



The Reformation
Messenger
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Full Surrender
Page 4

A Heathen King Whose Life Was Changed
Page 12

Parasites
Page 16

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.

IN THIS ISSUE:

3 Flee as a Bird

4 Full Surrender

6 "... Swift to Hear ..."

9 Copy of Three Visions

10 The Vine

12 Parasites

16 A Heathen King Whose Life Was Changed

20 Health Matters:

Cholesterol—The Good and The Bad

22 Children's Story: The Broken Angel

23 Asleep in Jesus—Violet Williams

24 Killbear National Park 2016



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Flee as a Bird

“After Saul's atrocious slaughter of the priests of the Lord, ‘one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.’

“Still hunted by the king, David found no place of rest or security. At Keilah his brave band saved the town from capture by the Philistines, but they were not safe, even among the people whom they had delivered. From Keilah they repaired to the wilderness of Ziph.

“At this time, when there were so few bright spots in the path of David, he was rejoiced to receive an unexpected visit from Jonathan, who had learned the place of his refuge. Precious were the moments which these two friends passed in each other's society. They related their varied experiences, and Jonathan strengthened the heart of David, saying, ‘Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth.’ As they talked of the wonderful dealings of God with David, the hunted fugitive was greatly encouraged. ‘And they two made a

covenant before the Lord: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.’

“After the visit of Jonathan, David encouraged his soul with songs of praise, accompanying his voice with his harp as he sang:

‘In the Lord put I my trust:
How say ye to my soul,
Flee as a bird to your mountain?
For, lo, the wicked bend their bow,
They make ready their arrow upon the string,
That they may privily shoot at the upright in
heart.

If the foundations be destroyed,
What can the righteous do?
The Lord is in His holy temple,
The Lord's throne is in heaven:
His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of
men.

The Lord trieth the righteous:
But the wicked and him that loveth violence His
soul hateth.’

Psalm 11:1–5

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 660–661

Ellen G. White



Full Surrender

We often sing the beautiful gospel song, “All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, In His presence daily live. I surrender all, I surrender all, All to Thee my blessed Saviour, I surrender all.”

The Lord gladly accepts our promise to Him, and when He comes to us to claim what we have promised, how many change their minds and are willing to give only a small part of what they have? Ananias and Sapphira did this. They promised to give all, but then changed their minds to give less.

It is beautiful music to the ears of the Lord when someone tells Him, Lord, to Thee I surrender all. Take my time, my money, my talents, my strength, my heart, my love, my all I give. And adding to it, “worldly pleasures all forsaken, take me Jesus, take me now. “

Have you ever thought about what it costs to be saved?

“If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.” Luke 14:26–28, 33

The rich young man came to Jesus and went away sorrowful and disappointed. To him, a full surrender was too high a price to pay.

Jesus did many miracles, healing the sick, forgiving sins.

He did this mostly to those people who had nothing—the man lying beside the pool of Bethesda, crippled for 38 years; the dying thief on the cross; lepers living outside the city as outcasts of society. Blind Bartimaeus who could only cry out, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. But if someone had something to give, they had to make a full surrender first. Peter, John, and James left their fishing boats and nets. Matthew left the customs booth. Paul left all behind.

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” Matthew 19:29

It is a joy to have relatives, and family, to have a father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, wife, and husband. But if we lose this joy, the company of Christ will give us a hundred times greater joy. Money, houses, and land gives us security, comfort, and happiness; but if we lose them, the company of Jesus will give us hundred times more security, comfort, and happiness.

Maybe now we understand the words of Paul, “As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” 2 Corinthians 6:10

Paul had no earthly goods, yet he was very happy and rejoicing as one who possessed all things.

Does this now mean that we will sell our homes and furniture and give all the money to the poor and go on Welfare (government assistance)? No, but it does mean that our

house is given to Jesus as a place for visitors and the homeless, and our table is for the hungry.

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.” Matthew 25:35–36

Full surrender also means our time, 24 hours of the day, seven days a week, ready to work for Jesus.

“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.” Isaiah 6:8. He did not know where he needed to go, and what he needed to do, but he was ready for anything. Also today, God is calling, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” He is not sending us alone, He said, “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:20

Never will you go alone to a Bible study; no, Jesus promised to go with you. Never will you go alone to do canvassing; no, angels will be your companions.

But if we go to worldly entertainments or sporting events we must consider the influence on our character

“In the night season I was a witness to the performance that was carried on on the school grounds. The students who engaged in the grotesque mimicry that was seen, acted out the mind of the enemy, some in a very unbecoming manner. A view of things was presented before me in which the students were playing games of tennis and cricket. Then I was given instruction regarding the character of these amusements. They were presented to me as a species of idolatry, like the idols of the nations.

“There were more than visible spectators on the ground. Satan and his angels were there, making impressions on human minds. Angels of God, who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, were also present, not to approve, but to disapprove. They were ashamed that such an exhibition should be given by the professed children of God. The forces of the enemy gained a decided victory,

and God was dishonored. He who gave His life to refine, ennoble, and sanctify human beings was grieved at the performance.” –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 350

“Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.

“The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 342

If you waste time in selfish pleasure, you are not making a full surrender. God has given you talents that He expects you to use to His honour, to do missionary work, to save souls. Are the use of our talents up to our own discretion, or are we to ask God how to use them, and when?

Can we neglect attending the meetings of the church and still believe we have made a full surrender? If there is still one thing lacking, then our surrender is not complete, and this one thing will stop the hand of God from blessing us, and close the windows of heaven from us.

The only right thing to do is to make a full surrender to God of all our talents. Every word that we speak, let it be with grace. Every countenance, let it be softened with love. Every minute, let it be service to God. Full surrender will not allow us to be offended; we still love them that offend us. Full surrender means to pray, “not my will, but Thy will be done.”

Many have made a partial surrender, but he that has made a full surrender, he will receive one hundred fold in this life and also everlasting life. Amen.

Timo Martin

LOOKING FOR YOU . . .

If you are interested in submitting an item for publication in *The Reformation Messenger*, please submit by email or mail.



**Submit:
Drawings, Announcements ,
Reports, Articles, Poems,
Photos, Personal Testimonies
and Experiences.**

“...Swift to hear...”



Have you ever wondered why God has given us two ears but only one mouth? I have often wondered why some people act as if they had two mouths and only one ear. We will discover that our words should be few and well chosen; but there are those who can hardly open their mouth and, when they do, they seldom find the right words.

The Bible says: “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” James 1:19. “The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.” James 3:6. “The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. . . He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly. . . He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” Proverbs 19:11; 14:29; 16:32

Let us illustrate this with a clear difference between your words before and after true conversion. Before, when there is one involved in a discussion, he would gruffly say, “You do not understand.” But after his true conversion will say very kindly, “Maybe I was not clear enough. Let me say it all over in other words.” Before, he would say, “You are wrong.” Now he may say, “Have you considered both sides of the question?” Before, he would say, “You are a liar.” Now he says, “It seems to me that you do not have all the facts.” “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a

world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.” James 3:2–6. “There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.” Proverbs 12:18

One of the proverbs of King Solomon reads: “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” Proverbs 15:1. At the beginning of His ministry, Christ taught: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” Matthew 5:9. There is a bright future for peacemakers, but not for troublemakers.

“Our great Exemplar was exalted to be equal with God. He was high commander in heaven. All the holy angels delighted to bow before Him. ‘And again, when He bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.’ Jesus took upon Himself our nature, laid aside His glory, majesty, and riches to perform His mission, to save that which was lost. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto others. Jesus, when reviled, abused, and insulted, did not retaliate. ‘Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again.’ When the cruelty of man caused Him to suffer painful stripes and wounds, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously. The apostle Paul exhorted his Philippian brethren: ‘Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.’ Is the servant greater than his master? Christ has given us His life as a pattern, and we dishonor Him when we become jealous of every slight, and are ready to resent every injury, supposed or real. It is not an evidence of a noble mind to be prepared to defend self, to preserve our own dignity.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 426

“... slow to speak ...”

When the Lord comes again you and I will need to be prepared, and Scripture informs us that to be victorious in that day we must be found without “guile” in our mouths. Many Christians have overlooked the importance of speech in preparing the character for heaven.

Words are the expression of our thoughts and feelings. They are used for statements, remarks, protests, explanations and definitions. According to semantics, every word has a meaning. Words also play an important part in the different areas of life, such as in advertising, sales psychology, etc. We want to consider how words are connected with our life of faith so we are motivated to think about our words. We need to take heed and much care when we answer or react to any speech. The apostle Paul, inspired, wrote about the care which could be heeded: “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” Colossians 4:6

“Speech is one of the great gifts of God. It is the means by which the thoughts of the heart are communicated. It is with the tongue that we offer prayer and praise to God. With the tongue we convince and persuade. With the tongue we comfort and bless, soothing the bruised, wounded soul. With the tongue we may make known the wonders of the grace of God. With the tongue also we may utter perverse things, speaking words that sting like an adder.” *—The Review and Herald, May 12, 1910*

We carry a great deal of power and influence in our voice. Often we do not realize the tremendous implications inherent in virtually every sound we utter. Today we are deciding if our voice will express allegiance to Christ or to Satan in the great controversy before us. Which choice are you making? Today the enemy of souls knows that the voice will be a key factor in deciding the destiny of countless men and women. He is trying to make us use this special talent for evil rather than for good. “Not one word is to be spoken unadvisedly. No evil speaking, no frivolous talk, no fretful



repining or impure suggestion, will escape the lips of him who is following Christ. The apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, says, ‘Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth’ (Ephesians 4:29). A corrupt communication does not mean only words that are vile. It means any expression contrary to holy principles and pure and undefiled religion. It includes impure hints and covert insinuations of evil. Unless instantly resisted, these lead to great sin.” *—The Signs of the Times, July 2, 1902*

“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” Proverbs 15:1. Hard words sow seeds which produce a bad harvest of fruits which no one will store. Our own words have an effect upon our own character, as well as upon others. Only the infinite God can measure the harm which has been produced by inconsiderate words. These words pass our lips; and although we may not want to hurt others with them, they are an index of our thoughts and work on the side of Satan. What unhappiness has already been produced through the speaking out of thoughtless, unkind words in the family circle! We, as Christians, should pay attention to the influence of our words, whether we are with believers or unbelievers.

What can our words cause? All of us at one time or another have experienced the disputes, sorrow, and worry produced by inconsiderate words. What leads to such outbreaks? Does it not come from our own inner discord or lack of trust in Christ? What is this a sign of? “Unless we control our words and temper, we are slaves to Satan. We are in subjection to him. He leads us captive. All jangling and unpleasant,

impatient, fretful words are an offering presented to his satanic majesty. . . for it destroys the peace and happiness of whole families, destroys health, and is eventually the cause of forfeiting an eternal life of happiness.” *—The Adventist Home, p. 437*

To ministers, leaders, and workers

What attitude should ministers and others in church responsibility take toward those who come to them with a report against any coworker or member? “When a person comes to a minister or to men in positions of trust with complaints against a brother or a sister, let the minister ask, ‘Have you complied with the rules our Saviour has given?’ And if he has failed to carry out any particular of this instruction, do not listen to a word of his complaint. In the name and Spirit of Jesus, refuse to take up a re-

“It is true there is an indignation that is justifiable, even in the followers of Christ. When they see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute, when they see the innocent oppressed, a righteous indignation stirs the soul. Such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin. But those who at any supposed provocation feel at liberty to indulge anger or resentment are opening the heart to Satan. Bitterness and animosity must be banished from the soul if we would be in harmony with heaven.” *—The Desire of Ages, p. 310*

port against your brother or your sister in the faith. If members of the church go contrary to these rules, they make themselves subjects for church discipline and should be under the censure of the church. This matter, so plainly taught in the lessons of Christ, has been treated with strange indifference. The church has either neglected her work entirely in the matter of correcting evil, or has done it with harshness and severity, thus wounding and bruising souls. Measures should be taken to correct this cruel spirit of criticism, of judging the motives of others, as though Christ had revealed to men the hearts of their brethren.” —*The Review and Herald*, April 16, 1895

Our ministers, missionary workers, and church officers must all practice this divine rule. They must gather their congregation and present before them this obligation. The evil speaker should be checked at once. The church of God will not progress until this door by which the enemy so often enters is resolutely closed. In the light of this instruction, how would we classify those who write evil reports against others and against the work, and yet never reveal it at the right time to those in responsibility? The evil speaker who whispers in the ear of another commits three evils: (1) against himself or herself; (2) against the one spoken about; and (3) against the one whose character is being destroyed.

“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool. . . A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.” Proverbs 10:18; 17:4. We should not speak one word which we would not want holy angels seeing and registering in the heavenly books. Reports about our wrong words and deeds enter the heavenly books.

“...slow to wrath”

“He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.” Proverbs 14:29

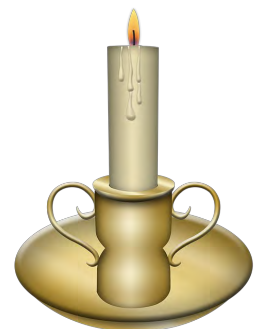
Take care of your thoughts. Sin begins in the heart. If you keep your thoughts pure, your life will be blameless. The indulgence of sinful thoughts and desires produces sinful actions. When you are in a situation provoking your anger, do not give up or be angry quickly. The Bible says be “slow to wrath”. “Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. . . . Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 486. “When one once gives place to an angry spirit, he is just as much intoxicated as the man who has put the glass to his lips. Learn the eloquence of silence.” —*Mind, Character, and Personality*,

vol. 2, p. 582

We may feel it is our right to vindicate. The Spirit of Prophecy says, “We must give others an example of not stopping at every trifling offense in order to vindicate our rights. We may expect that false reports will circulate about us; but if we follow a straight course, if we remain indifferent to these things, others will also be indifferent. Let us leave to God the care of our reputation. And thus, like sons and daughters of God, we shall show that we have self-control. We shall show that we are led by the Spirit of God, and that we are slow to anger.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1160–1161

“Jesus did not contend for His rights.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 89. Like the apostle Paul, we must bring all our thoughts, words and deeds into subjection to the will of Christ. Our words and deeds prove clearly what kind of character we have—the character of Jesus or of Satan. Those who are in daily communion with God show meekness in their characters. Their words are kind. They bear the fruit of love and kindness in all their actions. They are unconscious of it, because Christ dwells in their hearts.

A consecrated Christian life is ever shedding light and comfort and peace. “If we would guard our words, so that nothing but kindness shall escape our lips, we will give evidence that we are preparing to become members of the heavenly family.” —*Medical Ministry*, p. 213



“Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to control a rash and impetuous temper. When the grace of meekness is cherished by those who are naturally sour or hasty in disposition, they will put forth the most earnest efforts to subdue their unhappy temper. Every day they will gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered. They become assimilated to the Divine Pattern, until they can obey the inspired injunction, ‘Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath’ (James 1:19).” —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 15

Victor Shumbusho
Congo Union Secretary



"I saw that we must wake up, wake, and cry earnestly for the arm of the Lord to be revealed. It is fatal to sleep now. Time is almost finished. I saw that it was a shame for us to refer to the scattering for examples to govern us now in the gathering time; for if God does no more for us now than He did then, we shall never be gathered. In the scattering, Israel were torn and smitten, but now God will bind up and heal them.

"I saw that God had stretched out His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people. They are these who have been covered up in the 'rubbish' since 1844. I saw that efforts to spread the truth should now be put forth, such as in 1843 and 1844. In the scattering, efforts to spread the truth had but little effect—accomplished but little or nothing—but now in the gathering time, when God has set His hand to gather His people, efforts to spread the truth will have their designed effect; and all should be zealous and united in the work. I saw that a paper was needed, and all should feel interested in it.

"I saw that the truth should be made plain upon tables, that the earth and the fullness thereof is the Lord's, and that necessary means should not be spared to make it plain. I saw that the old chart was directed by the Lord, and that not a figure of it should be altered except by inspiration. I saw that the figures of the chart were as God would have them, and that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none should see it till His hand was removed. (see chart next page).

"I saw that the two-horned beast had a dragon's mouth, and that his power was in his head, and that the decree would go out of his mouth. Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but sep-

arate and distinct from them. She has had her day, and it is past, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, were the next to come on the stage and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints. I saw that as the mother has been declining in power, the daughters had been growing, and soon they will exercise the power once exercised by the mother.

"I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it) will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.

"Then the Catholics bid the Protestants to go forward, and issue a decree that all who will not observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day, shall be slain. And the Catholics, whose numbers are large, will stand by the Protestants. The Catholics will give their power to the image of the beast. And the Protestants will work as their mother worked before them to destroy the saints. But before their decree bring or bear fruit, the saints will be delivered by the Voice of God. Then I saw that Jesus' work in the sanctuary will soon be finished. And after His work there is finished, He will come to the door of the first apartment, and confess the sins of Israel upon the head of the Scape Goat. Then He will put on the garments of vengeance. Then the plagues will come upon the wicked, and they do not come till Jesus puts on that garment, and takes His place upon the great white

cloud. Then while the plagues are falling, the Scape Goat is being led away. He makes a mighty struggle to escape, but he is held fast by the hand that leads him. If he should effect his escape, Israel would lose their lives. I saw that it would take time to lead away the Scape Goat into the land of forgetfulness after the sins were put on his head.

"The great white cloud I saw was not the holy place, but entirely separate from the holy and most holy place, entirely separate from the sanctuary.

"Then the angel repeated these words, and said, 'This is the time spoken of in Isaiah.' He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. He had no mediator between God and man, and these plagues could be withheld no longer, for Jesus had ceased to plead for Israel, and they were covered with the covering of the Almighty God, and then they could live in the sight of a holy God, and those who were not covered, the plagues fell upon them, for they had nothing to shelter or protect them from the wrath of God."

Dorchester, Maine, October 23, 1850
Spalding and Megan Collections, page 1-2
Ellen G. White



WHY GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TOLD TO GO TO THE VINE

Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5

RELATING WITH THE FIG TREE

"Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Luke 13:7

Brethren and sisters, ask yourself, how many privileges has God given to you? Do you sometimes not take seriously the free gift of God through Jesus Christ?

"God has given the world an opportunity to learn and to obey His will. He has given them, in His word, the light of truth; He has sent them warning, counsel, and admonition; but few will obey His voice. Like the Jewish nation, the majority, even of professed Christians, pride

themselves on their superior advantages, but make no returns to God for these great blessings." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 99

BRETHREN ARE YOU IN THE VINE?

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:16

"It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are prepared to close their earthly history." –*Christian Service* p. 41. Why? Because they do not want to make returns to God.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

A LESSON FROM THE JEWISH NATION

"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee." Romans 11:17–21

"The warning was not heeded by the Jewish people. They forgot God, and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives. The blessings they had received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages were appropriated for their own glorification. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example. Like the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, they followed out every imagination of their evil hearts. Thus they made sacred things appear a farce, saying, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these' (Jeremiah 7:4), while at the same time they were misrepresenting God's character, dishonoring His name, and polluting His sanctuary." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 291–292

IN THE LAST DAYS

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Timothy 3:5

"Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and

who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building." –*Maranatha*, p. 254

"God calls for men and women of stability, of firm purpose, who can be relied upon in seasons of danger and trial, who are as firmly rooted and grounded in the truth as the eternal hills, who cannot be swayed to the right or to the left, but who move straight onward and are always found on the right side. There are some, who, in time of religious peril, may almost always be looked for in the ranks of the enemy; if they have any influence, it is on the wrong side. They do not feel under moral obligation to give all their strength to the truth they profess. Such will be rewarded according to their works." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 75

"The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another." –*Maranatha*, p. 250. What has the Lord not done for you? When He comes will He find you not bearing fruit?

"What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Isaiah 5:4. The Lord has given us His word that we might be acquainted with it and that through His word we may reveal the character of God to the world.

May God bless you as you look to Jesus Christ as your leader and fight the good fight of faith in Christ Jesus name. Amen.

Sister Jenifer Akello, Uganda



PARASITES



The word parasite causes one to cringe. When we think of a parasite we think of intestinal worms, or ticks and leeches, or some other unpleasant critters living where they should not.

What is a parasite?

There are two definitions.

- 1) An animal or plant that lives in, or on, another (the host from which it draws nourishment). The host does not benefit from the association and is often harmed by it as the parasite contributes nothing for the survival of its host. The damage they do ranges widely from minor inconvenience to debilitating, or fatal, disease.

There are two types of these parasites. There are ectoparasites that live and feed on the outer surface of the host, like a leech, and do not usually cause disease themselves; but they can act as vector, as in the case of ticks, which transmit the organisms that cause disease. Then there are endoparasites, such as tapeworms, that live within the host's organisms and tissues, which can cause more damage. Some of these require a vector to carry them within the host.

- 2) Cultural parasites: These are persons who take advantage of other people and fail to offer anything in return. Or, in other words, a person who receives support from others without giving anything useful or proper in return; one who habitually lives at the expense and hospitality of others.

We will consider the first definition initially in this article, and then the second.

In the religious world, we can say there are spiritual parasites. Modern day Christianity has developed many Chris-

tian Parasites.

“Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure truth. Error could not stand alone, and would soon become extinct, if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, showing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1094–1095

In Old Testament times, there were really only two basic religious groups. The pagan religions and the Israelites who served the true God. In the time of Christ, there were the Jews and the Gentiles. It was not difficult to make a decision. To serve the true and living God meant to join the Jewish nation. After the resurrection, the Christian religion emerged, adding a third. Now there were two religious groups that claimed to serve the true and living God and believe in the Bible as it was written at that time.

Since that time, down through the ages, and especially after the Dark Ages, Satan found more success in developing multiple Christian churches, most of who teach much truth with parasites of error attached. For error to stand and grow as a parasite, it needs the living Word of God to

grow on. "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isaiah 4:1. Spiritual parasites are growing, each with its own false theories that they are extracting from the living Word of God; claiming to serve God, but in their own way. There is a Christian church to suit almost every lifestyle imaginable, and if one cannot find one, they can create a new one and they will find followers.

"While God has given ample evidence for faith, He will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them. And those who refuse to accept and obey God's word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 527. And yet they derive their beliefs from the living word of God—the Bible. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Corinthians 4:4

The enemy does his best to pervert the truth by giving half-truths. That way people have a difficult time discerning what is right and what is wrong. People who do not know God's Word actually have half-truths in their mind. When one learns and applies the rightly divided Word of God in a renewed mind effort, they begin to acquire the whole truth.

"Satan's angels are wise to do evil, and they will create that which some will claim to be advanced light, and will proclaim it as new and wonderful; yet while in some respects the message may be truth, it will be mingled with human inventions, and will teach for doctrine the commandments of men. . . . Many apparently good things will need to be carefully considered with much prayer, for they are specious devices of the enemy to lead souls in a path which lies so close to the path of truth that it will be scarcely distinguishable from it. But the eye of faith may discern that it is diverging, though almost imperceptibly, from the right path." —*Evangelism*, p. 590

While we acknowledge that false doctrines in Christian churches are like parasites, is it possible for the members in God's church to become spiritual parasites?

There have been members in the past who have come out with fanciful theories that do not agree with the written word of God or the Spirit of Prophecy. Then there are others who go and teach and preach contrary to the decisions made by the General Conference assembly where the angels of God are directing the decisions. These persons are considered parasites, and after a time end up separating

from God's church. As a leech or tick is extracted from the body, these members that are causing damage to the host are eventually removed, whether by the church (Matthew 18:15–17) or by God Himself. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." 1 John 2:19

And then we have a variety of standards on what some view as minor issues, like dressing and eating. While some believe you must adhere to a strict vegan diet, others believe that as long as you abstain from eating meat, you can choose to eat what you wish, regardless of the amount of sugar and preservatives. This second view is a parasitic truth and the person will either be led to greater truth, extracting the parasite, or the parasite will destroy them with ill health.

Not only false doctrines that are taught are considered parasites to the truth, we can also say that sin itself in any form that is practiced is a parasite. "If one sin is cherished in the soul, or one wrong practice retained in the life, the whole being is contaminated. The man becomes an instrument of unrighteousness." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 313

The trouble with sin is, it is easy to fall into, but it is much more difficult to extract. As a parasite, it is easy to have a tick or leech attach to you, but the extraction process is a little more difficult. The guinea worm found in central Africa is the worst. It enters the human host through contaminated drinking water. The worms poke holes in the human's intestine and go for a swim. After about one year a full-grown guinea worm is the width of a paper clip wire and up to three feet long. It begins to move through the body of its human host, causing tremendous pain. Finally, the worm pokes out of the host's body—often through the foot. Once the worm exposes itself, it can only be removed a few centimeters a day. Otherwise the worm will pull apart and die, resulting in infection and possibly death for its host. Sometimes the painful process takes weeks.



Sin is easy to get involved in. Just like drinking the water from a stream seems simple and harmless, so often does sin; but sin is difficult to get rid of once it has taken hold. When sin "pokes its head" out of our lives, and we recognize it has to be dealt with, we should act. Forgiveness comes quickly, but many times the process of getting free from its pull is slow and agonizing. However, like the guinea

ea worm, sin, when left unchecked, it can kill you. Some people think they will sin a little and then will give it up any time they want to. One person told me marijuana is not addicting like cigarettes and can be given up any time a person chooses, while cigarettes cause a physical addiction and are difficult to overcome. I am not so sure this is the case. Sin in any form is not given up without a struggle. It is best not to let the parasite inside in the first place.

There are ectoparasites—sins that are clearly visible, such as diet and dress. I often think of this statement, “You should never let a morsel pass your lips between your regular meals. Eat what you ought, but eat it at one meal, and then wait until the next.” —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 180. And then I think of “Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Hebrews 12:16. How many are willing to exchange their salvation for one morsel?

Gossip is another ectoparasite that needs a host to survive. One who keeps on spreading gossip is a host for this parasite. The person doing the speaking is receiving the greater harm and will have his/her spiritual life force eaten up if the parasite is not removed.

There are many visible sinful practices that seem mild, but are eating out the life force of a person’s spirituality. You are growing or dying in every action you do. With every action and thought, each one should “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” 2 Corinthians 13:5. Ask yourself if this action is bringing you closer to Jesus or is it driving you further away. Is it a parasite that is killing you?

Then there are the endoparasites. These are parasites that cannot be seen. They are “the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12. “The righteousness of Christ will not cover one cherished sin. A man may be a law-breaker in heart; yet if he commits no outward act of transgression, he may be regarded by the world as possessing great integrity. But God’s law looks into the secrets of the heart. Every act is judged by the motives that prompt it. Only that which is in accord with the principles of God’s law will stand in the judgment.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 316

It is better to avoid sin in the first place. Leave those people who tempt you and do not spend your spare time with them. “If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” Proverbs 1:10

In the time of Christ, we read of the demoniacs who were demon possessed (Matthew 8:28–33). Demons are spiritual parasites that want to attach themselves to us and suck spiritual life from us. Left to their own vices, they will weaken us and make life needlessly unpleasant. They are the spiritual equivalent of physical parasites, such as the tapeworm or hookworm. The reasoning ability of these

men was eventually destroyed by the parasites of the demons. “Whenever men reject the Saviour’s invitation, they are yielding themselves to Satan. Multitudes in every department in life, in the home, in business, and even in the church, are doing this today.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 341. Notice how it mentions that there are some in the home, business, and in church who are yielding to Satan. Satan is especially wanting to attack and attach to those in the church. He wants to be a parasite on you. “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.” Luke 11:24–26. The parasite being extracted leaves a vacancy, and if it is not filled with healthy tissue, the parasite will return.

“Can we not understand that the most costly thing in the world is sin? It is at the expense of purity of conscience, at the cost of losing the favour of God and separating the soul from Him, and at last losing heaven. The sin of grieving the Holy Spirit of God and walking contrary to Him has cost many a one the loss of his soul.” —*Faith and Works*, p. 17

One sin cherished will defile the soul in the same manner as one drop of ink will colour an entire basin of water. “One sin cherished is sufficient to work degradation of character and to mislead others.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 312. “One cherished sin will, little by little, debase the character, bringing all its nobler powers into subjection to the evil desire. The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the indulgence of one evil habit, one neglect of the high claims of duty, breaks down the defenses of the soul and opens the way for Satan to come in and lead us astray.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 114

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:1–2

When you conform to this world, you are relinquishing yourself to become a host for a parasite, which is the devil and his spirits. It is that simple. Unless you know the Word of God, you are actually under the control and influence of the devil and his spirits most of the time. You need to understand that the adversary (devil) cannot stand the light. The light of God’s Word dispels darkness and also makes manifest darkness. As we dwell in the light, the powers of darkness flee.

It is possible for Christians to also become parasites themselves—ectoparasites. They attach themselves to teachers, parents, ministers and church leaders. They do not make an experience for themselves. Many times in missionary work I have met Christians and when you bring them the truth they have no answer. All they can say is, “I will consult with my church leader and get back to you.” They do not know for themselves. We also cannot depend on our church leaders. They are there to guide us and direct us; yes, but we must make our own experience. We will have to be able to answer for ourselves. “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15. “Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3:15. These types of people can suck the energy out of missionaries who should be devoting their time



to searching for new souls to study with, not “baby sitting” the church members.

Now, considering our definition number 2 of a parasite at the beginning of the article, we read, “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” 2 Thessalonians 3:10

“The Word of God is plain and distinct upon this point of labour. No man or woman who is converted to God can be anything but a worker.” —*This Day With God*, p. 33. “None who are able to labour should be taught to expect food and clothing and shelter free of cost. For their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, some way should be devised whereby they may return an equivalent for what they receive.

Encourage every effort toward self-support. This will strengthen self-respect and a noble independence. And occupation of mind and body in useful work is



essential as a safeguard against temptation.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 177. This includes young children and teenagers also. They need to be taught that they have duties to perform in the household. They are not to be parasites, living off their parents, while giving nothing in return. Adults who are healthy definitely should be working to provide for themselves. “The Bible does not acknowledge a believer who is idle, however high his profession may be. There will be employment in heaven. The redeemed state is not one of idle repose. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God, but it is a rest found in loving service.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1164

This principle also applies to the spiritual life. As previously mentioned, we cannot become a parasite on our church leaders and missionaries; so “The same rule applies to our spiritual nourishment; if any would have the bread of eternal life, let him make efforts to obtain it.” —*Faith and Works*, p 49. Take time to study for yourself.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8

By thinking only on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, we can overcome the parasites. It may seem like a lot and it takes work to renew your mind to many of these Biblical principles. But, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13

Anything that is sucking the life force out of your spirituality is a parasite and needs to be extracted. It can be your work which leaves you no time for spiritual pursuits. It may be your entertainments which take your time and thoughts away from God. It may be your thoughts. It may be something apparently good, but it is detracting from your spiritual growth and private time with the Lord. These are parasites that must be removed or they will kill you.

Take each day as it comes, and, at the end of the day, make an account of the time you spent serving yourself—feeding a potential parasite. At the end of the day is your life closer to God than it was in the morning? May God help each of you readers here to grow day by day, keeping yourselves pure and clean from this world so that you will not be infected by any parasites that are seeking to destroy you. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



A Heathen King Whose Life had been Changed

Daniel chapter 4 contains a story full of significance for our walk with God. He is a God of mercy. He is compassionate, tender, and patient with the erring, waiting for those who have fallen deep into sin to recognize their waywardness and come to Him in repentance. If there is an urgency to prepare for salvation more than at any time in history on this earth, it is right now. The only people who will overcome in these final days are those who are developing a deep personal relationship today with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is no second chance after Jesus returns to this earth. It is today that we must develop our characters. Just like the king in this story, many times we do not pay attention to God at first. Although He gives us much evidence to prove His love towards us, like Nebuchadnezzar, many still go their own way; and even then the Saviour is patient with the erring.

In this chapter we read of Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony on how he came to know the God of heaven. Earlier, he had met God through Daniel and then through Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (chapter 3). In chapters 2 and 3, the king sees the contrast between the God of Israel and the gods of Babylon. Here we see his surrender to the true God. We see how God's love and patient persistence with this heathen king can change someone into a follower of Christ. In this, Nebuchadnezzar is a good example of a witness—one who relates what he has seen and experienced.

The Holy Spirit worked on Neb-

uchadnezzar's stubborn heart for many years before he surrendered his life to the God of heaven. The patience that God showed toward Nebuchadnezzar gives us hope. He is patient and continues to work with us and all those who love Him.

There is an interesting story about Peter Marshall, the author of the book entitled "A Man Called Peter." God called his name when he was about to fall off a deep rocky cliff on a stormy night in Scotland, while he was visiting some of his friends. He writes that when he came back home that dark and stormy night, he heard someone calling his name, "Peter, Peter." At first glance he did not pay attention. "Who could be possibly be calling my name?" he thought. "I'm alone in the darkness." He stopped in his tracks. Then, just as he was ready to take another step, he heard the voice again, sounding more urgent this time: "Peter, Peter!" At that moment, he was so terrified, so startled, that he went on his knees and began to crawl. When he reached out his hand there was no ground on which to put it on. He then realized the danger which he had been in, so he remained on his knees and thanked God for calling his name in the darkness.



That night, Peter Marshall, who would later immigrate to the United States and become the Chaplain of the Senate, had a sense that God had tapped him on the shoulder; that God had called his name.

There are times in life when God calls your name or my name. There are times when God intervenes miraculously to save your

life, my life. Our compassionate Saviour did that with my life. He intervened in my own life, telling me that there was a better way to spend my youth. I am so thankful to Jesus for giving me the opportunity to know Him and work in His vineyard, helping others to know Him as well. This life is too short to be spent without Jesus. We never know what might happen next and our life may come to an end. Can we be sure of tomorrow? Of course not. We do not know what will happen five minutes from now; that is why we should always be prepared for Jesus to come.

The story begins with the king's words, "Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me." Daniel 4:1–2 NKJV

This is Nebuchadnezzar's conversion story—his personal testimony. It is the story of how the heathen king was transformed by God's power and grace. It is as if Nebuchadnezzar says, "I have to speak, everybody else be silent, I have something to say. God transformed my life. He changed something in my heart, mind, and soul." The heathen king is glowing with God's grace. He is filled with God's goodness. The Lord knew Nebuchadnezzar's name and tapped him on the shoulder, just as He did with Peter Marshall.

If God can take a godless, heathen king and transform him and place peace in his heart, then there is hope for me, and there is hope for you. No matter how hopeless you feel at this moment, no matter how much you have disobeyed God and turned your back on Him, no matter how guilty you feel because of some sin you committed, if God can take a wicked, idolatrous, rebellious king like Nebuchadnezzar and transform his life, He can transform yours. If God can call his name, God can call your name. God can tap you on the shoulder in your darkest night and change your life also, my friend.

There is nothing more effective in winning a soul for Christ than your personal encounter with Jesus, your personal experience, and your personal testimony, as we see in the life of this heathen king. "How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation." Daniel 4:3. Every human being has a different and unique experience with Jesus. The person who was addicted to alcohol, but allowed Jesus to intervene in his life so his life was changed by the message received, like King Nebuchad-

nezzar, has something to say: "I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me."

Has God touched your heart in a certain way that you cannot keep silent? Has God worked a miracle in your life and you want to share it with somebody—maybe a family member, friend, workmate, schoolmate or with your church family? If God has done that in your life, then you cannot keep silent. The Samaritan woman at the well had an encounter with Jesus, and after that the whole city knew about it (John 4). Every story is different and it will be so wonderful in heaven when we share the uniqueness of our own experience of how God changed our life.

If everything in your life is so wonderful and going well—well with your job and financial issues, well with your family, well with your health—life can change in an instant. There is nothing wrong if all these things I mentioned are going well in someone's life. God wants that, but we should not think that if we serve God everything in our life *must* run well all the time. Life can change in an instant. It is very possible that everything can be going well in your life, then one night there is a telephone call and your life can be changed forever.

I remember in my youth, I grew up in a Christian home, having good moral principles taught by my parents; but I had the same feeling like Nebuchadnezzar. I said to myself that I am young, healthy, with many prospects before me; I can do whatever I want. Nobody can stop me. Regarding the Bible and what it had to say, I thought that it was not for me; I still had many years before me. This book is for older people. And suddenly God tapped me on my shoulder saying, "don't think like that, life is so fragile on this earth and you never know what can happen next." The first time I experienced death in my family, losing a person that I loved very much, was my Grandmother. Her death made me think about life on this earth and the importance of being reconciled to God while we are living in this body.

As I said before, life is so uncertain, unexpected things may come. Let us suppose that you come home one day, and there is a little note from your wife that says, "I am sorry, but for a long time I have been thinking about it. I have never said anything to you, but I am leaving." And that one day changes your life. Or you have been feeling a little weak and tired. You go for your annual checkup, and the doctor says, "you know that little lump that you felt? I'm sorry to have to tell you, but it's malignant, and it's metastasized, and you

don't have much time left." Life can have unexpected sharp turns. Life can change in an instant. Nothing is guaranteed on this earth.

When we read the story of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel chapter 4 we see how the king made the same mistake he did a few years before. What happens? The king is having another dream, but this time he remembers the dream and he wants to know the interpretation and its significance. Again he calls the elite of his kingdom and once again they prove themselves unworthy. "I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told them the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof." Daniel 4:5-7

In Daniel chapter 2 were they able to tell the king what he dreamed? Not at all. Now, if the king saw all of this, my question is, why is he calling them back to tell him the secrets of his dream, when they failed the first time? It does not make sense, but the Bible tells us in verse 8 first part; "But at the last Daniel came in before me." "At last." Do we sometimes do the same as Nebuchadnezzar, we worry about something that came up unexpectedly and we try to find our own solution, consulting our best friends in order to solve the problem, until finally, last of all, we get on our knees and pray? I am sure we have all made a similar experience. Oh, that we would help get on our knees and call upon God first. There is a God in heaven who longs to solve the problems of our hearts.

Nebuchadnezzar was in his palace. He had not acknowledged the God of the universe as King of his heart, and as a result, God gave him a wake-up call. One night he had this dream of the great tree. The tree grew large. The fowls of the air made their nests in the tree and the beasts of the earth were housed under the tree. As the

tree grew large, a decree came from Heaven saying to cut down the tree. The tree was chopped down, and only a stump remained, with a band of brass and iron. Now, Daniel is there, he is the man God uses to make known to the king that pride has a price. Just like sin has wages the same way pride has consequences in a person's life. "Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies." Daniel 4:19



Notice carefully, Daniel did not say to the king, "you are going to get yours now! You overthrew my city, Jerusalem, you took me captive and eventually you killed my parents and my people, now you have got what's coming to you, your kingdom will be chopped down—Hallelujah, praise the Lord, the heathen kingdom is going to fall, I can go home now." No, Daniel did not do



anything like this. His character shines when we see his reaction in that situation. Daniel knew that he could never influence the king unless he loved him. Daniel stands for us as a living example of what it

means to be treated unjustly. He was taken captive in his late teens, never to see his father again, never to see his mother again, never to marry the woman of his dreams, and here in a heathen kingdom God gives Daniel, once again, the interpretation of the king's dream. The beauty of Daniel's character is revealed in this story, as we see in his answer to the king. God never treats us as we deserve but He always treats us as He wishes us to be treated. God is love, and His character is perfect.

At times, God taps us on the shoulder. He taps us once, He taps us twice, and we continue walking away from Him, living careless lives, prayerless lives, godless lives, occupied by the things of this earth rather than the things of heaven. God loves you so much that He wants

you to learn lessons to help you get ready for heaven. When you were born into this world, God had a plan for your life, and through your life, as you make choices to be at harmony with God's will, God guides and directs you. His plan for your life is joy and happiness.

God gave time to Nebuchadnezzar to change but he did not initially change. One year after Daniel gave the interpretation to the king, we read, "At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" Daniel 4:29–30. Is that not a parallel of some of our lives? God tapped us on the shoulder and said, "Look, I'm giving you a chance." But have many, like Nebuchadnezzar, plunged ahead in a certain course of action that they knew in their heart was not in accordance with God's will? Nebuchadnezzar failed to heed God's warning, failed to listen to God's invitation to repentance, failed to accept God's loving instruction. He had turned his back on God's mercy, and he lost his throne in an instant.

This is what happens when we turn our back to God's invitation. The truth of the matter is that Nebuchadnezzar's story is your story. It is my story. It is the story of the human race. Nebuchadnezzar sat upon a throne in pride, in arrogance, in sin and rebellion against God. But the good news in this story is that just like the prodigal son when he says, "I will arise and go to my Father," Nebuchadnezzar said something similar after 7 times or 7 years of humiliation. "And at the end of the days I

Nebuchadnezzar lifted my eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation." Daniel 4:34. The Bible tells us that, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

Nebuchadnezzar was transformed as he looked up to heaven. Just like Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven, so can we. God can reach down and change us; He can make us pure, honest, and kind to one another. Would you like to say right now, "God I cannot change myself, I tried so many times like Nebuchadnezzar but I failed. Lord, would you please reach down and change my attitude that I might be the person You want me to be."

This is the story of a heathen king, transformed by Jesus. If this man was given the opportunity to be won for God's kingdom, you and I also have the same opportunity to be won for heaven by Jesus. The only question to be asked is, "will you acknowledge Jesus in your life?" May God grant us the power and will to say "Yes Lord, I will."

Nicholas Anca



"The youth especially stumble over this phrase, 'a new heart.' They do not know what it means. They look for a special change to take place in their feelings. This they term conversion. Over this error thousands have stumbled to ruin, not understanding the expression, 'Ye must be born again.'

"Satan leads people to think that because they have felt a rapture of feeling, they are converted. But their experience does not change. Their actions are the same as before. Their lives show no good fruit. They pray often and long, and are constantly referring to the feelings they had at such and such a time. But they do not live the new life. They are deceived. Their experience goes no deeper than feeling. They build upon the sand, and when adverse winds come, their house is swept away.

"When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—a changed life. There is a daily, hourly dying to selfishness and pride." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 1164–1165*

HEALTH MATTERS:

Cholesterol—The Good and the Bad

Most people, when they think of the term cholesterol, associate it with something bad, something dangerous to one's health. But, is this the case? What exactly is cholesterol and does it play a role in our health? For the next two health articles, we will learn about cholesterol, its function in our body, what happens if we have too much cholesterol, and how to control how much cholesterol we have in our body.

What is not commonly known is that cholesterol is not only good for us, but it is absolutely necessary for the proper functioning of our body. Cholesterol is a fat, a rigid, waxy substance, that is produced by every cell in our body. If our cells need extra cholesterol, beyond what they can make themselves, our liver is the primary place where cholesterol is made and is then transported to the cells. The liver produces 75 per cent of the cholesterol we need. We do not need cholesterol in our diet for our bodies to synthesize cholesterol. Our body actually monitors our cells, and if it senses that a cell does not have enough cholesterol, it will produce more. Your liver produces about 1,000 mg of cholesterol a day. However, the average diet adds another 300 to 500 mg of unnecessary cholesterol a day.

Cholesterol has four main functions. As to how it functions in our cells, think of cholesterol as a brick. You need bricks to build the structure of a house. Your cell walls use cholesterol as bricks, so that the cells have a three-dimensional structure. It is found in every single cell in our body. Cholesterol also protects and repairs cell walls so that they are appropriately permeable, allowing only what is needed to pass in and out of each and every cell in your body. Another function of cholesterol is that it makes up digestive bile acids in the intestine. Bile acids are essential for the absorption of fats, oils and fat-soluble vitamins (A, E, K) from the small intestine. Without bile acids, our bod-

ies would not be able to digest the fat from our food. Cholesterol also enables the body to manufacture sex and stress hormones, such as progesterone, estrogen, testosterone, and cortisol. Cholesterol is necessary to convert the Vitamin D we receive from the sun into the form of Vitamin D that our body can use.

So, what is the problem with cholesterol? At normal levels, it is an essential substance for the body's functioning, but if levels in the blood get too high, it causes many serious health problems. High cholesterol levels are considered a "silent" health risk. Unless blood cholesterol levels are checked via a blood test, often the first time one becomes aware of a high cholesterol level is because of a serious health event such as a heart attack.

All animals synthesize cholesterol; therefore when people eat an animal-based diet, they ingest unnecessary amounts of cholesterol, on top of what is synthesized from their own body. And, in fact, receiving too much cholesterol from animal-based foods is a significant cause of dangerous levels of cholesterol in our body.

When a blood test for cholesterol levels is done, levels of LDL and HDL are done at the same time. The levels of these other substances are just as relevant, if not more, than the actual amount of cholesterol in the body. So, what is the significance of these other substances? Because cholesterol is a fat, it cannot mix with blood, which is water-based. So, in order for it to travel through the blood, it must be attached to something that allows it to be water-soluble. It is therefore carried around the body in the blood by attaching to lipoproteins. A lipoprotein is a water-soluble protein that combines with and transports fat through the bloodstream. The two main types of lipoproteins are LDL (low-density lipoproteins) and HDL (high-density lipoproteins).

LDLs make up the majority of the cholesterol in the body. The main structural difference between LDL and HDL is their compositions. Approximately 50 percent of the weight of an LDL particle is cholesterol and only 25 percent is protein. High-density lipoprotein particles, on the other hand, consist of 20 percent cholesterol by weight and 50 percent protein. Since protein is more dense than fat, HDL particles are more dense than LDL particles, hence the names "high-density" and "low-density" lipoproteins.

Both lipoproteins are necessary for the transportation of cholesterol in the blood, but the main functional difference between the two is that they deliver cholesterol to different parts of your body. Low-density lipoproteins—the primary carriers of cholesterol—bring cholesterol to cells where needed throughout your body. High-density lipoproteins, on the other hand, carry excess cholesterol

away from your heart and other organs and deliver it back to your liver. For example, if your liver thinks the ovaries need more cholesterol to produce estrogen, the liver produces new cholesterol, bundles it with a protein in the form of an LDL and sends it into the bloodstream. To reclaim unused LDLs, your liver bundles cholesterol into HDLs, which pass through your body and collect stray LDLs. When these HDLs return to the liver, it recycles them or uses them to build bile acids. Excess LDLs can also be eliminated from the body through the liver.

So, what is the reason that LDLs are referred to as the "bad" cholesterol; whereas, HDLs are known as the "good" cholesterol? They are both necessary to our health. They both serve a function in our body, and we cannot live without the presence of both. If the levels of LDL and HDL remain at a healthy level, there is no problem.

However, ingestion of fatty foods can increase the amount of LDLs in our body. If the liver detects that there is an increase in cholesterol in the body, it will synthesize more LDL to transport this cholesterol. Also, certain types of fats, specifically saturated fats and trans fats, increase the manufacture of LDLs in the body, through a mechanism which is unknown. We will learn more about the influence of our diet on cholesterol levels next month.

If the body contains too much cholesterol in the form of LDLs, it can cause cholesterol to build up within your arteries, causing damage to the blood vessel walls. This is why LDL is commonly referred to as the "bad cholesterol." High-density lipoproteins (HDL) take the extra cholesterol from your blood vessels and cells and return it to your liver for repurposing or for removal from the body. That is why HDL is called the "good cholesterol."

If there are not enough HDLs to remove the excess LDLs from the body, there is more of a likelihood that plaque, a hardened mixture of cholesterol, fat, and other elements, will develop in the arteries. This buildup can eventually lead to arterial blockage and an increased risk for heart disease and stroke. Plaque build-up happens over time, and as you age, the risk of problems from plaque increases. Long before they can be called plaques, hints of cholesterol build-up can be found in the arteries. Even some adolescents have these "fatty streaks" of cholesterol in their artery walls. These streaks are early precursors of cholesterol plaques.

The disease known as atherosclerosis, where plaque build-up damages blood vessels, is caused by high cholesterol damaging the blood vessel walls, creating a place for cho-

lesterol to enter into the wall. LDL circulating in the blood accumulates in the blood vessel walls, and over the years, plaque formation occurs. Plaque can cause a narrowing and a hardening at the site of the blockages. Blood has much more difficulty making it through the damaged blood vessels. This damage often occurs in the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart. Often plaque can break loose from the blood vessel walls, and when this happens, the body will try to heal the damage caused by the break in the wall. The body does this by building a clot in the area of the damage. These clots, if they block a major blood vessel which supplies blood to the heart or to the brain can cause heart attacks and strokes. HDL's are vital in lowering the risk of heart attacks and strokes by ridding the blood vessels of excess LDLs.

High cholesterol can also create an imbalance of bile acids, leading to gallstones. More than 80 per cent of gallstones are cholesterol stones. High cholesterol can also interfere with blood flow to your arms and legs. Numbness and pain are a result of decreased blood flow. There

is also a greater risk of infection in these limbs. Lack of blood can eventually result in tissue death, a condition known as gangrene.

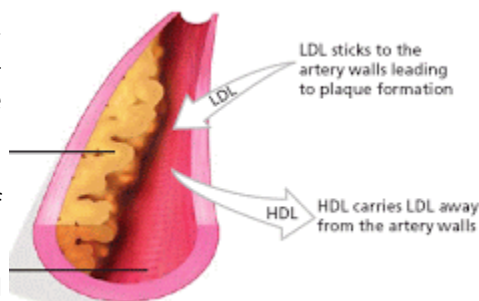
For these reasons, the levels of LDL and HDL are vital. For optimum health, the LDL concentration should be below a certain level, and the HDL level should

be higher than a certain level. In this scenario, there is less chance of a build-up of plaque (low LDL), and higher removal of excess cholesterol from the body (high HDL). Your doctor will let you know if the levels of LDL and HDL cholesterol you have are within healthy levels or whether they are abnormal.

Genetics can play a significant role in the levels of cholesterol in the body. Some people's bodies are better at self-regulation than others. If they consume too much cholesterol from their diet, their bodies will produce less cholesterol and their levels stay within normal limits. However, with other people who ingest too much cholesterol, their bodies do not slow down its own production of cholesterol, which leads to levels that can endanger health.

Cholesterol is both our friend and foe, hence the "good" and the "bad". At normal levels, it is an essential substance for the body's normal functioning, but if levels in the blood get too high, it becomes a silent danger that puts us at a higher risk of death from various diseases.

NEXT MONTH we will learn what can increase cholesterol levels in our body, and strategies that we can take to maintain the cholesterol in our bodies at a healthy level.



CHILDREN'S CORNER



The Broken Angel



Maggie liked watching big storms. So when the rain was really pouring down that night, she sat in the front room with the lights off and watched it safely in her house. Suddenly she saw a small figure walking into their cul-de-sac. It was a girl. She had no coat on and the rain was soaking her hair and dress completely. It was clear she was crying.

“Mommy come quick.” Maggie cried out and when mommy saw the poor girl, she rushed out onto the porch. Maggie came out with her and as she looked more closely, she suddenly recognized the girl. “Oh Mommy, its Angie!” Angie was Maggie’s best friend ever and they had been like sisters since kindergarten.

“Go get her Maggie.” Mommy said wisely knowing that if Angie was upset, seeing her dear friend first would be the best thing. She watched her daughter rush to the street and embrace her friend and then lead her back to the porch. As the girls approached, mommy went inside and got some blankets to dry Angie.

“I ran away Maggie. I am so cold.” Angie said as Maggie brought her to the house.

“Come in. You will get sick out here.” Maggie said in tears so afraid for her friend. Angie came in and quickly mommy and daddy were there drying her hair and warming her. Mommy gave her some of Maggie’s warmest things to wear for a while and daddy got some of the hot soup they had enjoyed at dinner and the whole family sat with her and made her feel safe and loved as she recovered. Angie just looked at Maggie’s mom and dad in amazement as she sipped her soup and finally the shivering stopped.

“Why don’t you two girls go to Maggie’s room and play so you can settle down.” Mommy said noticing that Angie wasn’t talking much with the adults around.

“Why did you run away?” Maggie asked right away when they were in her room.

“I was so afraid. My mom has a very expensive display of

glass angel statues. Well while they were out today, I took one down the play with it and I broke its wing. I think it was her favorite and I knew she would be so mad so I ran away. I was so upset, I didn’t know where else to go so I came to you.” Angie said crying again.

“I am so glad you came here Angie.” Maggie said hugging her friend.

“Your parents are so amazing. They didn’t act mad that I messed up their carpet or anything.

“Angie, parents are like that. Your mom and dad are too. Sure, they correct us. We need that. But your mom and dad love you no matter what.” Maggie explained.

“Angie, your mom is on the phone.” Maggie’s mommy called. Right away Angie got scared. Then Maggie’s mommy stepped into the room holding her hand over the speaker. “She is crying Angie. I told her you were safe but she wants to tell you how much she loves you.”

Maggie and her mom stepped out so she could take the call. Finally, she came out sniffing. She handed the phone to Maggie’s mom to talk to her parents and then turned to Maggie. “She said nothing in the world was more important than me and she wanted me home in my own room where I can be safe and with her and daddy.” Angie said looking confused.

When Maggie’s mom finished on the phone she sat down with the girls and helped Angie dry her tears. Maggie’s daddy came in and sat down too. “I don’t understand why my mommy isn’t really mad that I broke her angel.” She told Maggie’s parents.

“Angie, you have to understand something about parents.” Daddy said. “Your dad and mom love you no matter what. When they scold or try to teach you, that is part of love because they just want you to grow up to be all that God made you to be. But their love is unconditional. That means nothing you can do will make you deserve it and nothing bad you ever do will ever make them stop loving you.”

“But I don’t understand how they can do that” Angie said looking to Maggie’s dad for help.

"That's easy Angie." Mommy interrupted. "It's because that is how God loves us and how God loves you. God is your heavenly father and He made moms and dad just like Him. In fact, God loved you and me so much, He was willing to let Jesus die on the cross so we can always be in heaven with Him. Your mom and dad would die rather than see you hurt sweetie. That is the nature of God in them." She said holding Angie's hand.

"But I love them so much. I don't want them to die or get sick or get old or even be sad." Angie said emotionally.

"Then let's get you home to them and when you get

there, you hug them and tell them how much you love them." Daddy instructed her. "Then in the future if you do something wrong, you tell them right away and never ever run away again ok?"

"I promise." Angie said and then Maggie and her parents drove her home.

As she ran up to the door and hugged her mom and then her dad. Maggie said. "It's too bad about the broken angel."

But mommy just smiled and hugged Maggie as she watched. "It looks to me like the real little angel isn't broken any more and will never get broken again."

ASLEEP IN JESUS

As the sun rose on April 22, 1952, a beautiful Violet bloomed. Born to Edna Esoline Bailey and David Williams, a beautiful baby girl, in the District of Church Lincoln, Grange Hill, a parish of Westmoreland, Jamaica. She was the first of five children.

Violet Williams, affectionately called Junie by most who knew her, gave birth to four girls. Junie, being the caring person she was, wanted a better life for her four girls, thus immigrated to Canada in 1983. Her desire was not fully realized because of the various challenges that she encountered. She struggled a great deal, and worked very hard to provide for her family.

Violet was a very spiritual person and always sought to walk with the Lord. She loved to pray and worship God. She was always praying for the success of others. One of her favourite lines was "I'm giving God thanks when asked how she was doing, for my life."

Violet was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Then in 2013, after a chance meeting with some- one from the Reform Move- ment, she started receiving Bible studies from Br. Morris Lowe. She was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church Reform Movement on July 27, 2014. She is remembered as being very zealous in worshiping and praising God, as her life was a witness to this deep connection.

On August 15, she fell ill and was taken to the hospital. She continued to praise and thank God from her hospital bed. On August 16, in the early hours of the morning, she quietly passed from this life, in the arms of her best friend, Jesus.

"Death is not the extinguishing of a light, but the putting out of the lamp because the dawn is coming."





Drumbo's youth camp back in 2005 was the only youth camp I have ever remembered, and though other camps have taken place, there is one thing most of us can agree on: no previous youth camp had as much young people involved from so many different locations as the one that took place after the 2016 Canadian Field Conference. With about thirty people who attended, the majority young people, there was no reason to believe it was not going to be the camp of the year! Seven cars filled with people left Bloor Street Church on Sunday July 31st for a journey that would take approximately three hours up north. Our destination: Killbear Campsite. Though the name itself can cause shivers to run through the body (and signs reading: "Active bears on Campsite," and "Hit the brakes if snakes are crossing road"), we were ready for the three day adventure, far from the city lights. The sun had already gone down as we arrived, and rain welcomed us as we all struggled to put up our tents with the very little light coming from cellphones and flashlights. We all then came together, and as we ate a delicious soup around the fire, we listened to the youth leader inform us that we would be in different groups for the next few days. We knew this meant a lot of teamwork and points to gain. Each team chose a leader and the color that would represent them. With this thought in mind, some went to rest asking themselves, "What will we go through in order to win?"

The next day, we woke up to washrooms and showers out of service. Yes, this was starting to feel like real camping (not to mention the mosquito bites). However, we all found a way to wash up before morning worship and breakfast. A presentation was then lead out

by Brother Jason Climaco, who spoke about being children of the heavenly kingdom. We witness God's glory through the wonderful nature that surrounds us; nevertheless, God also wants to demonstrate His glory through each of us (Isaiah 43:7). The way He goes about doing this is through our relationship with ourselves, with others, and with God Himself. It is important that we improve in these three areas if we want to have God's glory, manifested through us.

After this we separated into our groups and faced our first challenge: to build a castle out of various colors of Play-dough; yes, you read correctly, PLAY-DOUGH. Now just imagine teenagers and young adults desperately trying to revive the child within themselves as they try to make the best play-dough castle ever! Well, that was us. Time was up, and as we looked around us to see each group's final product, smiles began to appear; it was obvious we all still had that creative child within. The day followed with a great lunch prepared by one of the teams (each team would prepare breakfast, lunch or dinner as part of the challenges as well), and activities like swimming at the beach, water football, and soccer on the warm beach sand took place. Our bodies had the physical exercise it needed; our minds were then prepared to receive the spiritual message at evening worship.



The second day was to be our busiest. During the morning, Pastor Pablo Hunger shared an important message about wearing the armour of God. As young people, we face many temptations and in order to be victorious in our spiritual battles against spiritual be-

ings, we must fight on a spiritual level wearing spiritual armour (Ephesians 6:10–18). We then had an activity which allowed us to relate the message to reality. All teams would make a circle, while a chosen team would be in the centre. The teams on the outside then took a light ball and had to try to hit each member inside the circle until everyone was out. Daily, Satan’s snares bombard us, this gives us more of a reason to be a help to our fellowmen and not to be an obstacle.

For the rest of that day, each group had nineteen challenges to be complete by the end of the day. Just to mention some examples: taking pictures with things mentioned in specific Bible verses given, acting out different Bible stories while recording it, finding a real animal’s footprint, climbing trees, taking a picture with the Youth Department’s logo (this must have been the hardest challenge of all!), etc. it may sound very easy to do, but these were real challenges! With so little time and so much to do, teams had to stick together in order to get all these activities done. However, before having to go through the rush, everyone went on a pleasant walk through one of the campsite’s trails. Unfortunately we did not get a chance to see a bear; however, we were able to appreciate the presence of a mother deer with her fawn from a distance. In addition, though not so cute, it was interesting to see a few garden snakes as well. At the end of the day, after having heard a spiritual message, we had a great laugh, seeing the results of each group’s completed photos and videos. Though one group stood out as the winning group, we all had a great time working as a team through each challenge.

Our last day at Killbear arrived, and I still wondered if there would still be a chance to see a bear. After morning worship and breakfast we still felt the team spirit as we helped bring down the tents and clean up the place. Our last activity was an hour away at Six Miles Lake where we had the opportunity to go canoeing and swim for the last time. Certainly, we had a wonderful time, even those whose canoe flipped over. We all then said our goodbyes, as some returned to the USA and the rest to other parts of Canada. As I look back now, it feels like it was all a dream. However, one thing does stay impressed on my mind vividly: Sometimes we forget that in order to win, we must work together, be compassionate even to those not on our team, and do the best we can do. We are all in the same boat, some stronger than others, but the truth is, we are all in the same fight, struggling many times against Satan’s snares. Do we not all need someone to lift us up occasionally, and do we not have someone to lift up? No one said it better than the once wisest king ever to live, Solomon: “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:9–12. On our Christian journey, there is no winning without having helped others get to the finish line as well. Amen.

Veronica Garcia

(more photos next page)



Meal Time



Spiritual Time



Congo



Above: Seminar in Bukavu, August 28, 2016



Right: Visitors and members following baptism in East Masisi



**Monze
Camp
Meeting,
Zambia**



Ghana



Sweden

The Whisper of the Twilight

Sweet the quiet calm of evening
When the spirit seeks repose,
And a gentle hush is weaving
Holy thoughts at daylight's close.

'Mid the crowded morning duties
Urged by noontide's hurried feet,
Oft we miss the sunny beauties
And the floral odours sweet.

As the twilight low descending
Steals the fret from every brow,
Swift the wings of night are lending
Upward flight to praises now.

God benign bestowed the sunlight,
Gave its work of rainbow hue;
But the whisper of the twilight
Is His tranquil, blest adieu

To the labours and the wrestling,
To the hurried, anxious strides;
Then my wearied spirit nestling
'Neath the wing of peace abides.

Worthie Harris Holden

