head. “Health is a blessing of which few appreciate the value; yet upon it the efficiency of our mental and physical powers largely depend. . . . Anything that lessens physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it less capable of discriminating between right and wrong. We become less capable of choosing the good and have less strength of will to do that which we know to be right.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 346

Delilah will come to you and ask, “What is the secret of your distinction? Why are you not like everybody else? Why can you not unite with all these other churches?” You will honestly answer and say “Io, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” Numbers 23:9. “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” 1 Peter 2:9 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:14–15,17–18. You will then spice up these words with, “I pray that my brethren may realize that the third angel’s message means much to us and that **the observance of the true Sabbath is to be the sign that distinguishes those who serve God from those**

**who serve Him not.** Let those who have become sleepy and indifferent awake.” –*Counsels for the Church* p.312 [emphasis mine]

To this, Delilah will call in the lords of the Philistines, knowing she has got you. She will sing you another lullaby, or if you are proving to be difficult she will give you some wine of Babylon. She will tell you, “There is no need to exalt one day above another. There is no need to starve your family when you can take up this job that demands that you work on the Sabbath, God will understand.” On Fridays she will make you so busy that you fail to receive the Sabbath sometimes. Even to attend church services on Sabbath will be difficult because you will be too tired. Or she will just give you things to annoy you on the Sabbath. Oh! The lullabies will be endless on this one until you fall asleep; until you become indifferent to the observance of the Sabbath, and alas! In one moment your sign of loyalty to God will be gone!

### **AN APPEAL**

Dear brothers and sisters, you may be on Delilah’s lap right now, “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” Ephesians 5:14. Awake before you lose your secret of strength. Once you lose the source of your strength you will, like blind Samson, be grinding for the Philistines instead of serving the Lord. You will become too busy with worldly things than the things of God. Your investments will be in this world, not in heaven. Your thoughts will be of things on earth, not of things in heaven. You will love to talk about your life here, but not of your life in heaven. But there is hope. Samson, through prayer and repentance, regained his once-lost strength. His hair began to grow back again and, not long after that, he was able to destroy the Philistines. Sad to say, though, that he perished with them in their demise. You too can regain your strength. You can buy eye salve to anoint your eyes that you may see clearly what the will of God is (Revelation 3:18). Come to Jesus and eat some B-complex vitamins to make that hair grow very fast so that you may once again conquer yourself, the world, and the devil (Isaiah 55:1, 6).

God bids you to “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Ephesians 5:15–16

***Mukelabai Mukelabai  
Zambia, Sweden***





# Prayer for West Africa



“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”  
“And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him.”  
Acts 12:5, 7

Ebola is now in the global spotlight. We have most of our members in so-called developing countries; and in these countries our members (like the general population in these countries) are generally economically disadvantaged (high poverty), and have very limited access to high quality healthcare. The World Health Organization, in partnership with the Ministries of Health in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria reported 3069 suspected and confirmed cases of Ebola and 1552 deaths as of August 26, 2014.

Brother Golden Hingabantu stated, “Every 30 minutes we see health team cars coming from many directions carrying Ebola victims to the Ebola camp, and many to the graveyards. Time is short. Every day that passes brings us nearer to the end. Those with whom we associate day by day need our help and guidance. Tomorrow some of these souls may be where we can never reach them again.”

Our dear Brother Benjamin Smith, a Bible worker in Liberia, and his son David are among those that did not survive the virus. Brother Smith accepted his sick brother, who came from Monrovia and died the next day. Not knowing he was already infected with the virus, he was hosted in the same room with the family, thus causing them to contract the virus. Brother Smith's wife and mother-in-law were also in the house at the time and became helpless, as the government, through the Ministry of Health, positioned police around the house, preventing anyone from entering, to keep others from contracting and spreading the virus.

Four believers have died as a result of the Ebola virus—the late Bible worker, his two younger children, ages 1 1/2 and 5, and his mother-in-law. Miraculously, his wife is gradually improving, while their remaining three children are with their aunt and are doing fine at their quarantined compound of the government hospital. Sister

Promise, the wife of our Bible worker who died, has improved. She is in the same house where her husband died and is waiting for her last blood test next week. The three children and their aunt are waiting to be released by the health officials. The news of this sister's recovery reached the Regional Senator's office on August 21. He left his office to go and see for himself the healing power of God and gave US \$50 to our sister. He told the President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, what had happened, and she was amazed to hear the wonderful news. She also left the state house on Sabbath, August 23, to visit the sister and give her gifts for her and her family.

The second death incident occurred in the home of the only brother who is still in the area. Two of his children died in one week. However, health workers said that this was not the result of an Ebola virus attack. Their death was attributed to the closure of health facilities in the affected areas because nurses were also dying of the virus.

The rest of the church members have left for other places for their safety, leaving the worship center closed for the last month.

The children of the late, Brother Benjamin Smith are being held in quarantine by health workers at the government hospital compound in Bomi County. By the grace of God, none of them has shown any signs of the deadly Ebola virus. Your contributions for the surviving members of this family will help with their basic needs—food, treatment, and clothing. The hospital is only keeping them; it is not providing them with treatment of any kind. Your donations can be made through the General Conference Good Samaritan department for the affected believers in this area of the world.

We are all members of the family of God. Let us help those in the family who are less fortunate than we are. Please also remember them in your daily prayers. Eric Kekula, Vice President of the Liberian Mission Field, stated, “We are fasting and praying that God will have mercy on all of His children in this situation.”



# In the Wilderness

We can read of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness in a few short verses in the books of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The narrative of the temptation is very well known to many Christians and although it is familiar, it is good to review it again and again.

Let us just take some time to look a little deeper into the significance of the temptations that Jesus suffered in the wilderness so we can get a better appreciation of the sacrifice that He made in order to make it possible for mankind to overcome and receive salvation at last. Perhaps we will become more serious about the evil nature of even one sin when we understand what it cost the Son of God. Also, we are given hope in that the power He used in overcoming the temptations of the devil is available to us also.

“After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. When He had come up out of the water, He bowed upon Jordan's banks and pleaded with the great Eternal for strength to endure the conflict with the fallen foe. The opening of the heavens and the descent of the excellent glory attested His divine character. The voice from the Father declared the close relation of Christ to His Infinite Majesty: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ The mission of Christ was soon to begin. But He must first withdraw from the busy scenes of life to a desolate wilderness for the express purpose of bearing the threefold test of temptation in behalf of those He had come to redeem.” —*Confrontation*, p. 9

During His earthly ministry, Jesus was beset by the devil on every hand. Everywhere He went, the temptations were constantly assailing Him. However, before He began His public ministry, He went into the desert to be alone with His Father and this is where the wilderness

temptations took place.

## TIME OUT WITH GOD

As we read in the quote above, before His ministry, Jesus was to first “withdraw from the busy scenes of life to a desolate wilderness.”

In the Bible we read of other great men who withdrew from the busy scenes of life prior to their public ministry. Regarding the Apostle Paul, we read, “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem.” Galatians 1:17–18. “Here, in the solitude of the desert, Paul had ample opportunity for quiet study and meditation. He calmly reviewed his past experience and made sure work of repentance. He sought God with all his heart, resting not until he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted and his sin pardoned. He longed for the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had hitherto shaped his life, and received instruction from the Source of truth. Jesus communed with him and established him in the faith, bestowing upon him a rich measure of wisdom and grace.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 125–126

Also, “Moses spent forty years as a shepherd of flocks to prepare him to understand himself, and to purify himself by emptying himself so that the Lord could accomplish His will in him. . . . Moses was under training to God. He endured a long process of mental training to fit him to be leader of the armies of Israel.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 99

Enoch was a preacher of righteousness in a time when evil was rampant in the earth and there was little right-

eousness to be found. It was a difficult task, but he bravely went forward to bring light into the darkness. He, too, made sure he took time alone with God. "In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers. He continued to exclude himself, at certain periods, from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 86–87

John the Baptist was known as the voice in the wilderness. He spent much of his early life in solitude. "John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, received his early training from his parents. The greater portion of his life was spent in the wilderness. . . . It was John's choice to forego the enjoyments and luxuries of city life for the stern discipline of the wilderness. Here his surroundings were favorable to habits of simplicity and self-denial. Uninterrupted by the clamor of the world, he could here study the lessons of nature, of revelation, and of providence." —*The Adventist Home*, p. 133

And so, Jesus, also, took time out in solitude before His earthly ministry. Although John the disciple tried to follow Him, Jesus needed this time alone. "John, one of the new disciples, had searched for Christ and had found Him in His humiliation, emaciated, and bearing the marks of great physical and mental distress. Jesus, unwilling that John should witness His humiliation, had gently yet firmly dismissed him from His presence. He wished to be alone; no human eye must behold His agony, no human heart be called out in sympathy with His distress." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 99

All co-workers with Christ need time out and alone in order to more effectively work for the Master. Jesus is our great example and it would do well to follow His footsteps.

## THE TEMPTATIONS

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John 2:15–16

In this Bible verse, specifically, verse 16, we see the temptations of Jesus summarized. These are the main categories of all temptations that mankind has to face.

**First temptation:** "And when the tempter came to Him,

*he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."* Matthew 4:3. The first temptation that Jesus faced in the wilderness is under the category of "lust of the flesh." Both appetite and uncontrolled passions are described here. It all begins with appetite.

One may ask, why did Jesus need to fast for forty days? It is often difficult to fast only one day. For some, the only time they fast is the one day a year during the Week of Prayer, and even this is a difficult endeavour for them. Jesus fasted this long because the power of appetite has a stronghold on mankind. This is what it took to break the power of appetite. "The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the great sinfulness of debased appetite and the power it has upon the human family." —*Confrontation*, p. 37

"Christ was our example in all things. As we see His humiliation in the long trial and fast in the wilderness to overcome the temptations of appetite in our behalf, we are to take this lesson home to ourselves when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence so fearful that the Son of God subjected Himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that He might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians with an enlightened conscience, and Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which have an enervating influence upon the mind and heart? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health, and the weakening of moral power, is holding in the bonds of slavery at the present time a large share of the Christian world." —*The Review and Herald*, September 1, 1874

Ask yourself how seriously you adhere to the laws of appetite? Is one sinful indulgence here and there acceptable? Will God overlook the one small indulgence? When tempted to indulge your appetite with something you know is not good for you think of the long fast of Jesus in the wilderness.

And what about uncontrolled passions? Perverted appetite leads to perverted passions. "The world had become so corrupt through indulgence of appetite and debased passion in the days of Noah that God destroyed its inhabitants by the waters of the Flood. And as men again multiplied upon the earth the indulgence in wine to intoxication perverted the senses and prepared the way for excessive meat eating and the strengthening of the animal passions." —*Confrontation*, p. 24

“As in his human strength man could not resist the power of Satan’s temptations, Jesus volunteered to undertake the work and to bear the burden for man, and overcome the power of appetite in his behalf. In man’s behalf He must show self-denial, perseverance, and firmness of principle paramount to the gnawing pangs of hunger. He must show a power of control stronger than hunger and even death.” –*Confrontation*, p. 37. Although very hungry, Jesus overcame and resisted the enemy’s temptation.

**Second Temptation:** “If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.” Matthew 4:6. Under this temptation falls the idea that we can sin with no consequences and it is summarized by the words, “the pride of life.” We are God’s creatures which He created and He loves us very much. Some believe we are so valuable to Him, that no matter what we do, He will never destroy us. So people continue in a lifestyle of sin and their churches tell them they do not need to overcome sin. Even in God’s church, there are those who believe that a small sin here and there is okay, as long as you repent of it later. We will continue sinning until Jesus comes, so do not even bother trying to overcome. One small sin, one small evil thought, one small indulgence, will keep us out of favour with God and out of heaven. Sadly, one day the Lord will, “do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act.” Isaiah 28:21. He makes a call for repentance. However the choice is ours whether we want to surrender every little sin, “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.” Ezekiel 18:31–32

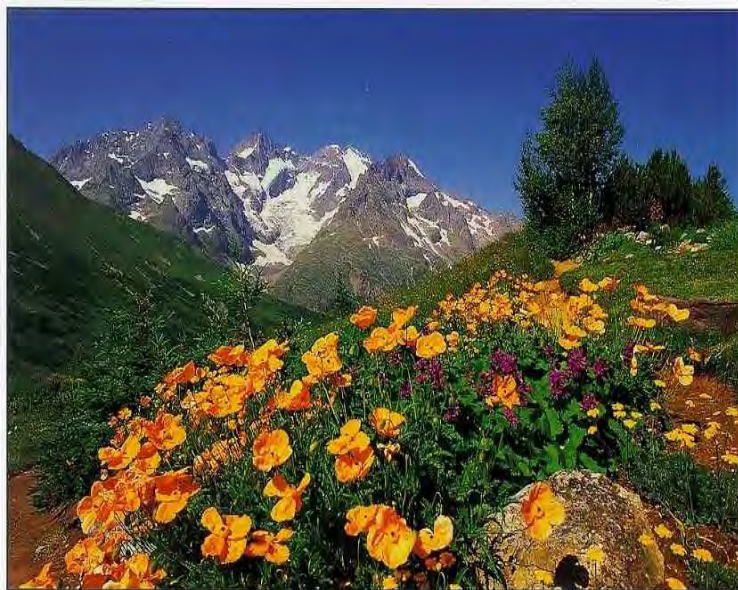
We call this presumption. We presume on the goodness of God and continue to live a life in opposition to His expressed will, yet expect His blessings. “The sin of presumption lies close beside the virtue of perfect faith and confidence in God. Satan flattered himself that he could take advantage of the humanity of Christ to urge Him over the line of trust to presumption. Upon this point many souls are wrecked. Satan tried to deceive Christ through flattery.” –*Confrontation*, p. 48

Every sin has its consequences. The one example that is very clear is the fact that there is so much illness in the world and much of it is a result of indulgence of appe-

tite and passions. There are other sins, also, that lead to unpleasant consequences when the sin is discovered, such as sins of adultery or fraud. People indulge in sin and pray to the Lord to deliver them from its consequences. They love their sin as did Cain and Esau, but do not like the consequences.

“Christ came off victor in the second temptation. He manifested perfect confidence and trust in His Father during His severe conflict with the powerful foe. Our Redeemer, in the victory here gained, has left man a perfect pattern, showing him that his only safety is in firm trust and unwavering confidence in God in all trials and perils. He refused to presume upon the mercy of His Father by placing Himself in peril that would make it necessary for His heavenly Father to display His power to save Him from danger.” –*Confrontation*, p. 49

**Third Temptation:** “The devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Matthew 4:8–9



This sin can be summarized by “the lust of the eyes”. Satan shows people the wonders of the world; the glitter; the glory; and says that all this is yours if you bow down to me. Young people are in awe of the glamour of the world. Sadly, even Christian young people who have grown up in the faith have fallen into Satan’s snares. They compare their lifestyle of self-denial to the self-indulgence of the world and they are enraptured. They leave the straight and narrow pathway to join the hilarity they see on the broad road. Few ever find their way back. Satan has been very successful by the use of

the media, such as TV, Internet and social media. It is all there to please the eyes. Satan has a completely different perspective than does the Son of God.

“As Satan saw them, they possessed great external grandeur. But Christ saw them in a different aspect, just as they were—earthly dominions under the power of a tyrant. He saw humanity full of woe, suffering under the oppressive power of Satan. He saw the earth defiled by hatred, revenge, malice, lust, and murder. He saw fiends in the possession of the bodies and souls of men.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1083

“This last temptation was the most alluring of the three. Satan knew that Christ's life must be one of sorrow, hardship, and conflict. And he thought he could take advantage of this fact to bribe Christ to yield His integrity. . . . He bore Jesus to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and then in a panoramic view presented before Him all the kingdoms of the world that had been so long under his dominion, and offered them to Him in one great gift. He told Christ that He could come into possession of all these kingdoms without suffering or peril. Satan promises to yield his scepter and dominion, and to make Christ the rightful Ruler, for one favor from Him. All he requires in return for making over to Him the kingdoms of the world that day presented before Him, is that Christ shall do him homage as to a superior.

“The eye of Jesus for a moment rested upon the glory presented before Him; but He turned away and refused to look upon the entrancing spectacle. He would not endanger His steadfast integrity by dallying with the tempter.” —*Confrontation*, p. 52

We must do as Jesus did. When Satan presents all the alluring amusements of the world before our eyes, we need to look away. We need to turn away and turn to Jesus. Do not let your eyes linger on the scenes or the temptation will turn into lustful desire. By the grace of God only, can we overcome. We must turn away and turn to Jesus and the temptation can be resisted.

## **JESUS OVERCAME**

This was no simple warfare. “The warfare with the power of darkness had been long and intensely trying to Christ's human nature in His weak and suffering condition. . . .The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God.” —*Confrontation*, p. 55

Jesus overcame and you also can overcome each and every sin.

“He withstood the temptation, through the power that many may command. He laid hold on the throne of God, and there is not a man or woman, who may not have access to the same help through faith in God. Man may become a partaker of the divine nature; not a soul lives who may not summon the aid of heaven in temptation and trial. Christ came to reveal the source of His power, that man might never rely on his unaided human capabilities.

“Those who would overcome must put to the tax every power of their being. They must agonize on their knees before God for divine power.” —*The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890

“We have characters to form here. God will test us and prove us by placing us in positions to develop the most enduring strength, purity, and nobility of soul, with perfect patience on our part, and entire trust in a crucified Saviour. We shall meet with reverses, affliction, and severe trials, for these are God's tests. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver and purge His people as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.” —*Confrontation*, p. 93

“There is no safety for any man, young or old, unless he feels the necessity of seeking God for counsel at every step. Those only who maintain close communion with God will learn to place His estimate upon men, to reverence the pure, the good, the humble, and the meek. . . .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.

“In view of the dangers of this time, shall not we, as God's commandment-keeping people, put away from among us all sin, all iniquity, all perverseness?” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 331

There is hope in Christ. May God help us to take seriously the time in which we are living in. It is a solemn time; a time to put away all sin. It can be done with the help of Christ.

Think seriously about what Jesus suffered for you in the wilderness of temptation. Do you expect less? No; it is time to surrender our entire beings, body, soul and spirit to the service of the Lord. Amen.

**Wendy Eaton**



# The Bible

The Bible is a strange book. It is loved by some as something very precious and the most valuable treasure that they own, but it is hated by others. They would like to see it destroyed. And then many simply ignore it. They may have a copy of it in their homes, but they do not read it. Yet, to look into it can change everything—our life, our destiny, our peace and happiness.

How many times do we look into the mirror to see how our appearance is? We want to be neat and tidy. But what is often behind the beautiful appearance? There can be an ugly, vain and selfish character. Is there a mirror that shows us our soul, our character, our spiritual condition? Yes, there is. The word of God reveals to us our inner condition. It also reveals to us the way of salvation and our decision to follow the truth's written therein will determine if we are saved or not. Are we ready for Jesus to come to take us to heaven, or are there still some impurities that must be cleansed away?

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

The word of God is quick—it means living. It reveals to us the condition of our soul and which spirit we have. It discerns our thoughts and the condition of our hearts, to find out if there is any selfishness in them.

The word of God is powerful, it created all the worlds, suns and planets, and the creative power is still in it; yes, by the word of God we are recreated. We are born again into a different person.

The word of God is our spiritual food that we need to maintain our spiritual strength, to be living Christians.

The word of God is the Two Witnesses that God has given us.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Revelation 11:3–6

The Bible is the greatest power in our world. It can change bad to good, evil to righteousness, a sinner to a saint. The Bible also does the judging of us. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. John 12:48. It will decide whether we are worthy of eternal life or of eternal death.

By the word of God we can have fullness of joy. Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:11

Paul writes to us, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:18. Nothing gives us so much comfort as the word of God. It is also a lamp that shines light on our pathway throughout our lives, and leads us to the perfect destination, the New Jerusalem.

A rich young man came to Jesus asking what he must do to have eternal life. He said that he had kept the Ten Commandments, but in the light of God's word he was still lacking; that is the reason why Bible study is important, it reveals to us our mistakes and our neglected duties, things that can keep us out of heaven.

Paul thought of himself that he was a good religious person, very jealous for the cause, until he met Jesus on the way to Damascus. Now his opinion of himself changed and he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24

The disciples thought of themselves as good religious persons until Jesus started to wash their feet. Now they realized their selfishness and pride. How wrong can we be and not realize it?

Sister White also writes, "Others think that they, also, can be Christians and yet consult their own tastes and make provision for the flesh, if these false-hearted professors can do so. On many a professed Christian's banner the motto is written, 'You can serve God and please self,—you can serve God and mammon.' They profess to be wise virgins, but not having the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps, they shed forth no light to the glory of God and for the salvation of men. They seek to do what the world's Redeemer said was impossible to do; He has declared, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' Those who profess to be Christians, but do not follow in the footsteps of Christ make of none effect His words, and obscure the plan of salvation." — *The Review and Herald*, August 19, 1890

The Bible makes it clear that we must die to ourselves. We must deny ourselves, that means we must not please ourselves, nor consult our own tastes. This means a full surrender, complete resignation to the will of God. We need to pray, "Thy will be done in my life."

There may be something hidden in our hearts. David prayed to God, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23–24

It may hurt us, and be painful to see our mistakes and faults. But yet we must reach perfection in order to be saved.

"Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully." — *Early Writings*, p. 71

We must gain victory over every sin, our every wrong word and action. Our thoughts must be pure, as God is pure. Our patience must be unlimited. Our love must reach the lowest depths of human woe and misery. The standard set before us in the word of God is as high as the heaven is above the earth. And if we see defects in our character as we look into the mirror of the word of God, then be not discouraged; the same Bible that reveals to us our defects, also reveals to us a remedy. We can be cleansed from all unrighteousness. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18

When you read the Bible every day, miracles start to happen. William Miller spent much time in Bible reading and the end result of it was the Advent Movement.

"When God's word is made the man of our counsel, when we search the Scriptures for light, heavenly angels come near to impress the mind and to enlighten the understanding so that it can be truly said, 'The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.' Psalm 119:130." — *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 442

"In the reverent contemplation of the truths presented in His word the mind of the student is brought into communion with the infinite mind. Such a study will not only refine and ennoble the character, but it cannot fail to expand and invigorate the mental powers." — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596

"The daily study of the Scriptures will have a sanctifying influence upon the mind. You will breathe a heavenly atmosphere." — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol.1, p. 242

Make the Bible your friend. Read it through and through. Memorize the wonderful promises; study the prophecies of the last days. Compare your life to the life of Christ, our Lord. Look to this heavenly mirror all the day long. And finally your soul will be presentable before the judgment seat of God. Your lovely character will be as a precious jewel which God will soon take to His heavenly home. Amen.

**Timo Martin**

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# Justification by Faith

Justification by Faith prepares us for Christ's Righteousness; they go together, hand in hand. We receive both when we accept Christ as our Saviour. We receive power to overcome every sin.

I would like to ask, how can we interpret the truth written in Isaiah 8:20? "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." To find out what the testimony is, we read in Exodus 25:21. "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee." From this verse we understand that the testimony is the Ten Commandments. The ceremonial law was a different law as it was done away with. It pointed to the cross and its shadow. When we read of sin in the following verse, it is referring to the Ten Commandments. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4

Justification by faith is an eternal study. "The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 651. A glimpse of the Redeemer was given to our first parents when they sinned (transgressed the law—the Ten Commandments). Abel showed his faith in the promised Saviour by the sacrifice of the lamb plus the fat as a symbol of his faith in the Redeemer and to put away sin (Genesis 4:4; Hebrews 11:4). The patriarchs lived in close connection with the Lord, and did not need many forms or ceremonies to teach them the one grand truth—that sin could be atoned for only by the death of one who was sinless. They needed only a rough altar and an innocent lamb to connect their faith with the infinite Sin-bearer. Of all the sacrifices recorded in the book of Genesis, none comes so near the great anti-typical offering as the one required of Abraham when God called him to offer his only son (Hebrews 11:17–19).

Before the incarnation of the Son of God the Psalmist clearly states, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering and sin

offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:6–8. (Hebrews 10:5). He was proclaiming this statement in heaven before His incarnation.

Isaiah was prophesying something very unique about Christ's first coming. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" Isaiah 53:1–11. And when Jesus revealed Himself to mankind He said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." John 9:39. "And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Isaiah 8:14. (1 Peter 2:7–8). This shows He shall be a Saviour to those who believe in Him and a snare to those reject Him. "Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the systems of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 652. The same Being who made the covenant with Israel makes another covenant with them. This was prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31–33), however nothing happened for many years. The same Being who made the first covenant (the Redeemer), just before His death, makes this statement: "This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22:20. "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me." 1 Corinthians 11:23–26



In the beginning just after Adam sinned, "The loyal angels hasted speedily to the Son of God and acquainted Him with what was taking place among the angels." —The Story of Redemption, p. 17. At that moment, God the Father He was in close converse with Jesus. His form was hid because of the bright beams of the presence of the Father and the angels wanted to know what was going on. Then, finally, Jesus reveals for the first time to the universe that He will take man's penalty and die for them. The plan of redemption was revealed. Now in human form He speaks with His disciples and confirms the new covenant with them.

The Gospel of Christ is like a mustard seed. Although it is the tiniest of all seeds when it falls to the ground, when it grows it becomes the loftiest of trees. If we understand the love of God in Christ it is like the whole universe spinning on the centrifugal point where stands the cross of Calvary. When He was among His disciples He could not reveal everything because of their spiritual state. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." John 16:12–13

This was the theme of the letter Paul wrote to the Galatians. The Christian church was revolutionized when Martin Luther understood the book of Galatians and a great reformation took place. This also happened to the Adventist Church in 1888 with the beginning of the Revelation 18 Angel's message and the message of the outpouring of the Latter Rain (please read the whole 6 chapters of Galatians). "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto different gospel." Galatians 1:6. Paul mentioned that even if an angel from heaven preached any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. He was showing the tug of war between the leading Apostles, to slip away from the reality of the gospel and he even mentions Peter acting like a hypocrite.

Paul is trying to awaken the people to the true revelation of Jesus Christ. Do not try to keep the Law like the Ancient Israelites did, but come to the spirituality of the law. What did Jeremiah say in Chapter 31? "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people." Jeremiah 31:33

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which

are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:16–23. This is what Jesus is asking us to do. We are not to keep the letter of the law but the Spirit of the law. This we can do only through faith in Christ. We plead with God to grant us His Spirit so that we may receive help. Then we understand that the Holy Spirit is a helper, not an intruder, Who will guide the human agent to make right decisions concerning salvation.

Salvation is a priceless treasure; it cost everything God possessed. It can be received only by faith. On the cross of Calvary all humanity was represented. The chief priests, mocking amongst themselves along with the scribes, said, Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. While everyone was asking for a visible manifestation, the thief on the cross speaks to Jesus asking, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Luke 23:42. When His favorite disciple betrays Him and all His loved ones have deserted Him, this thief sees that the One who is hanging with him is not just a man but the One who holds everything by His word. Jesus answered Him with joy because of his faith—surely you shall be with Me in paradise. This is what faith is all about. It is not a visible manifestation, but spiritual eyesight. Soon all mankind will be caught up in the supernatural manifestation of satanic spirits transforming themselves to be like angels of light, but our faith must cling to a "Thus saith the Lord"—simply, His word.

The gulf which Adam created by his sin was something unimaginable, but faith is something unique. By faith this gulf is removed and mankind is brought into connection with God again. Faith grasps His hand and reaches out to humanity until the human agent feels the presence of the infinite one near his heart. It fills the soul with the wonderful grace that will enable him to overcome every sin and weakness making his character perfect like His Creator; like he was in the beginning when man was first created.

Nothing but simple faith like a child can accomplish this great transformation. Amen.

**Augustus Ratneiya**

## HEALTH MATTERS:

# Cool as a Cucumber

The cucumber is one of the oldest cultivated crops, and is believed to originate in the northern sub-Himalayan plains of India. Since its humble beginnings, it is now one of the most common vegetables grown around the world. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> most cultivated vegetable in the world. It is a staple in most vegetable gardens, and no grocery store that stocks vegetables will be without cucumbers gracing its aisles.

The cucumber belongs in the same family as melons and squashes. It is easy to grow, does well in most climates during the summer growing season, and its ability to climb allows cucumbers to be planted in small areas that provide a wall or trellis for the vines to take hold of. This method also keeps insects off the plants and makes for easier harvesting. After planting, a ready-to-pick crop is available after 50-70 days, making it a good garden vegetable especially for areas with a short growing season. One plant can produce anywhere from 10-15 cucumbers, which also make it a good, cost-effective crop. With the hundreds of varieties available, there will be one that suits everyone's palate.

The cucumber is a staple ingredient in our salads, but how many of us are even aware of the health benefits of the cucumber? Not only is it healthy as a food, but it also has health benefits and uses that go beyond its basic nutritional content.

Cucumber juice is low-calorie and with its high vitamin and mineral content, it makes a nutritious drink and a good choice when you need a little extra hydration. Because of its high water content, it contains enough water to make it ideal for juicing. Remove the skin, chop up the cucumber and place it into a blender, strain out the pulp, and you will have a drink that will leave you feeling cool and refreshed.

Cucumbers do not need to be limited to salads. Cucumber sandwiches are also popular. Cold cucumber soup is

refreshing on a hot day. Combined with yoghurt, cucumbers make a nice sauce to liven up other dishes. They are also easily carried on the go, cucumber slices make a tasty snack that can be prepared at home.

The term "cool as a cucumber," referring to someone who is calm and unruffled, originates with the cucumber's ability to cool the temperature of the body. They are also typically cool to the touch. In addition, when applied to the skin, cucumbers reduce swelling, and the heat associated with it.

Cucumbers are, surprisingly, one of the best foods for your body's overall health. It has a host of nutrients that target many areas of our body in terms of its benefits. Cucumbers pack a nutritional punch with very little calories, making it a favourite for those on reducing diets. A half cup of cucumbers contains 8 calories. However, even if one is not trying to lose weight, the health benefits of cucumbers are worth giving this vegetable another look. Cucumbers contain Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.

Cucumbers also contain a number of phytonutrients, the main ones being cucurbitacins, lignans, and flavonoids. These three types of phytonutrients found in cucumbers provide us with valuable antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-cancer benefits. Antioxidants help in preventing free-radical damage to our bodies, and are key to reducing the risk of age-related illnesses. The beta-carotene content in cucumbers help protect eyesight. They also contains a high amount of Vitamin K, which is a natural blood-thinner.

Frequently cucumbers are peeled before eaten because the skin can be tough, making it difficult to chew and digest, but most of the nutritional value of a cucumber comes from the peel. Cucumber peels are rich

in fiber which helps to prevent constipation. So, to reap the nutritional benefits from a cucumber, leave the peel on.

Not only is the cucumber healthy for our system, but did you know that it can also be used externally to benefit one's eyes, skin, and hair? Many skin care products contain cucumber as an ingredient.

Let us look in detail as to the health benefits of cucumbers:

1. **Good source of Vitamin B's (B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, Folic Acid).** Because of this, cucumbers can provide a quick burst of energy.

2. **Rehydrates the body and replenishes daily vitamins.** Cucumbers are 95% water, so it helps to prevent dehydration. Cucumbers have most of the vitamins that we need in a single day. The skin is the part that contains most of the Vitamin C, so don't peel your cucumber before you eat it.

3. **Skin care.** Placing a cucumber directly on the skin can ease irritations. It can also treat sunburns, with its cooling effect on the skin and its anti-inflammatory properties. Cucumber alone is hydrating to the skin. However, a cucumber puree combined with various other ingredients can be used to treat different skin ailments. A face mask of cucumber puree, combined with oats and honey is good for acne-prone skin as it soaks up excess oils, acts as a gentle exfoliant, and deep cleans pores. A combination of cucumber and yogurt will hydrate dry skin. Also, cucumber puree combined with lemon and aloe is good for aging skin, to help fade blemishes and dark spots, and to reduce fine lines and wrinkles. Leave all masks on for 15 minutes and then wash off.

4. **Eye benefits.** Put a slice over the eyes to help reduce puffiness.

5. **Hair care.** Cucumbers contain silicon and sulphur, which promote hair growth. Mash up a cucumber into a puree or use the juice. Leave in your hair for 10-15 minutes before rinsing. You will also have the added benefit of very shiny hair.

6. **Fight cancers.** Cucumber is known to contain several phytochemicals known as lignans, which are cancer-

fighting chemicals. They reduce the risk of specific cancers such as: breast, ovarian, uterine and prostate.

7. **Home care.** Before taking a shower, rub a cucumber slice along a mirror and it will avoid the mirror fogging up. Rubbing a cucumber along the squeaky hinge of a door will stop the squeaking.

8. **Relieves bad breath.** Take a slice of cucumber, press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds. The phytochemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth which causes bad breath.

9. **Assists in weight loss and digestion.** Because of its low calorie count and high water content, it is ideal for those people who want to lose weight. The high water content and fiber are effective in ridding the body of toxins. It can also help chronic constipation.

10. **Helps to improve diabetes.** Cucumber juice contains a hormone which is needed by the pancreas to produce insulin. Increased insulin production from the pancreas means that the person will not need to rely on as much medication.

11. **Reduces cholesterol.** A compound called sterols in cucumbers may help to lower cholesterol levels.

12. **Regulates blood pressure.** Cucumbers contain a lot of potassium, magnesium, and fiber. These work together to regulate blood pressure so it can be used by people who have high or low blood pressure.

13. **Promotes joint health.** Cucumber is an excellent source of silica, which helps promote joint health by strengthening the connective tissues in the joint. A benefit to those with arthritis.

Stressed? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a boiling pot of water. The chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma.

Cucumbers have not received as much press as other vegetables in terms of health benefits, but its unique combination of nutrients are why it is considered one of the healthiest foods readily available world-wide. So, when thinking of a delicious and nutritious food, think "cool" and reach for a cucumber.





# Escape from Prison Camp

The True Story of the prison escape in World War II of the brothers of Brother Timo Martin (Marttinen) and Sister Leila McTavish.

**“The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7**

During World War II, the country of Finland was actively involved in the war, and military service was mandatory. Many of the healthy young men were drafted into the army. This caused a difficulty for our faithful church members. Leo and Teuvo Marttinen (the brothers of Timo Marttinen and Leila McTavish—Teuvo being the father of Eva Lammes), were among those who were drafted into the Finnish army.

Leo And Teuvo Marrttinen received the order to go to the Oriveden Military Training Centre on September 14, 1942. Teuvo was only 19 years of age at the time. Since they refused all military service it resulted in their imprisonment for 10 months. One lieutenant said to them, “Here you will be to feel the real taste of hell.” They were not allowed their own bed. They were not given a food plate, but had to buy food from the store. There was always a long lineup to buy food and it was given to them with cursing and swearing.

One day a lieutenant took Teuvo into the woods and cut a stick from a tree and commanded him to drop to the ground and come up again, faster and faster; and every time he did, the lieutenant kept hitting him. Once in a while he asked, “Are you now ready to take a weapon?” Finally, he took his baton and attached his handkerchief to it and started to hit him with that. All this time Teuvo kept repeating Bible texts to him, hoping to get him to stop the beating. Finally the lieutenant said, with tears in his eyes, “I will not hit you anymore, because you have the true faith.” After this beating Teuvo had to spend three nights in a sitting position because he could not lie down due to the pain. Only when his brother supported him could he even stand up. It took three weeks before he recovered.

The two brothers were then taken to the prison in

Hämeenlinna, and from there to the prison in Konnunsuo. Here they made new experiences. Leo was made to dig deep drainage ditches. Not being used to that kind of work his hands became blistered and started bleeding. At night they healed somewhat; however, the next day, they were bleeding again. The gloves were always wet from the blood. But he wrote to his home saying that he was glad and thankful to God because what else can the child of God expect in this world.

Teuvo had a weak stomach when he came to prison, and soon started bleeding blood from his stomach. For this reason, for six days he could not put anything into his mouth.

At one time they were working in a swamp and it was raining for the whole day. It was cold and windy and the loose prisoner’s clothing provided little protection. Their teeth were chattering from the cold. Leo complained to the guard that he was freezing, and that it was difficult for him to work. The answer was, “Then you have to work harder and that will make you warm.” Teuvo was so weak that he could barely carry an empty shovel.

After the prison sentence was finished, the brothers returned home. They were home for only five days and had to leave again. This time to Kuurila, to a different type of prison camp. This was a place where the worst of criminals were taken. Such men were taken who would not submit and obey. They were taken there to break their will. Some of those working there were military officers who had been demoted. There were always two officers against one man. These military officers had, to the best their ability, to get men to submit. They did this in the hopes of receiving their former position back. Arriving there, the brothers told the highest

commander their stand against military service, to which he answered, "From such a stand you will soon be removed."

The brothers were told that they need to work in the gravel pit. They were then forced to put on a soldier's uniform, and a shotgun was put around their neck. The brothers dropped the shotguns down and the guards complained to the captain, asking what should be done with these men. The captain answered, "They deserve to be hung." This did not happen, thankfully, but after this they received much greater and greater punishments. Their hands were tied behind the backs of their heads and they were made to crawl in the trenches. The brothers were having difficulty breathing when fine sand went into their throat and lungs because they could not use their hands to protect themselves. This kind of punishment, as well as many other types, went on every day from morning until night.

Finally, the brothers thought it was too difficult and they were wondering if they would eventually collapse or fail or die. Now they started to plan for escape, which was possible only on Sunday and in the middle of the day. Leo escaped first and it was told to Teuvo that if you will try to escape also you will receive no mercy, but will be shot immediately. It was Thursday morning when Teuvo was lying on his bed and it sounded like someone behind him told him, "Teuvo, go away." He turned to look, but there was nobody. Then he heeded this word of exhortation. In that place there were men who had committed the greatest of crimes and they were prohibited from leaving that compound. It was well protected. Teuvo went around the place several times and everywhere there were officers. Then he prayed to God, "If you want me to get out of here, then you must blind the men. Cover me from their sight." Teuvo made a test by walking in the front of the officers, watching their eyes. Their faces were looking towards him, but nobody seemed to recognize or acknowledge that they saw him. Then he walked to the fence, and he climbed up, but nobody came to ask him where he was going. Once over the fence, he walked for one kilometer in the open fields. It was the time of year when the grain was just starting to grow, so it was not very high making him quite visible, but nobody called to him to go back. Then he even went to swim in the lake nearby, which was very visible to the compound. Along the way two soldiers came towards him and asked him, "Where is your I.D.? Have you lost your I.D.?" (It was some badge that was attached to his hat.) With the two officers in front of him, Teuvo did not

think of anything else, but he calmly took his hat into his hand in such a manner that the officers would not see I.D. on his hat. They did not notice.

Asking around Teuvo found Brother Rantanen in his home at Viiala. He stayed here overnight. It was in this home, a little earlier that Leo had come also. It was here that Leo had changed his prison clothing to a suit that Brother Rantanen gave him. When Leo was there, Brother Rantanen had taken him in a little boat to Pirkkala, to the home of one of the church members. They were living there in a rented apartment; but the landlady of the house, who lived upstairs, informed the police when she saw Leo coming and staying there. The police came and looked at Leo's papers. He had nothing else but an old passport. The police said, "Now it is 8:15, and the bus leaves from here at 8:45. I will go and change my clothing and then you come and meet me at the bus station, which is near my home so that when the bus comes we can go fix your papers." The bus was a restricted bus, so the police had to accompany him. The lady of the house kept on watching from the window to make sure that Leo would not escape. The window was situated so that she could see whole front yard. It was not possible to leave the house without her seeing it. Then Leo said to the brother in whose home he was, "What shall I do now?" And the brother answered, "Certainly you have to escape."

This brother and sister prayed earnestly to God to blind the sight of this lady of the house so that she would not see Leo escaping. After a while the police realized that he had made a mistake by leaving Leo, and came back and asked where he was. The brother answered, "I don't know. He just left from here." But the landlady said, "I have been watching from my window the whole time and nobody has left. They must have hid him." So, they all started to help the police search for him. Every corner was searched, including the upper part of the house. The police could not make a report of this incident because he is the one who had made the mistake in leaving Leo there.

It was raining heavily, and Leo started walking through the forest to Lempäälä. When he arrived there he began searching for a brother in the church named Brother Ahola. He arrived in the city at night at around 3:00 a.m., but he did not know which house Brother Ahola lived in. It was dangerous to walk around in the middle of the night during the war, and he did not dare to go and wake anybody up. While walking he found, in the front yard of one house, a small piece of white paper. He picked it up and read the words that were written

there, "Let thy light so shine". It was written in the hand writing of a child. The child had written it and dropped it on the front lawn. Leo then knew that he had come to the right place. Light shines. He then had courage to go and look in the window; through the window he could see a Bible, the Sabbath School Lesson, and a Songbook on the table. In this house he could stay only a few days.

From Lempäälä, Leo went to Parkano, to the house of one of our church sisters. He went by bicycle. On the way he stopped by one night in the home of his parents, in Vati-la. The next morning he continued his trip. His mother went some distance with him. She went to the railway station. Soon after Leo left home, the police came to the Marttinen home, asking for Leo and Teuvo. There were only two young children at home (Timo and Leila). Timo answered and told the police he did not know where his brothers were.

The whole summer Leo was in Parkano. Then came fall time. While there, every Sabbath he and the sister he was staying with went to Sabbath School at the house of another brother who lived five km away. One Sabbath morning the brother saw a police car drive up to his home. There came two government policemen and one local policeman into his house. They told him that they had been informed there was a tall man seen coming to their house who nobody in the area recognizes, who comes there every Sabbath. Four times they came inside the house, asking him questions. After that, they remained sitting in their car for one hour at the front gate, waiting for Leo. This brother was afraid that soon Leo would come to Sabbath School and be arrested. He tremblingly kept looking down the road to see when Leo and the sister would be coming. The police seemed to know the sister with whom Leo was staying and had been informed that they normally came together to Sabbath School. Finally, the police car left and started to drive in the direction of the home of the sister where Leo was staying. They drove along the road that they would be walking on. The road to the house of Lepisto took a 90 degree turn, and those who walk that road normally cut the corner through the woods. A little pathway had been made at this corner through the woods. As Leo and the sister were walking along this pathway, while they were in the middle, they saw the police car driving towards to the house of Lepisto—the house they had just left a moment ago. If they would have been in the house Leo would have been arrested. If they would have been through the pathway and back on the road, the same thing would have happened. After seeing this they turned and walked deeper into the woods away from the road, in the event that the police car would return to look for him in the house of the brother.

It was the marvelous leading of the Lord that the police

did not leave immediately, but remained for one hour in front of the brother's house. Otherwise, Leo would have been caught. They would not have reached this pathway in the corner in time.

In the late afternoon, Brother Toivo took food for Leo, who was still in the woods. He was easy to find by following his footsteps, because the first snow had just fallen. From here, Leo went to an elderly woman's house nearby who was somewhat influenced by the Advent Message.

Now back to Teuvo. From Viiala, from the house of the Rantanen's, he came to Tampere. There his mother was already waiting for him and gave him civilian clothing to wear. In this city he found a safe place to stay with one of our church brothers. He stayed with him for several weeks. From there he went to Jyväskylä to stay with another brother, Lumme, who was a chimney sweep. He gave Teuvo employment and the equipment to clean chimneys. Teuvo had many different experiences during this time. One time the chimney broke and a brick fell on his foot. It injured him so severely that he could barely move. The people in the house told him to go to the doctor. He could not do that as he would be arrested again. He was barely able to leave the house and on the way he found a barn that was full of hay where he hid himself. His foot was swollen and in a lot of pain. Here he expected to die. This would free him from all his sufferings. After three days, however, the swelling started to go down so that he could walk a little. He was then able to get some water to quench his raging thirst. Once while riding his bicycle on the way, there was a police checkpoint, where all those passing by were to be examined. Teuvo had to think fast. He did not want to stop so he rode his bicycle as fast as he could and rode right past the checkpoint, escaping it. Perhaps it helped that he was dressed as a chimney sweep, having the equipment with him. For such a person the police seemed not to be so concerned, so they did not bother to stop him. In the fall Teuvo came back and stayed with Brother Jokisalo.

All this time, the mother of Leo and Teuvo was waiting for the time of year when the river between Sweden and Finland would freeze, hoping that her sons could cross to Sweden, which was a neutral country during the war.

The situation of her boys was so close to their mother's heart. Day and night she was praying to heaven that her sons would be safe. For years, the mother had been writing to an old friend from the SDA church who lived in the north. She was now asking this friend if the river between Finland and Sweden was frozen. It finally did freeze over in the end of March. The woman said that everyone was talking about how the police are watching and checking all the houses around there. But the mother asked for a sign, through which God would show His will regarding her sons' escape. She was sure that God would protect

them on their way.

Brother Ahola then went to Parkano to get Leo. Their mother took Teuvo from Tampere and they were united in Haaparanta. Brother Ahola had permission from the head of the employment department to travel with his helpers to the city of Tornio. Tornio was a border town with Sweden and people were not allowed to travel there without permission. He did receive permission; however, while in the train the police told them that they could not arrive in Tornio with the papers that they currently had. Teuvo had borrowed his brother's passport and the photo was similar; however, Leo was travelling with a different person's passport and the photo was not similar (Leo did feel a bit guilty about this afterwards). Other people had told them the same thing—that they would have difficulty when they arrived in Tornio.

While they were in the Oulu train station they waited for a long time because the train was delayed for 6 to 7 hours. Meanwhile, Sabbath had begun and the next train was just coming. Leo said that he should inform the friend of their mother's in Tornio by telephone that they were on the way, but were late. He was told to go make that phone call right away, while they were waiting. Brother Vartija answered the telephone and said, "Good, then we will come to meet you at the railway station." And this was their salvation, because, in the middle of the day, Brother Vartija could not have come to the station. In the evening he was free to come. The train was late and Sabbath had begun, so he came to the train station when it finally arrived in Tornio. When they arrived, the locks in the doors of the train were opened. All the doors had been locked 10 km before Tornio so that no one could try to escape. Leo was arrested immediately and taken to the police station. Brother Ahola tried to speak in his behalf but in vain. Finally Brother Ahola searched for, and found, Brother Vartija and took him to the police station. Brother Vartija was asked if these two men were his visitors. He said, "Yes, they are my visitors." Then the police stated that Leo could go and spend the night at his house because the police station was closed in Tampere, and they could not get the necessary information that they required to be sure of his identity. They were told to come back to the police station at 9 a.m. Praise the Lord for the train delay which caused them to arrive so late that nothing could be done that day. Then began the dangerous crossing of the border that night.

In the middle of the night, at 2 a.m., Leo and Teuvo made

their dangerous crossing of the border—across the river. They did it that very night because they were afraid that the police would come to look for them in the house of Brother Vartija.

The two men's mother was with them when they went around the police checkpoints. They went to the river where the ice had just frozen. In one place it was still weak, and Leo fell into the water up to his shoulders. He got completely wet. Regardless of all this, they were still able to cross the river to a place called Haaparanta. As they walked further into Sweden, the police arrested them and took them back to Haaparanta. They gave dry clothing to Leo, and the police chief told them that they could not stay in Sweden. No one had been allowed to stay there who had escaped from Finland. Some people were handed over to the Finnish authorities, while others were given the opportunity to return to Finland secretly. Nevertheless, their situation was sent to the government

to decide. The decision of the government was that the citizens of Finland, Leo and Teuvo Marttinen could not remain in Sweden. The decision of the government was then taken to the king of Sweden so that he would confirm it. The king supported the government's decision, but he wrote in the end in his own handwriting, "Do not send them back to Finland against their will." Two months had passed since they crossed the river and were arrested in Haaparanta.



**Left: Leo. Right : Teuvo (1939)**

Now they were free. The rejoicing of the brothers knew no limit. So many times when they had been threatened by death, they could not do anything else but to cry, "Praise be the God Almighty." His name is to be praised for this wonderful experience. There had been tens of thousands of people who escaped to Sweden and had been sent back by the government, but these two who had escaped, and had their request presented to the king, were permitted to remain. The brethren had no money and no lawyer and they were very poor citizens. They were the first citizens of Finland who had escaped from there, that were allowed to stay in Sweden.

Finally, these brothers received freedom in Sweden and they could get in touch with the brothers and sister in the faith. Their difficult experiences were over. The enemy did not gain the victory; glory be to the Lord.

Teuvo spent the rest of his life in Sweden, where he got married and raised a family. The older brother, Leo, came to Canada later, and lived there for the remainder of his life.



# Business Transactions in the Bible

(Part 3)

## Jeremiah's Transaction

The business transaction that I am writing about is one that always intrigued me but that I never quite understood. It was the time when Jeremiah the prophet bought a field. It did not make any sense to me why Jeremiah, a weary prophet, who, at the time of the purchase was in prison, would want to buy a field at a time when Babylon was about to lay siege on Jerusalem. Jeremiah 32:6–8 tells us more about why Jeremiah did this; "And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD."

The field cost 17 shekels of silver and while the transaction was being made, Jeremiah made sure that there were witnesses and handwritten evidence which he then gave to Baruch, his scribe. He handed the evidence of the purchase to Baruch in front of everyone present, which included his uncle and the Jews from the prison court. We can read what he told Baruch in Jeremiah 32:14–15, "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

Jeremiah did this because God told him to, but he must have been a little perplexed as he was already old and a prisoner, furthermore, the field purchased was in the village of Anathoth, which was already under the control of the Babylonians! So, after the transaction was finished, Jeremiah prayed to God (Jeremiah 32:24–28) for

answers saying, "Behold the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what Thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, Thou seest it. And Thou hast said unto me, O LORD GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me? Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it."

Ellen White tells us in the book, *Prophets and Kings* that Jeremiah's transaction was to be like a parable, illustrating his faith to a doomed city. This is because the prophet himself had been foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, the desolation of Judea, and the utter ruin of the kingdom. He had been prophesying a long period of captivity in faraway Babylon. Already advanced in years, he could never hope to receive personal benefit from the purchase he had made. However, his study of the prophecies that were recorded in the Scriptures had created within his heart a firm conviction that the Lord purposed to restore to the children of the captivity their ancient possession of the Land of Promise. Through faith in God, Jeremiah was shown the exiles returning at the end of the years of affliction and reoccupying the land of their fathers. Through the purchase of the Anathoth estate he would do what he could, to inspire others with the hope that brought so much comfort to his own heart.

I learned a lot while researching for this story but I thought, how can we apply this story to our lives? Well, just like the Israelites in that time, many today are captives (of sin), discouraged and in ruin. But, just like Jeremiah bought a field in Anathoth while he was in prison, we too, while still on earth can invest in a good plot of land in heaven.



And, like Jeremiah through his act of faith was to give hope to the Israelites that they would one day be delivered from captivity and return to their homeland, so we should, through our lives, be able to portray the same faith and give others hope in their opportunity for freedom through Jesus Christ and the journey to their heavenly homeland. Amen.

**Elaine Romero**

## Miracles in the Old Testament (Part 1)

What is a miracle? The Merriam-Webster dictionary says the following: *1. An extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs; 2. An extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing, or accomplishment; 3. A divinely natural phenomenon experienced humanly as the fulfillment of spiritual law.*

In short, it is a supernatural act, or act of God. There have been many great and wonderful miracles throughout history. I would like to focus on the miracles in the Old Testament. Let us look at a chosen few of them.

The first miracle recorded to have ever taken place is the burning bush as a sign for Moses.

“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” Exodus 3:1–3

Isn't that amazing? The bush was burning but it did not get burned up. Surely this was a miracle and a sign from God that Moses was to lead His people. The Hebrews would now have someone to lead them out of the chains of bondage.



Another wondrous miracle that happened was the opening of the Red Sea. We all know that story well, but I'm going to re-tell it. The Israelites had just left Egypt and were on their way to Canaan. There was one huge obstacle in the way before they could pass through the wilderness; it was the Red Sea. As they got to the shore, all of a sudden they see a cloud of dust far behind them.

The Egyptians were coming with chariots. The mountains were also beside them.

Then God blew and the sea parted. As the Israelites crossed God put a cloud in between them, making darkness for the Egyptians but light still for His people. As the last Israelite reached the other side, God raised the cloud and the chariots charged. They went through the gap, but when they were mid-way, the sea came crashing down on their heads. The Egyptian army was no more. The Hebrews sang praises to God for their deliverance.

This next miracle that I will tell you about is, in my opinion, the most amazing in the history of the Old Testament. Do you remember when Joshua needed more light to finish off the battle against the Amorites? Does anyone remember that? Well, here is what happened. Joshua was fighting the Amorites with the Israelite army. They had been fighting for a long time; the Israelites nearly had won, but darkness was coming on, and then the enemy would be able to escape and the victory would be lost. This was a crucial battle. If the Hebrews won they would be able to take hold of Canaan once and for all. Joshua then cried to the sun and ordered it to rest above Gibeon. He cried to the moon, which was rising and ordered it to remain in the valley of Ajalon. Miraculously, the sun and moon stayed where they were. On and on the battle went. The sun rested in the sky for hours when there should have been darkness. It wasn't just in Palestine that this long day was observed. All around the world this long day was observed. Finally, when the Israelites had the victory, the sun set. The reason I think this miracle is so amazing is because the sun could not have stopped moving without the whole universe stopping. The universe is constantly spinning in synchronicity. If one thing stops, the other things have to as well or else order would be changed to chaos. So, not only did the solar system stop spinning, but so did the whole universe! What faith Joshua had! What love God had for His people!

Brothers and sisters, these are just some of the miracles that were recorded in the Old Testament. There are many more, such as the time when a man was raised from the dead just by touching Elisha's bones, or when time went backwards ten minutes as a sign for King Hezekiah. These are all supernatural acts; no human is able to do them or even equal them. There are still more miracles to come in the future. It is my wish and prayer that we may be able to witness them and see them with our own eyes. Amen.

**Cyrus Newby**

# London Ontario, Youth Retreat

June 14, 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I would like to let you know a little bit about the event which took place on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

First of all, we thank everyone of you who participated and answered His call. I know from my personal experience, that when God calls us we should answer. In this way we give opportunity for the Holy Spirit to use us for God's honour and glory and for our own personal spiritual growth.

The theme of this Youth Retreat was "Music." Bible

texts were taken from Psalm 33:1, "Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright." And, Psalm 40:3, "And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

Some of the subjects studied were: How does music benefits us? How can we use music for God's honour and glory in our worship? And, the wrong use of music.

We live in a Christian world that is so confused regarding music and that is why this subject is so important. I prayed and asked God to help us in this matter and to give us light from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy regarding how to worship God in the most beautiful way possible.

The retreat took place in the open air, in nature. It was

a beautiful sunny day and together we studied about this gift of music. The program was led by Sister Brenda who mentioned that music is a precious gift from God and if rightly used will bring glory to God. Harmony, melody and rhythm were the main points discussed.



We want to thank Brother Danny and Brother Adrian who talked about the benefits of music and how the different types of music affect us. The idea of Gospel rock, so popular for many Christians, is that we cannot carry the Gospel in a worldly vehicle. If we want to carry the gospel



to the world let us carry it in a godly manner, singing godly songs to the glory of God.

Brother Jose Avila with his family praised the Lord with a beautiful song. We want to thank them and may God help this wonderful family to praise His name always.

We concluded with a personal experience from Sister Alina. She shared with us her personal testimony and how God helped her to come to the true knowledge of His word and was baptized.

In a few words I want to also thank the Canadian Field for their support and prayers. God bless you.

In Christ,

**Nicholas Anca**

## Some of the Ministers in the Church



**Above:  
Brother Shirima,  
Tanzania**



**Above: Brother De la Paz, Philippines  
With his wife Grace**



**Above: Brother Lowe, Canada,  
with son Adrian**



**Right:  
Brother Caputo,  
Italy**



**Right:  
Brother Alva,  
Peru**

**Left:  
Brother Monterroso,  
Guatemala**



## Legazpi City, Philippines



**“The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked. There are places which are now a moral wilderness, and these are to become as the garden of the Lord. The waste places of the earth are to be cultivated, that they may bud and blossom as the rose. New territories are to be worked by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. New churches must be established, new congregations organized. At this time there should be representatives of present truth in every city and in the remote parts of the earth.” - *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 24**

## **After**

**After the sowing comes the glorious reaping,  
After the sadness comes harp and song;  
Eternal joy shall banish all our weeping,  
As we mingle with the blood-washed throng.**

**After the desert comes the land of beauty,  
And Marah's pool's forgot 'neath Elim's palms;  
After the prayer, the cross, the life of duty,  
Eternity's long, glad thanksgiving psalms.**

**After time's desert is the land immortal,  
Majestic mountains, smiling valleys green;  
The narrow way leads to the shining portal,  
And life's glad waters with their sparkling sheen.**

**L.D. Santee**