

A tropical landscape featuring a calm pond in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding dense greenery and palm trees. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

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

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Maranatha !

The secret rapture ?



Many honest Christians believe that Christ is going to come back to this earth in two ways—one being in secret, the other visible. The former will be silent in which Christ comes to secretly rapture, or remove, His followers from earth before the great time of trouble and tribulation occurs. Then after several years, the visible and literal appearing of Christ will take place in which those who were not ready during the time of the secret rapture will have a second chance to make themselves ready throughout the tribulation, after which Christ will come to save them. There are many Bible texts regarding the second coming of Christ. But do any of these refer to a silent or secret return, or do they all speak about the same visible glorious event? Let us find out what the unerring Scriptures really teach.

How will Jesus appear in the clouds of heaven?

The apostle Paul reveals that the coming of Christ to this earth will be as follows:

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”¹ Thessalonians 4:16–17; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52. Paul declared that when Christ should come, there would be a shout; a voice; a trumpet. The righteous dead would be resurrected, and along with the righteous living, would be caught up from the earth to meet the Lord in the clouds, never to part again.

The apostle John reveals that the coming of Jesus to this earth will be as follows: “Behold, He cometh with

clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.” Revelation 1:7. John declared that when Christ should come, it would be with clouds, and every eye on the earth would miraculously see Him, and all the kindreds of the earth who have rejected Him would wail.

The patriarch David reveals that the coming of Jesus to this earth will be as follows: “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.” Psalms 50:3–5. David declared that when Christ should come, it would not be in silence, but would be a time of judgment, with fire burning up and devouring those judged unworthy; and God would gather His saints from the earth to be with Him—being those who have sacrificed all to follow Him.

The prophet Jeremiah reveals that the coming of the Lord to this earth will be not in secret. He declared that when Christ comes, He will mightily utter His voice; a shout will be given; it will be noisy throughout the earth; the Lord will take the righteous to heaven, and all the wicked will be slain (Jeremiah 25:30–31, 33).

And Christ Himself reveals what His coming to this earth will be like: “Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.... And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heav-

en: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:26–27, 30–31. This is an amazing, powerful promise by Jesus Himself. The event of his coming will rivet the people’s attention all over the world. Christ declared that when He returns the second time, it would be with a sign; all people on the earth would see Him coming in the clouds of heaven and with power and great glory; the great majority of all the people of the earth would not be happy, but would mourn; there would be a great sound of a trumpet; and God would gather His obedient elect to Himself from every part of the world.

All of the above Scriptures are in complete harmony with each other regarding what it will be like when Christ comes back to this earth in the last days. Signs will occur just prior to His arrival. Every eye on the earth, every person of every nation and tribe will see Him return in power and great glory; there will be great noise, a shout, a heavenly voice, and a great loud trumpet will sound. The righteous dead will be resurrected from their graves, and together with the living righteous will be caught up into the air to meet their Lord in the clouds, because they chose to sacrifice all to follow and obey God. While all the rest of the earth’s inhabitants the Lord “shall destroy with the brightness of His coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8) because they chose not to obey Him. They were wicked and thus judged unworthy of everlasting life.

As you can clearly see, the Scriptures declare that there is definitely nothing silent when our Lord returns to this earth, because it will be with great noise, shouting, and a great trumpet blowing. And the unerring Scriptures also declare that there is definitely nothing secret when



Christ returns either, because every person on this earth will see Him in the clouds of the air, and will either be taken to heaven to forever be with the Lord, or will be destroyed. Thus the doctrine of a silent or secret rapture is nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, because when Christ returns it will be visible for all to see!

Since the Scriptures do not teach there will be a secret rapture, where did this doctrine and belief come from? This doctrine came from a Presbyterian woman while she was in a trance! “The idea of a two stage coming of Christ (one secret and the other visible) first came to a Scottish lass, Miss Margaret MacDonald of Port Glasgow, Scotland, while she was in a ‘prophetic’ trance.” – M.L. Moser, *An Apologetic of Premillennialism*, p. 28. So the doctrine of the secret rapture has no foundation in the word of God, but derives its origin from a mystic trance! Though, many Christian do believe that.

“You will find men who talk of a second probation, comforting themselves with the thought that if they are not overcomers in this probationary time, they will in a future probation secure a preparation for heaven. But the Lord has no future probation for any soul that lives. Those who do not appreciate this present probation will have no second trial. Those who in this *life pursue a course which will close against them the gates of the city of God, need not flatter themselves that the Lord will give them another opportunity to prepare to meet Him. No, no, no!*” – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 398

“There is not a second probation for anyone. Now is probationary time, before the angel shall fold her golden wings, the angel of mercy, and shall step down from the throne, and mercy, mercy is gone forever. (Manuscript 49, 1894).” – *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 989

But as “a thief in the night”!

But what about those Scriptures which declare that the Lord will come as “a thief in the night;” surely this backs up the belief in a secret rapture? But the apostle Peter tells us:

“. . .the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word [of God] are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . . The Lord is. . . longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:7, 9–10

Peter declared, in harmony with the rest of Scripture, that when Christ returns it would be with great noise, and fervent heat which melts and burns up the earth. There is definitely nothing silent or secret about this! It should then be obvious that the phrase of Christ coming “as a thief in the night” does not have reference to a secret rapture, but to individuals being surprised, caught unprepared, and who are not ready for their Lord's return.

But what about those Scriptures which talk of one being taken and the other being left behind (see Matthew 24:37–41); surely this backs up the belief in a secret rapture? However, in reality, two people may appear similar outwardly, but the Lord reads the heart. “For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7. In this Scripture, Christ was drawing a parallel between the time of His coming versus the time of Noah and the flood—and there certainly was nothing secret about the flood! Those who entered the ark were saved, while those who refused to follow God's direction for salvation were left outside. But what were they left for? For another chance of salvation? NO! They were left for destruction!

But what about the belief that Christ would rapture all of His people off the earth before the time of trouble, tribulation, persecution, and the working of Satan with lying wonders? The prophet Daniel declared that “there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was. . . and at that time Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1

The apostle John declared that God's righteous people who were living when Christ returned to earth would be those “which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes [characters], and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:14

And the apostle Paul revealed the timing when the coming of Christ to this earth would take place:

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even Him [Christ] whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong

delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8–12

So Daniel, John, and Paul plainly declare that the coming of Christ and the deliverance of God's faithful saints cannot take place until after the great tribulation, after the time of trouble, and after the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders. These deceive all who live in unrighteousness because they do not love and follow the truth, and all these would be destroyed with the brightness of His coming. In fact, Christ Himself prayed that His Father would not take His people “out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” John 17:15

Since there is no time in which a silent or secret rapture of God's people from this earth will take place, then there is no second chance for salvation!

“...To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts...” Hebrews 3:15. “...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Corinthians 6:2

“Every day the probation of some is closing. Every hour some are passing beyond the reach of mercy.” –Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 140

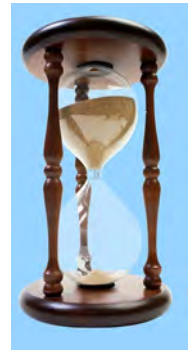
May we understand that “salvation is far from the wicked” (Psalms 119:155), because they do not do God's will nor keep His commandments, and thus they continue to commit sin (1 John 3:3–10). Let us instead make sure that we are prepared now for our Saviour's return, so that His coming does not “overtake” or catch any of us unprepared as “a thief in the night” and we be lost. May we be diligent to make our

“calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10). Jesus will soon come. Let us therefore redeem every opportunity which the Lord in His mercy imparts to us to work for Him. Let us not do as did this man, who let twenty years pass and then begin again to work for the Lord. Your neighbour, friend or colleague who lives and dwells with you—everyone needs to hear the message of reconciliation, to be reconciled with God. It creates peace, joy, shelter, and fulfillment. Do you want to become an “ambassador for Christ”? Make your decision today. Ask the Lord Jesus for strength, and then go out with a loving heart to tell the people the last, wonderful message of mercy: “We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.” Thus a people will be gathered which can joyfully look forward to the return of Jesus and meet Him in peace. Are you prepared? “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. . . . And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” Mark 13:33, 37. Amen.

Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo



Do Not Waste Time



“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 has He given will He require a more strict account than of our time. The value of time is beyond computation.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 342

Every day of our life has a purpose. God has made plans for every minute of each day for the purpose of perfecting our character. If we accept the plan that God has made for us, through His help, we will change into greater holiness, greater meekness, and we will have a greater missionary spirit. Through a moment by moment connection with Christ, when He returns, we will have reached the perfection Jesus spoke of when He said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48

Will this spiritual growth happen naturally? No, nothing happens without great effort on our part. When we do everything humanly possible, then God gives His power to us. Only then will we see great spiritual growth every day. We will have greater love to God and to our neighbours; make greater sacrifices, pray more, and be more patient. We will then have fullness of joy and happiness and need nothing from the world to satisfy us; no entertainment or pleasure that the world enjoys.

We need a clear understanding of perfection—things that we must learn, and into whose image we must change. We must reflect Jesus’ image fully, not 99 percent. We need to meditate on the life of Jesus day and night, and put out our supreme effort with God’s help to become like Christ.

To keep a clear picture of Christ in our minds we need to read the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy books every day. We must compare our life to the life of Jesus. Every evening, examine the past day and see if your life was reflecting the life of Jesus. “Jesus came in personal contact with men. He did not stand aloof and apart from those who needed His help. He entered the homes of men, comforted the mourner, healed the sick, aroused the careless, and went about doing good. And if we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must do

as He did. We must give men the same kind of help that He did.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 53

In order to live such a life, we must “pray without ceasing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17. “No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 530. Jesus said, “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:36

It can happen that we forget to pray constantly, and forget about Jesus and His sacrifice. We may forget the purpose of the day, and so the day becomes a wasted day. We did not advance towards perfection. Several wasted days will make us forget the purpose of time, and we fall into Laodicean lukewarmness. Eternal interests are forgotten, and we make Satan happy. For this reason, most professing Christians will be lost.

If days and years go by without spiritual advancement, our judgement day will come and find us wanting. If we do not reflect the image of Jesus fully, our names will be removed from the Book of Life.

Now, today, what do we need to do? “I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God’s approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look would settle upon them. . . .

“Some I saw did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones.” —*Early Writings*, p. 269–270

Our sealing time is near, and we should put every effort into preparing for it, otherwise we will not receive the seal of God in our foreheads. “Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without

a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God . . .

“I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” –*Ibid.*, p. 71

The Lord has provided enough time in each person’s life to reach this perfection of character. As we yield our will to the Lord, and work in cooperation with Him, when He returns our characters will have reached the required the heavenly standard.

The question arises, how do we spend this time? Many think that they are good Christians, ready for heaven; they keep the Sabbath, pay their tithes, and they are vegetarians. This, however is not enough. The Pharisees did this. “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Luke 18:11–12. But, Jesus said to them., “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” John 8:44. Today we have Pharisees who are satisfied with themselves and say, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” Revelation 3:17

This Laodicean lukewarmness is very common among Christians. They work for eight hours, then come home and prepare their food, and do their shopping. Finally, before going to bed, they say a short prayer. But did they pray all day without ceasing? Did they meditate on the life of Jesus? They did not advance in their Christian life. In fact, they have backslidden. These are wasted days, and eventually the whole life becomes wasted, and then they realize, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” Jeremiah 8:20. Too late, too late, these are terrible words to hear.

“We should fear to rob Him of the time He claims from us; we should fear to spend it in idleness or in the adornment of the body, appropriating to foolish purposes the precious hours God has given us to be devoted to prayer, to becoming conversant with our Bibles, and to laboring for the good of our fellow beings, thus fitting ourselves and them for the great work devolving upon us.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 72

“We have a great work to do. Let us not pass in idleness the precious hours that God has given us in which to perfect characters for heaven. We must not be inactive or slothful in this work, for we have not a moment to spend without a purpose or object.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 540

We sing in our hymn, “Work for the night is coming, when man’s work is done.” How many are neglecting the work that God has given them to do, and so they stop growing spiritu-

ally, and start backsliding? We need to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” Philippians 2:12. Then Jesus will, “Make you perfect in every good work to do His will.” Hebrews 13:21. “It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Our precious Saviour invites us to join ourselves to Him, to unite our weakness to His strength, our ignorance to His wisdom, our unworthiness to His merits. God’s providence is the school in which we are to learn the meekness and lowliness of Jesus. The Lord is ever setting before us, not the way we would choose, which seems easier and pleasanter to us, but the true aims of life. It rests with us to co-operate with the agencies which Heaven employs, in the work of conforming our characters to the divine model. None can neglect or defer this work but at the most fearful peril to their souls.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 623

Every day our character must grow towards perfection. This can be done only by constant prayer, meditating on the life of Jesus, participating in missionary work, and daily Bible reading.

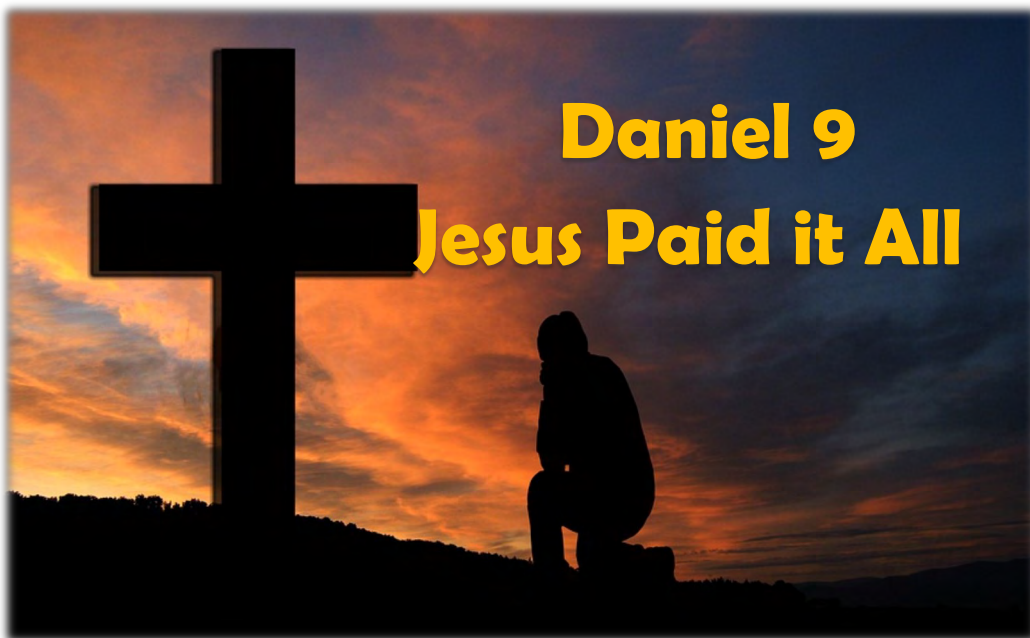
“Who knows whether God will not give you up to the deceptions you love? Who knows but that the preachers who are faithful, firm, and true may be the last who shall offer the gospel of peace to our unthankful churches? It may be that the destroyers are already training under the hand of Satan and only wait the departure of a few more standard-bearers to take their places, and with the voice of the false prophet, cry, ‘peace, peace,’ when the Lord hath not spoken peace. I seldom weep, but now I find my eyes blinded with tears; they are falling upon my paper as I write. It may be that ere-long all prophesyings among us will be at an end, and the voice which has stirred the people may no longer disturb their carnal slumber.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 77

This testimony was written to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on June 20, 1882 as a warning. This warning was not accepted nor put to practice; therefore, 32 years later, a great apostasy took place. We, as the Reform Church, must take these counsels seriously and prepare ourselves for the great test that will come upon us in the Sunday Law.

Is heaven worth all this effort? I would say, yes. I have seen heaven in my dreams, and it made me homesick for it. Any effort, even sacrificing our lives is very little compared to the glory of heaven and eternal life, thus avoiding hell fire. “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Luke 13:24

If you do all what Jesus asks you to do, and what He did in sacrificing His life for you, you will have fullness of joy—that the world cannot give you, with all of its entertainments. Without this fullness of joy we are not ready for our judgment. Let us put out a serious effort to reach the character perfection that is required. Amen.

Timo Martin



Daniel 9

Jesus Paid it All

God has been so gracious to His people for giving them the sure word of prophecy; for giving them His word as so plainly explained in the book of Daniel. Before we begin our study into Daniel chapter 9 let us review what we have learned so far. In the previous article we read that Daniel had been left with some unanswered questions regarding the prophecy that was revealed to him in chapter 8. Daniel is even quick sick because he just cannot understand or comprehend what has been told him in relation to the 2300 days (or prophetic years) and how it correlates with the 70 years' prophecy in Jeremiah 25. Here we find Daniel thinking in this context. He is currently a captive in Babylon and is anticipating that in his time, shortly, there will be deliverance for his people and a reestablishment of the Temple in Jerusalem. He was thinking in the context of how the 2300 years' prophecy fits. That is why Daniel became ill for few days. He was unable correlate the connection between the 2300 days (years) and the 70 years. Since the prophesy belongs to the time of the end, it cannot be literal days, but the Bible gives us the answer. One day in Biblical prophecy equates to one year in literal time. (see Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6). The Angel Gabriel told Daniel specifically that "The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days." Daniel 8:26. Although the angel tells Daniel it was for the time of the end, he still did not understand it. He is still thinking in the immediate historic context of his days, but the angel said, "no, Daniel, this vision is about the future."

In Daniel 9, which was written in the first year of Darius, Daniel begins to pray. He wanted to know about the deliverance of his people. "In the first year of Darius the

son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." Daniel 9:1–2. Since the Medes and Persians overthrew the Chaldeans, or Babylonians, in 538 BC and if this is the first year of Darius, this must be then in the year 538 BC. Daniel was taken captive in

605 B.C. when he was 17 years old. Therefore, Daniel is an old man at this point in time, in his 80s, and he is coming to the end of his life. And so we find him searching the Scriptures of the Old Testament for the fulfilment of the 70 years' prophecy regarding the captivity of God's people.

Daniel knew that God keeps His word and he was looking for deliverance. He then begins to fast and pray, making requests and supplications to God. He recounts the sins of Israel, acknowledging that the result of their captivity was due to their sin. "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth." Daniel 9:13. The law of God simply states that when any individual, any family, or any nation, knowingly and willingly turns their back on God, they forfeit God's divine blessing and God's divine favour. As a result, God's protective hand is withdrawn, and their lives face a heartache, sorrow, and disaster that they would not have faced had they not entertained that rebellious attitude.

Prayer is powerful and when we pray Satan and his hosts tremble. It is vital for us to understand that Satan is trying to do everything he can to stop us from praying, from supplicating, from connecting with God. Daniel, in chapter 9, is supplicating to God and he begins by confessing his sins and the sins of



God's people, Israel; he is before the Lord in a humble state seeking forgiveness and understanding. As Daniel prays the angel Gabriel interrupts in the midst of the prayer. "And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." Daniel 9:20–22. Gabriel therefore started at the place where Daniel fainted. He could no longer receive instructions or yet understand the remainder of the vision, and so for Gabriel to fully complete his mission he had to start at the point where he left off—the 2300 days, as found in verse 14 of Daniel 8. "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

This prophecy is the foundation of Christianity. It is about the first coming of the Messiah when He gave His life for humanity, and for the time of the end. The explanation is found in Daniel 9:24–27. While the previous parts of the vision in Daniel 8 featured beasts and a kingdom, this final part of the vision revealed a period of time, and so he opened the explanation of this prophetic period of time starting with Daniel's people—the Jews. Verse 24 reads: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."

This is truly an amazing prophecy. Gabriel explains that this section of the vision is "determined". In the original Hebrew, what does the word determined mean? The Old Testament book of Daniel was written in Aramaic and Hebrew, and the Hebrew word, "chathak (khawthak)" has been translated "determined." A literal translation of this word means "to cut off or separate from."

We are now therefore to take it to mean that 70 weeks are cut off from the period in question—the 2300 days (years).

The first part of this prophecy about the Messiah and the judgement reveals Jesus as the Messiah. God gave a 70-week time period for the nation of Israel to repent of its apostasy, during which time Jesus would come to the world as the long-awaited Messiah. In prophetic

symbolism, a day represents a year as mentioned earlier. This principle is validated by numerous prophecies. It would be impossible for the events of Daniel 9 to apply to a literal 490 days. The 70 weeks (490 days) represent 490 literal years.

The starting point of this prophecy was a command allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." Daniel 9:25. This decree, found in Ezra 7:11–26, was made by King Artaxerxes in the seventieth year of his reign, in 457 BC. Daniel was told that the Messiah would come after 69 weeks. Since the command was given in 457 BC, therefore 69 weeks (483 literal years) brings us to the year AD 27 (when calculating this, remember there is no year 0, so we must add a year). According to this prophecy, the Messiah would appear in AD 27. The word Messiah means, "The Anointed One."

In that exact year (AD 27), Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was baptized in the Jordan River and He was anointed by the Holy Spirit (see Acts 10:37–38). He then began His public ministry as the Messiah. Jesus Himself confirmed it when He was at the beginning of His ministry, stating, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." Mark 1:15. Daniel predicted hundreds of years in advance the exact year for the baptism of Christ. Luke 3:1 says that Jesus' baptism took place in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, which history places at AD 27. The Messiah, Jesus Christ, came at the correct time as prophesied—in the year AD 27! The Bible is accurate and gives us confidence in God's word. This beautiful prophecy is revealed in such a way that there is no doubt about Jesus being the Messiah that was prophesied already in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:15. Jesus was announcing that He was the Messiah, but what was predicted to happen to the Messiah?

The answer is found in the last subdivision—the final seven days (seven years) of the 70 weeks (or 490 years) that was allotted to the Jesus. We read, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the

oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Daniel 9:26–27. Here the Angel Gabriel explains when Jesus would die for the sins of the world.

In the middle of the week something would happen. Gabriel stated further that “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.” Daniel 9:27. Christ’s ministry after He was baptized lasted three and one half years (half of the prophetic week). His life was cut off but not for Himself—He atoned for the sins of the whole world. Christ was crucified in AD 31, three and one half years into prophesied seven years.

When Jesus died, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” Mark 15:38. This indicated that the sacrificial system was now finished, because Jesus—the true Lamb—had died for the sins of the world. In the temple service, the Passover lamb was sacrificed once a year on a specific day at a specific time (the afternoon of the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan). Jesus was dying on the cross as the priests were preparing to kill the Passover lamb. On that dark afternoon, prophecy was fulfilled as “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” 1 Corinthians 5:7. The time prophecy demonstrates that the Bible can be trusted and that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah of Bible prophecy!

The prophecy however stated that He would confirm the covenant with many for one week. The remaining three and one half years was completed by the disciples as they continued the work in Jerusalem with the Jews.

After being baptized by John and anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah in AD 27, Jesus instructed His disciples to focus on preaching to the Jewish people. He

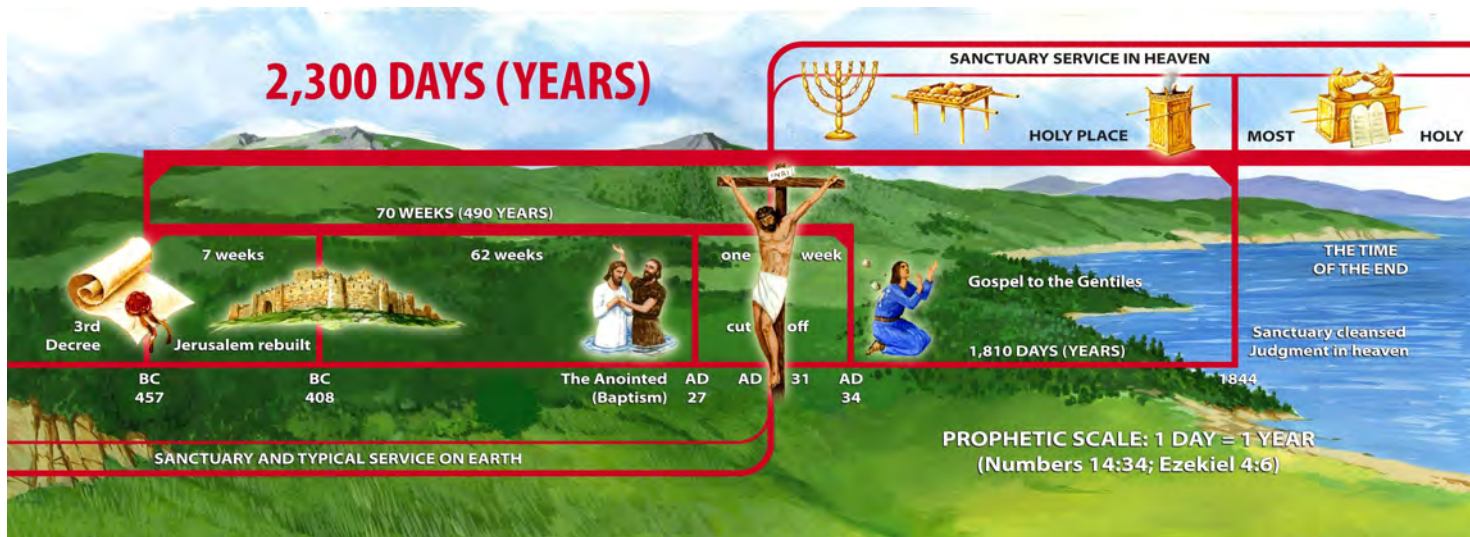
longed for the Jewish nation to accept and present Him as the Messiah to the whole world. Even after His death, Jesus told His disciples to begin their ministry at Jerusalem. There was still time for them to repent of their sin in rejecting the true Messiah. Jesus loved the people of Jerusalem. He knew the prophecy of Daniel 9, and He passionately warned them about refusing to accept the gift of salvation.

Exactly three and one half years after Jesus’ death, in AD 34 at the stoning of Stephen, a devout leader within the new faith, the remaining three and one half years was completed—thus fulfilling the 70th week. Jesus declared that the great promise of a glorious future would be taken away from the Jews and given to another people. The Jews’ 490 years were determined exactly as prophesied—the sacrificial system was now concluded.

When Stephen was stoned by the Jewish religious leaders, he became the first Christian martyr. The blessings of the Gospel were now to be extended to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Israel was no longer God’s chosen nation.

What a pity; the Bible tells us that Jesus “came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” John 1:11. Could it be that at the end of time His own people today would also receive Him not? History reveals that it can happen again. Do not let it happen to you, but make sure you are acquainted with Jesus the true Messiah. Make sure you have received Him now as your personal Saviour, so that you will be glorified with Him.

Today, all who accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour are considered to be a part of spiritual Israel. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. Paul wrote, “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that cir-



cumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Romans 2:28–29

The first 490 years of the 2300-year prophecy was about the Jews, and that portion ended in A.D. 34. The last part of the 2300 years have to do with God’s people today—with you and me, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, and the second coming of Christ. The Lord combined an event we can see—the first coming of Christ—with an event we have not seen as it is future still, the second coming of Christ. If the events came true during the first part of the prophecy, the events will most certainly come true during the second part of this prophecy.

Leviticus 23:27, 30, tells us how the Day of Atonement was observed in Ancient Israel. In that day only the high priest was called to perform a specific task that took place once a year. As animal sacrifices were offered each day, the priest took some of the blood of the sacrifices and sprinkled it inside the Holy Place of the sanctuary. This service symbolized the transfer of sin from the animal into the sanctuary. But on one day each year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place into the very presence of God and His Law. The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, was a day set aside to ensure complete harmony between God and man. To atone means to restore, “at-one”-ness with God. The purpose was to cleanse both the sanctuary and the sinner. The record of sin left by the sacrificial blood had built up in the sanctuary throughout the year. On the Day of Atonement these sins were symbolically “blotted out” and the sanctuary was cleansed of sin. This was a day of judgment and the people of Israel would afflict their souls by making sure there were no specific sins left unconfessed or unfor-saken. On this day those who refused to confess their sins were judged guilty and cut off from God’s people (“For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.” Leviticus 23:29).

Now, the question is; how will the heavenly sanctuary be cleansed? “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Hebrews 9:23. This refers to Jesus’ blood. Jesus entered into the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood to intercede for us.

The cleansing of the Sanctuary referred to by Daniel does not involve an earthly sanctuary. The Jewish tem-

ple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans and has never been rebuilt. The events and symbols of the earthly sanctuary point to Jesus and the sanctuary in heaven. The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is the removal of the record of our sins from the books of heaven (“the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:10); sinners are forgiven when they repent of their sins, and even the very record of our sins is blotted out in God’s judgement. What good news, brothers and sisters, dear friends; now is the time to make your salvation sure by letting Jesus cleanse you and prepare you for His Second Coming.

The starting date of the 2300 days (years) as we have seen was a command given by Artaxerxes allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city; this command was issued in the year 457 BC. Continuing 2,300 years from 457 BC brings us to the year 1844 AD, the starting date of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, or antitypical Day of Atonement. In 1844 Jesus began the work of judgement in heaven. According to the Bible we are now living in heaven’s judgment hour! Living at this time in earth’s history is a very solemn time. God’s judgement is now in session; therefore, we can confidently worship God knowing that as we yield our lives fully to Jesus Christ, we have a High Priest in heaven who is advocating for us. “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:24

Three very important things to remember:

- 1) Since 1844, we have been living in the time of heaven’s Judgment.
- 2) Jesus is both our Advocate and Friend.
- 3) Now is the time to accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

In earth’s final hour, God invites men and women to come to Him. In the last days of earth’s history, the call of the judgment hour is a call to a deeper study of the Bible. The call of the judgment hour is a call to faithfulness to Christ. The call of the judgment hour is that Jesus is our only Saviour. Jesus is our only Priest. The call of the judgment hour is a call to the backsliding ones to return to the obedience that God asks for in His Word. Time is running out. Is there anything in your life that is not in harmony with His will, anything in your life that separates you from Him? Do you spend time with His Word? Are you willing to commit your life to Jesus today? Amen!

Nicholas Anca

Led by God



I am about to take you through my life story on how I encountered our Lord Jesus Christ. My name before I met Christ was **Ebrima Jaiteh**; after I met Christ He changed my name to **Ebrima John Jaiteh**, as He changed the name of Jacob to Israel (Genesis 32:28). I was born and brought up as a Muslim. My father was an Islamic scholar who traveled from the West African nation, The Gambia, to different parts of the world to preach and convert many to Islam in the 1980's. In 1984 he met my mother in Ghana and he was able to convert her and most of her family members. They got married and God blessed them with four boys. I have three siblings—two elder brothers, and a younger brother. I was born on April 4th 1993 in Ghana. In the year 2000 my father decided to come back to The Gambia, his homeland, for a visit. We accompanied him. After three months he died, but before he gave up the ghost, he held my hands together with my mother and said “among my four sons, Ebrima you are the chosen one to continue from where I have stopped.” I was only 7 years old. I knew nothing about what he was saying. At that time we remained in The Gambia. After a few months, I was taken to a place called Kiyang where I was going to learn the Quran. Five years had passed and I was still learning the Quran and its secrets. In 2005, my mother deemed it necessary for me to learn the English language since it is the official language in my country, The Gambia. So I was sent to a school where I could learn the English language.

In the year 2009, on one Sunday morning around 9 am as I was in my room sleeping, I heard a distorted noise from the Pentecostal church around my area. They were

making so much noise that one could not detect the kinds of instruments they were playing. Because of that horrible noise I was unable to sleep, so I got up from the bed furiously. I came out and saw some little boys playing outside my compound gate. I ask them to bring me some stones from the wayside. They did exactly as I told them to do, and I then asked them to join me in throwing stones at the church so they would stop playing and making noise in the area. Before then, the complaint had gone around the area that the church normally disturbs the neighbourhood on Sundays. All the Muslims in the area were waiting for an opportunity to present itself—somebody bold enough to start a fight with the church. I became that person; so when I starting throwing stones, I threw them with confidence, knowing that my Muslim brothers would support me in case the Christians wanted to fight back. I also had this confidence that I was doing the will of Allah. The Quran says, if anyone disbelieves in Muhammad the prophet of Allah they are an infidel. To me, I was doing the service of Allah with not one iota of doubt.

We kept on throwing the stones until some of their expensive window panes were broken. Some of the church members and youth in the church came out. I stood my ground, waiting for the worst to happen. As they drew near, the pastor of the church came out (pastor Steven), and said to the church members with a loud and a compassionate voice, “do not touch that boy, leave him alone, you do not know the amount of grace he is carrying, he is a donkey for our Lord!” The pastor then ushered the members back into the church. I became

spooked, speechless, and felt guilty of myself. I expected a fight but instead I got forgiveness and mercy.

However, that evening, as I was seated in my house, taking respite for the day, suddenly I saw Pastor Steven walking majestically towards me with his Bible in his hands. I began to wonder what he wanted from me. At first I thought perhaps he was coming to warn me not to repeat what I had done that morning, but instead, he open his Bible to John 3:16 and started reading, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son. . ." Before he could complete the verse I became angry and felt insulted by his words, so I punched him in the face, saying to myself, how could he insult my God? I quoted to him from the **Quran chapter 17 surat I-isra (the night journey) saying "praise to Allah, who has not begotten a son and has no partner in dominion and has no protector out of weakness; and glorify Him with glorification."** When I finished reciting, I sent him out of my house, and he left in pain, but without saying a word.

After one week, Pastor Steven came back to me with the same message. I had just come in from playing football when I saw him entering my compound with his Bible again. I was standing at my door with a glass of water. He greeted me with a cheerful smile, and I asked him what he wanted. He opened his Bible again to John 3:16 reading, "For God so loved the world. . ." This time, I poured the glass of water on him and sent him out again. I warned him never to come back, otherwise I would kill him and go to heaven straight. I had a belief from my Quranic School that if I kill a non-believer, I am guaranteed heaven. It is like a free ticket to heaven.

Exactly five days later the pastor came back to my house again with the same old story. This time I was fed up, tired of him coming and going. So I decided to now listen to him so he would leave me in peace. I gave him a seat, and allowed him to say whatever he wanted to say. After reading John 3:16 and sharing a few words that I could not even remember, because all I wanted was for him to just do his business quickly and leave my house before my family met him. When he finished his sermon for that day, I requested a copy of a Bible. The reason I wanted that copy was not for me to become a Christian. I already had my plans and motives in place, which was to collect the Bible, read it, and use it to convert Christians into Islam as my father did before he passed away. The pastor humbly gave me his own Bible with joy and a smile on his face.

After several weeks, I was still reading the Bible and trying to compare it with some of the verses in the Quran. God started to speak to my heart gradually and my heart

was getting soft; I began to see God differently.

One fateful night, it was on the 31st August 2009, it had been raining and the rain had stopped around midnight, 12 a.m. While I was sleeping in my room, the whole place was very quiet and I began to dream. In the dream I saw myself with a large crowd of people, mostly my Muslim brethren. It was time to pray and the crowd needed a leader to lead the prayer (imam). When I looked I saw everyone pointing at me to lead them in prayers, so I had no choice but to lead them. I performed ablution and stood in front of the large crowd. We all faced the east where the sun rises, and everyone was waiting for me to say "allah hu akbra" that is to open the prayers. I could not say it. I was in front, struggling to say the word, but I became speechless. Then I looked up to the sun for God to help me say something. Suddenly, I saw a dove coming out of the sun; as the dove was getting closer it became the likeness of a man. I was still in front, struggling to say the word. Then, a word came to my mouth and I shouted "Jesus Christ". I woke up from the dream and I could hear the room echo my voice. I became afraid and started to feel cold. I took the Bible the pastor gave me back to him, thinking that, because I have the property of a Christian that is why I am having such dreams. Perhaps they must have enchanted the Bible. When I reached his house I knocked at the pastor's door and he opened it. I gave back the Bible to him, and said to him, your plans have failed; you think I can be fooled? Take your stupid Bible and your fake dreams. I walked out, leaving the pastor standing there standing speechless. He did not even know what I was saying for he was still sleepy.

In the afternoon, the pastor sent one of his church members to call me to his house saying that he wanted to speak with me. I went with him to see the pastor, still angry, thinking that he made me dream such a dream. When I got to his house, he welcomed me inside his prayer room, and asked me to explain what had happened to me the previous night. I explained exactly what happened. The pastor went down on his knees and worshiped God, saying in his prayer that his assignment in The Gambia had finished. He prayed for me too. From that point, I knew within myself that the pastor had nothing to do with my dreams, so who then must have made me dream such a dream? The only answer that came to my mind is God. But I needed to be sure. So I challenged God that afternoon while walking to my house saying, "Oh God, if it's You who had made me dream the dream I had last night, repeat it to me again!" I keep on saying that repeatedly until I got to my house. I sat in the parlor watching TV and within five minutes I

starting sleeping again. And the dream came back to me exactly as I dreamt the previous night! It was like copy and paste. Nothing changed. From that point I knew God needed me to do something for Him. I started going to church time to time, dodging, so that my people would not notice.

Two weeks after my encounter with the Lord, my pastor friend Steven was transferred back to Nigeria, for he was a missionary sent from Nigeria. This was a big challenge for me since I was new to the faith and it was only that pastor who knew my condition at that time. I started praying to God for direction. He later gave me an idea; I used to know a Christian family who lived very far from my town, in one village called Brikama-ba in region 5. It is about nine hours drive from my place. I was still going to school, so in order for me to serve God I needed to leave my home, otherwise they would find out that I have become a Christian. It was going to be a problem for me, and I was only 16 years old. So I had to come up with something. After days praying, I went to my mother (after I had already spoken to the Christian family in Region 5) that I would love to complete my schooling in the village school. The man of the house welcomed the idea, so I spoke to my mother about it. When I told her, she did not even ask many questions. She only asked me when I was planning to start school over there. I told her, next week. She then quickly made the arrangements and I was set for my journey after the week.

On arrival, I told the man of the family what the Lord had showed me in a dream. He advised me not to tell anyone in the village that I was once a Muslim, because the Muslims are very aggressive towards issues like this. The Islamic law says that if a Muslim brother disbelieves the prophet Muhammad such a person should be killed. I knew that already so I was very careful.

On my first Sunday with the family, I saw everyone in the family dressed up to go to church, so I dressed up too and followed them. When we got to the church, I was not comfortable, for they were Catholics; I only knew of the Pentecostal faith, not Catholic. When I went home I told God that I did not want to go back to that church again. I did not understand anything they were doing. Nothing was actually familiar from where I was from. God spoke to my heart again, saying, worship me on Saturday instead. Ahh! I had not seen any Christian who worships on Saturday, why only me? However, I obeyed for some weeks.

One Friday, as I was in class, I heard a loud noise outside. All the students ran to see what it was. With my Bible in my hands, I also followed the crowd to see what was happening. When I got to the scene, I saw a young girl

lying down, being so tormented by an evil spirit that she cried like a man. I remembered my Bible verse Matthew 8:16—“When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick”— and so many other scriptures in the Bible. While the teachers were trying to make everyone go back to their respective classes, I found my way to the girl that was possessed; I laid my hands on her and said, “In the mighty name of Jesus Christ! Leave her body now! He who has defeated you two thousand years ago, will defeat you again, leave now in Jesus’ name!” She became free. The whole place became quiet and people were looking at me as if I was a superhero from the city, come to the village. I looked at the crowd and said it was not me, it is the power of Jesus, believe Him and you can do greater things than this! I was taken to the principal’s office for an interview and the questions they asked me were:

Who are you?

Where are you from?

How could you do such a thing?

All I answered was, it was not me, it is Jesus Christ. Among them was a teacher who was a Christian; he later asked me what church I worship at. I told him, God asked me to worship Him at home on Saturdays since the only church here is Catholic. He then invited me to his church called the Deeper Life Bible Church. It was Pentecostal. I started fellowshipping with them, going to the nearest villages and towns to share the word of God with them. The pastor (Chidy was also a Nigerian) could not speak the local language, therefore, he needed an indigenous person who could translate for him into the local language. I made myself available. People started talking about me in the village; I was only 16 years old at the time. God inspired me to start a school fellowship for some of the students that were interested. Every Friday in the afternoon we gathered to pray and share the word. People started calling me Pastor J.J. because I was always with my Bible, preaching the word.

After a few months, I started having problems with the man I was staying with. What was the problem? He said, “instead of you preaching and bringing people to the Catholic Church, you are taking them to the Pentecostal Church.” Because of this, he started giving me problems here and there. The devil made the man hate me so much so that he decided to report me to my family in the city. He called my mother, and told her everything. My mother and the rest of the family members became very angry, and demanded for my immediate presence for a family meeting in the city. I told them I was doing my

exams, and they should allow me to finish up with my exams and I would come during my holidays.

When I finally went to the city for my holidays to my family, after about a week, most of my relatives in The Gambia came to my house as if it were a funeral. I did not understand what was going on; my father's friends were present also. So, a family meeting was scheduled and I was called upon; I came and listened, and behold, the meeting was all about me.

Everyone in the room expressed their total disappointment in my recent-found faith. I was advised to stop talking about Jesus and return to my father's faith. After everyone spoke, it was my turn to speak. I told them, **"Nobody can separate me from the love of Jesus Christ, not friends, not mother, not father, not brother, nobody at all!"** While I was still speaking my elder brother slapped me on my face. I fell down onto the floor, saying "Father forgive him." Straightaway I remembered what I had done to Pastor Steven. In my culture, when an elderly person insults or beats a younger one, you do not have to pay him back. And the Bible also teaches that when a man slaps you on your cheek turn the other cheek. After that slap he was asked to leave me alone until the next day. They said that I must be mad or have started taking some hard drugs. The next day, my family invited a Muslim scholar who knew both the Bible and the Quran to speak with me, hoping he could convince me to stop following Christ and come back to Islam. That talk failed. The third day and yet another meeting. This was the final meeting, and already God had spoken to me that, tonight things will be very ugly, but I should stay true and strong. I read Joshua 1:6-7.

After that meeting, my family sent me out of the house. They threw all my things outside and said that if I wanted to remain a believer, I could not stay with them. Nobody was going to feed me; nobody was going to clothe me. I took my bag and went into the world, without knowing where I was going to go!

Meanwhile, the pastor in region 5 had been waiting for me to return so that we could continue the work of the Lord there, since he could not speak the local language.

I called him that night and after I explained to him what had happened. He told me to find a place to spend the night until the next day. I had no place to go. Everyone I used to know had rejected me, and it was only me and Jesus! While walking in the cold dark night I came to a very big tree near a forest. I went under the tree and laid down to sleep. While slumbering, I felt something crawling on me. I could sense it, but I was too tired to find out what it was. When I woke up in the morning, I saw a

very big snake lying beside me, all dried up! I started crying. After my family left me to spend the night on the street near a forest, God was there to protect me. God did that to prove to me that He was with me. Most people that passed me that morning thought I was a mad boy.

The church made arrangements for me. I was sent back to school. When I finished secondary school, the Government of my country sponsored me to study education at The Gambia College School of Education (H.T.C) Higher Teachers Certificate. I studied the English language and History, and upon finishing, I got my first two jobs as the Principal of Light House Primary and I also taught the English language and History at SOS Senior Secondary School.

God has been merciful and faithful to me. After revealing to me the Saturday worship in region 5, which I abandoned because of my lack of understanding as of then, He remembered me in 2015.

I was in my office one day when a fellow walked into my office. We greeted each other and he introduced himself as Christian Gadoxor. I was thinking, perhaps he has come to enroll his child at my school. After a while he told me his mission. He is a missionary sent to educate people about health issues as well as to preach the gospel truth. He was new in the country. I gave him all the support he needed at that time. I took him to the college and the University of The Gambia where we taught about healthful living and the need to become a vegetarian. We organized radio programs around the country. During this time, I was also learning from him, until I had a greater understanding of the message. After knowing the truth I quickly started worshiping with the church (SDA Reform) in The Gambia. I was baptized and confirmed. I am now the field secretary of the Gambian mission field.



This is where I also met my new mother in Christ, Wendy Eaton from Canada.

I hope this life story changes your life for the glory of God. Thank you!



The use we make of our time is extremely critical in our Christian journey. God has given us time and we must use it wisely, for time wasted can never be regained. Minutes lost are gone forever. You will be called to give an account for every moment you wasted. When God gives you a message that will save you from perishing and you neglect that God-given opportunity there might not be another chance for you. Therefore, today is the day of your salvation and it is now that you must accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour.

“Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness. . . . While it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.” Hebrews 3:7–8, 15

TIME SERVING PEOPLE

Many professed Christians today are time servers. They know their Master’s will. They hear the words of God but do not abide by them. The Apostle James warned, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.” James 1:22–24

In the time of John the Baptist many professed to be his friends. They wanted to find favour in the sight of the coming Messiah but they had no real conviction of sin. John's message was, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17. In the Spirit of Prophecy we read, “Many of the scribes and Pharisees came confessing their sins, and asking for baptism. They had exalted themselves as better than other men, and had led the people to entertain a high opinion of their piety; now

the guilty secrets of their lives were unveiled. But John was impressed by the Holy Spirit that many of these men had no real conviction of sin. They were timeservers. As friends of the prophet, they hoped to find favor with the coming Prince.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 105

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5

John the Baptist continued “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” Matthew 3:7–8

“John declared to the teachers of Israel that their pride, selfishness, and cruelty showed them to be a generation of vipers, a deadly curse to the people, rather than the children of just and obedient Abraham. In view of the light they had received from God, they were even worse than the heathen, to whom they felt so much superior. They had forgotten the rock whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit from which they had been digged.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 106

THE GIFT OF SALVATION MAY PASS YOU BY

Many Christians today, after God has sent them warning, hear the words and tremble because their sins are being pointed out. Sadly though, many will not repent of their sins.

The message today is, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Acts 3:19

“But let no one neglect present opportunities and delay repentance, presuming on the eleventh-hour conversion

of the thief, and trusting to a death-bed repentance. Every ray of light neglected leaves the sinner in greater darkness than before, till some fearful deception may take possession of his mind, and his case may become hopeless.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 159

God desires every soul to be saved and He bears long with the sinner, but there is a limit for His grace. Many people are rejecting His mercy and may have reached this limit. “But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejecters of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown, which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 36

TODAY IS THE DAY OF YOUR SALVATION

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

“A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him concerning

righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. That was his heaven-sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. But he said to the messenger of God, ‘Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.’ He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427

“But instead of permitting his convictions to lead him to repentance, he sought to dismiss these unwelcome reflections.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427. Then he went on to say, “Go away for the present, when I have an opportunity I will summon you.”

Oh, my dear fellow believers, it is now time for each of us to search our hearts and lives. How have we treated the warnings which are being sent from heaven to us? Have we slighted the free gift of salvation as did Felix? He was being instructed in all points of truth so that he may repent of his sinful deeds. However, instead of welcoming the truth, he slighted the only remaining opportunity to save his life. Did he have another opportunity to hear the voice of God? No, never! That was his final opportunity.

Christ says today, “I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Revelation 3:18

May the Lord help us that each one of us may bring forth fruits meet for repentance through Jesus Christ.

God bless you. Grace be unto you. Amen.

Jenifer Akello, Uganda

Who Drove My Car?

Have you ever been driving a car and felt very tired? Your eyes start to droop and you are fighting to stay awake? Thankfully we have been mercifully spared. I would never recommend being presumptuous by continuing to drive a car when your eyes are closing. Having said this, the next day after returning from Africa, I went into work in the afternoon and was driving home at 11:30 p.m. According to my body clock it was 4:30 a.m. Naturally I was tired; beyond tired; over tired. My eyes did not droop in the normal tired fashion, but my brain felt like in a fog. I thought I could make it home safely as my eyes at least were not drooping. I remember seeing a sign on the road for construction up ahead and trying to decide if I should remain on the highway or get off to avoid the construction. I opted to remain on the highway. I just passed the last exit before the construction and a second later looked at the side of the road to read the next sign. I did a double-take. “Wait a minute. Where am I?” I thought for a few minutes. I am 12 km further down the road. 12 km??? in one second? I had passed the exit I had to get off to go home. In fact, I had passed the construction zone, I had passed two exits in 1 second? And I had absolutely no recollection of passing any of these. All I know is I passed the exit before the construction zone and what felt like 1 second I was 12 km further down the road. My body was apparently over tired. What happened in those 12 km—about 10 minutes? Who drove my car to keep it on the road? Only God knows. I thank my heavenly Father that I am alive today and not another statistic in a crumpled car at the side of the road. **Wendy Eaton**

HEALTH MATTERS:

A Vegan Diet—Complete Nutrition For Mankind

As we have studied in the last two articles, God originally created humans to be vegans. Over time, and after sin entered into the world, humans began to eat dairy and meat products. However, when we reviewed the anatomy of the human digestive system, it resembles the digestive system of an herbivore—an animal that only eats plants—and is able to derive all the nutrients necessary from a plant based diet. Although many humans choose to eat a wide variety of plant and animal foods, and have the capability of deriving nutrients from both plant and animal foods, earning us the dubious title of “omnivore,” we are still anatomically herbivorous. As we learned, despite the ability to obtain nutrients from animal foods, the consumption of meat and dairy comes with a cost; that is, these foods are not consumed without impacting the digestive system and overall health in a negative way.

Many people also claim that humans need to consume meat and dairy; that the nutrients humans need cannot solely come from a plant-based diet. As we looked into the Paleo diet, its premise is that man’s survival was based on many millennia of eating a diet based in meat, thus this is the diet he should be eating even now for the survival of the species. Those who believe in creation know that man was created by God to be vegan. Would God change the needs of the human who was the crowning glory of His creation because he fell into sin? One would think that it would be even more important to adhere to man’s original diet, as sin causes the human body to deteriorate; therefore, adhering to God’s diet plan would preserve the human body against the ravages of a sin-sickened creation.

The premise that man needs to eat animal products is easily proven incorrect, based on anecdotal and scientific evidence. Lifelong vegans exist, and are typically healthier than their non-vegan counterparts. Science and nutrition experts have also confirmed the fact that a vegan diet is

healthy and able to provide all the nutrients that a human body needs.

When we consider the nutritional needs of humans, what exactly does a human body need, in order to function, to stay healthy, and to survive? To sum up the nutritional needs of mankind, his diet must provide the following: Calories—enough to meet one’s daily energy needs; amino acids—nine essential amino acids that are needed to manufacture protein; fatty acids—two essential fatty acids; minerals—inorganic ions; Vitamins.

Carbohydrates, which are made up of starches and sugars, provide most

of the calories required to supply our energy needs. Age, sex, size, health, and the intensity of physical activity determine the exact calorie needs of each individual. All carbohydrates are derived from plant foods and should provide the bulk of our diet. 55–70% of our calories should be derived from carbohydrates. The carbohydrate calories from complex sugars (starches) are healthiest as the sugar is released slowly by the liver, thus avoiding the sugar spikes in our bloodstream that can turn the unneeded calories into fat cells. Processed foods contain large amounts of simple sugars, which break down quickly in the body and are stored in the fat cells. The types of carbohydrates eaten are vital to the overall health of the human body.

Amino acids are derived from protein-based foods. Although most plant-based proteins do not contain all nine essential amino acids, most vegan diets that contain a variety of plant proteins will ensure that all nine essential amino acids are eaten. The theory that protein-combining was necessary at each meal to supply all the amino acids has been invalidated by more current research. Some vegan protein foods are considered more “complete” than others, including quinoa and tofu. Ideally we should get 10-15% of our calories from protein, or 0.8g/kg of body weight. People who eat animal-based proteins consume up to five times more protein than the body requires. This, plus the saturated fats contained in animal proteins leads to an increased risk of health issues such as heart disease, kidney disease, osteoporosis, and



various cancers. Thus, not only can humans derive all the needed protein from plants, it is a much healthier source of protein.

Fats provide the most concentrated form of energy. Humans can synthesize most fats from carbohydrates—yet more proof that man does not need animal food. However, two essential fatty acids cannot be synthesized from carbohydrates and must be incorporated into the diet. These fats are linoleic acid (LA) and alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). These two fatty acids create specialized fats known as the Omega-6 (from LA), and Omega-3 fatty acids (from ALA). Not only must these be part of the diet, but the ratios of Omega 6:Omega 3 must be between 4:1 and 1:1 in order to reap the health benefits. Most American diets contain too much Omega 6 and not enough Omega 3, the ratio often being between 10:1 and 25:1. Omega 6's compete with Omega 3's in the body. Ingesting too much Omega-6 will prevent the production of Omega-3's. This unbalanced ratio is due to a reliance on processed foods and oils, which are now common in the Western diet.

Consuming too little of these fatty acids lead to abnormalities in the liver and kidneys, reduced growth rates, decreased immune function, depression, and dryness of the skin. Whereas, adequate intake of the essential fatty acids result in numerous health benefits, including improved brain function, prevention of plaque in blood vessels, reduced incidence of heart disease, stroke, and breast cancer, and relief from the symptoms associated with ulcerative colitis, menstrual pain, and joint pain. The two essential fatty acids can both be derived from plant foods.

Dietary fibre is not considered a nutrient as we do not digest it; however, its presence contributes to a vital part of our health. Fibre, also known as roughage or bulk, includes the parts of plant foods your body can't digest or absorb. Instead, fibre passes relatively intact through your stomach, small intestine and colon and out of your body. Soluble fibre can help lower cholesterol and sugar levels in the blood, lowering your risk of diabetes and heart disease, and helping to maintain a healthy weight. Insoluble fiber promotes the movement of material through your digestive system and increases stool bulk, preventing constipation or irregular stools. Lack of fibre in a diet can have a negative impact on the body, and has been implicated in colon cancers. Most plant-based foods contain both soluble and insoluble fibre.

Minerals are inorganic substances found in food and are essential to the proper functioning of the body. Certain minerals are needed in larger amounts. These include calcium, sodium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, sulphur, and chloride. Other minerals are needed in smaller amounts and are known as trace minerals. These include iron, zinc, iodine, manganese, chromium, fluoride, copper, selenium, and molybdenum. Other trace nutrients known

to be essential in tiny amounts include nickel, silicon, vanadium, and cobalt. Each of these minerals play a different role in maintaining health. All minerals can be supplied in adequate amounts by a well-balanced vegan diet.

Vitamins are defined as a group of organic compounds that are essential for normal growth and nutrition and are required in small quantities in the diet, either from food or supplements, because they cannot be synthesized by the body. We require 13 different vitamins, four of which are fat-soluble (A, D, E, K) and nine are water-soluble (B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B7, B9, B12, C). Of all the Vitamins, B12 is the most challenging for vegans to obtain adequate amounts of in their diet. This has been used by people to argue that a vegan diet is unsuitable for humans. B12 is found in soil, and man used to obtain adequate amounts of B12 by eating the plants that were grown in soil. Two factors account for the lack of B12 in a vegan diet—most of our vegetables which we purchase are cleaned from any soil that may be left on them, and after thousands of years of growing crops, much of the soil has been depleted of its resource of B12, which is why supplementation is now necessary.

And finally, a vegan diet is high in phytochemicals, naturally occurring chemical compounds found in plants, which provide plants with their various colours and scents. Included in the list of phytochemicals are antioxidants, which protect from free radical damage. They are not considered "essential" to man's diet, but they provide a vast array of health benefits that contribute to the superiority of a plant-based diet.

As we have learned, a vegan diet can supply humans with all the essential nutrients that allow all the functions of the body to work at their peak performance. There is no need for animal-food products; a vegan diet not only supplies us with complete nutrition but is also healthier. People on diets which include animal-based food have been shown to be more likely to have degenerative diseases, including heart disease. A vegan diet is also associated with lower levels of obesity, which is implicated in many of the modern diseases. The American Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada regard a well-planned vegan diet as appropriate for all stages of the life-cycle. If poorly planned, a vegan diet may be deficient in some vitamins and minerals. However, well-planned vegan diets have been found to offer protection against many degenerative conditions, and contribute to a longer and healthier life.



**NEXT MONTH:
HOW TO EAT A WELL-BALANCED VEGAN DIET**



The Sandcastle



"Kids! Grandpa's here!" Mother yelled from the bottom of the stairs.

Max and Annie looked at each other excitedly, "Coming!" they said together as they grabbed their bags and headed downstairs.

"Are my little ones ready to go to the beach?" Grandpa asked.

"Yes!" Max and Annie jumped up in excitement.

It was a ten minute walk to the beach, it was a beautiful sunny day and the sand felt hot beneath their feet. Max and Annie dropped their things on the picnic table under the tree. It was their usual spot.

"Grandpa, we're going to build a sand castle," Max said, "And I know where the perfect spot is! Right over there, by the water, I want our castle to have the best view."

"Hmm, sure sounds nice. If the water comes up though, it will destroy your castle. If you want your castle to stand firm, you may want to consider building it on the rocks there."

"Grandpa's right, Maxy. Let's do it by the rocks," Annie agreed as she pointed to the rocks.

"I really want to have my castle by the water, I don't think the water will come up. I'll do a castle by the water, you can do yours by the rocks," Max said as he grabbed some tools for himself and headed towards the water.

"But Maxy! . . . Annie began to yell.

"Annie," Grandpa said softly with a smile on his face, "Let him see for himself."

With that, Annie headed to the rocks with her tools,

and then took a bucket and headed to get water in order to make mud.

Some time passed by, and both castles looked wonderful. Max's castle had a river running through the castle, while Annie's castle stood majestically on one of the big rocks.

"Children, time to eat!" Grandpa had the picnic table set. Annie and Max dropped their tools and ran over to eat. They were truly hungry. After eating, they spent time talking to Grandpa, they had almost forgotten about their castles. Max looked over to the water to show Grandpa the castle he had built, but couldn't see it anywhere. All he saw was his tools floating in the water.

"Oh no! My castle!" Max yelled as he ran towards the water, Grandpa and Annie followed and helped grab the tools that floated.

"It's gone! I should have listened to you Grandpa," Max said sadly, "my castle is gone, but Annie's castle is still standing firm because she built it on that big rock, and the water can't reach it."

"Don't be sad, Maxy, we can learn something valuable from this, come let me tell you about a story Jesus once told," Grandpa put his hand on Max's shoulder.

They headed to the picnic table where Grandpa read from the Bible in Matthew 7:24-27. The story was about a wise man and a foolish man. One man built his house upon a rock, and nothing could destroy that house, not winds or rain, because it stood firm on the rock. However, the foolish man had built his house on the sand, and when the wind and rain came it fell, because it's foundation was not strong.

"It sounds a lot like what happened today Grandpa,"



Maxy said as he looked over to where his castle once stood.

“Jesus represents the rock, children, and we can be either the wise man or the foolish man. When we obey the counsels of God, nothing in life can bring us down. This makes us wise and our life will be like that sandcastle on the rock,” Grandpa said as he pointed towards Annie’s sandcastle. “However, if we decide to do things our own way, the hardships of life will destroy us. We must learn to listen to Jesus, even when things don’t make sense to us, because in the end, he knows what’s best.”

“I definitely want to be the wise man, grandpa, I want to build my house on the rock,” smiled Max.

“Then let’s build it! Come on!” said Annie as she got up and ran towards the rock. Max hugged his grandpa and followed happily.

Challenge Five

Draw and color a sandcastle on the rock. Then write what the rock represents on the line below.



Complete all 15
Challenges

Don't miss Grandpa's
next visit to Annie and
Max's home!!

Email your challenges here:

veronicoemigarcia@gmail.com





Western Africa

Once again I had the privilege of travelling with Sister Leila to Africa. This time she chose Western Africa as our destination—Senegal, The Gambia and Mali.

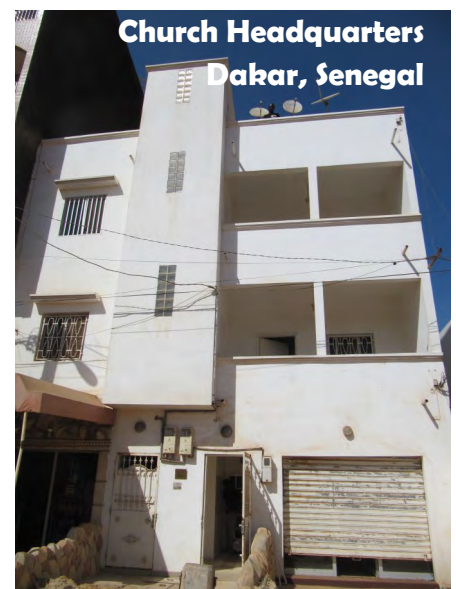
Western Africa has many French speaking countries and many strongly Muslim nations, but the Lord has His people scattered all over the world.

At first I agreed to go, even though they were strongly Muslim nations. I had no safety concerns though, as I knew the Lord would be with us. I wanted to make absolutely sure though, that the Lord was asking me to go and that I was going by faith and not presumption. I read on the internet what the government of Canada stated about the countries and any warnings. For The Gambia and Senegal, the report was that these countries are safe, but just be careful with your belongings as crime and theft can easily happen if you are not careful. And do not go out after dark. This seemed fairly reasonable. However, Mali was a different situation. We had already booked our plane tickets and I read online that the Canadian Government does not recommend travel to Mali.

"Risk level(s): MALI - AVOID ALL TRAVEL

"Global Affairs Canada advises against all travel to Mali (including the capital, Bamako), due to the threat of terrorism and banditry. . . . There is a high threat of terrorist attacks throughout Mali, including in Bamako. . . .Terrorist groups in the region are intent on increasing their attacks and kidnappings targeting Westerners. Terrorist targets could include government buildings, public areas such as bars, restaurants and tourist sites, and Western interests." <https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/mali>

I was starting to hesitate. I sent the report to Sister Leila and asked her to change the plane tickets to skip Mali. She saw the danger and tried to make the change, but the cost



was too high. Sister Leila contacted Brother Judicail in Senegal and shared with him my concerns. He stated that

the trouble was in the north with the tribal warfare, but the city of Bamako was safe. Although I was not afraid, I wanted to be sure that we were going by faith not presumption; that the Lord truly wanted us to go. If the Lord was wanting us to go, then we had no need to be concerned.

I prayed and in the following weeks the Lord brought me many encouraging Bible verses. Here are some of them:

"In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." Isaiah 54:14

"When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." Proverbs 3:24–26

"And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." Judges 6:23

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua 1:9

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee." Genesis 28:15

And when I was concerned about the potential for malaria or other illnesses, the Lord brought me this verse: "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the

LORD that healeth thee.” Exodus 15:26

With the verses that the Lord gave me, and the words of Brother Judicail, I decided to go by faith. The Lord had promised to take care of us. When it was time to leave, I had perfect confidence that it was the Lord’s will, so He would keep us safe.

Accompanying us on our travels was Brother Judicail Luboya, our ordained minister who lives and works in Senegal, which is a French-speaking Muslim country. Brother Christian Gadoxor, who currently lives and works in The Gambia, also accompanied us.

We arrived in Dakar, Senegal, on January 5 and were warmly greeted by Brother Judicail and his wife, Dorcas.

Yes, we were tired, but happy to be amongst God’s people. Brother Judicail and Sister Dorcas were gracious in giving us a place to stay at the mission house and Sister Dorcas provided delicious meals for us.

We were happy to also meet four interested young men who had travelled two days by bus to spend the week with us in Dakar. Their names are: Immanuel, Daniel, Isaac, and Enoch. They are from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and had come into contact with Brother Christian. Through the medical missionary work, Brother Christian met them and went to visit them. These young men now came to Dakar for further study on the Reformation message with Brother Judicail and us over the week. We had several studies and at the end of the week, before it was time for us all to depart, they expressed an interest to join God’s remnant church. One of the young men, Daniel (aged 29), is the church leader in their small local church which consists of 14 young men and one woman—the mother of another of the men, Isaac. The father of Isaac was the leader of the small church, but he had passed away, leaving the young men to continue to run the church. Let us pray for these young men as Brother Judicail and Brother Christian will visit them in their village in the near future to study with the others who were not able to attend. We pray that these young men will truly follow through with their interest and join the church through baptism.

While in Senegal for a week, we were able to see first hand, and participate in, the missionary activities. The challenges that there are in a Muslim country are quite different from those of Christian nations. Open witnessing is not permitted. Going house to house is completely out of the question. The health message is truly the entering wedge. Brother Judicail has befriended many Christian pastors who have come for advice on how to witness through the health message. Through these pastors he is also meeting some of their members, whom he hopes would begin to show interest in our message. Brother

Christian has become quite knowledgeable in health and natural remedies in his years of labour in the work of the Lord. Through the means of the health message, he has opened up the work in many of the nations in Western Africa (Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali). He trains the members in the churches on how to witness by using the health message. He gives them knowledge and diagnostic tools to help in diagnosing various inconsistencies in a person’s health. Christian has trained many, including Judicail, and Judicail now is using this method quite well. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning he runs a health seminar free of charge. Then he provides private health counsel to those who are seeking better health. Natural remedies, diet, and lifestyle changes are emphasized. And then from here he has opportunity to witness for the truth. He runs a very busy clinic. We were asked to give lectures on health during these seminars, during which the Lord blessed us. Brother Judicail also organized a health seminar in the evenings. For three nights we presented health lectures. These meetings were well attended. The people were very interested, asking many questions.

In her husband’s absence, Sister Dorcas effectively runs the Tuesday and Thursday seminars. She also conducts cooking classes on vegan cooking and has begun to make and sell whole wheat bread and soy milk. From these methods, there was one young man, Simon, who was baptized a few months ago. He is very active in the church activities. Now there are more interested souls attending the church. Sister Dorcas is a very active missionary, working with her husband when he is there, and in his absence, she runs the health seminars, Bible Studies and church services. Truly a virtuous woman who loves the Lord. Sister Dorcas especially appreciated our visit as she stated a sad truth that many times visiting pastors and ministers ignore the pastor’s wife and focus on the missionary and the missionary work. She was happy to fellowship with female members. And we were blessed to fellowship with her.

After the first week, our travels took us to The Gambia. Due to the political uncertainty in the country from the recent elections, we were thinking of changing our travel plans and going somewhere else, as many Gambian residents were fleeing the country and some consulates were urging their citizens to leave. We considered several other options but the Lord closed up the way for these alternatives, so we decided to go by faith. The Lord was telling us to go forward to The Gambia.

The Gambia is also a strong Muslim nation, although they do speak the English language there, which made communication a little easier. Brother Judicail accompanied us to The Gambia.

Here we were greeted by Brother Christian, who lives alone at the headquarters in The Gambia. His wife and children are currently in Ghana as she is taking care of a sick relative. We pray that they can join Christian in The Gambia in the near future. Brother Christian took care of us while staying at the headquarters. He cooked delicious meals and kept the place very clean.

For three evenings in The Gambia, we again conducted health lectures, which were well attended by the members and visitors.

Although the church is small, I was happy to meet a few young people there in the church. One young interested woman is the daughter of a Muslim Priest. We need to keep her in our prayers. She helps out in the health clinic but her father does not know of her interest in Christianity. Another young man (John), who came from a Muslim background, had an “encounter with Jesus” that led him to the conversion to Christianity. After attending the Pentecostal church for some time, this young man met Brother Christian, who introduced him to important truths not taught in the Pentecostal church. (You can read his testimony in this issue of *The Reformation Messenger* under the title, “Led by God”).

Brother Christian has made many friends, one of whom is a pastor from a Sunday-keeping Baptist church in The Gambia. Although he lives in the city, he pastors a church in the village about an hour away. Christian has been speaking to this man about the Sabbath and health reform quite extensively. The man attended the three night health seminar. Initially, our plan was to leave The Gambia early Sunday morning, but this man asked us to come to his church Sunday morning and have Brother Judicail preach the divine service. He asked that he preach about the Sabbath. There were about 50 people in attendance. Sister Leila first shared her testimony, and in the midst she mentioned the importance of the Sabbath and how it has been a blessing for her. Brother Judicail was then given the opportunity to preach. He preached a powerful sermon in support of the Sabbath. We then had to leave. Let us pray that this man can follow through with his convictions of the Sabbath day and lead his flock into the full truth.

We left The Gambia with Brothers Judicail and Christian to go to Mali. Brother Christian will continue to speak with this pastor upon his return. Let us pray for him.

The Lord kept us safe in The Gambia and we had no disturbances while there and no difficulties with travel. We had no safety concerns and had a peaceful time.

The last four days were spent in Mali. Mali is another French speaking Muslim country. As we had no mission headquarters at the time, we went to stay in a small hotel not far from the airport. No sooner had we settled in, than Brother Christian began to speak to the proprietor of the hotel about the health message and our mission. While we could not hold public meetings due to lack of a venue, the very next day Brother Christian had about 15 men coming to the hotel for health advice and counsel. He counselled them individually, one at a time, providing advice on diet and lifestyle change and providing herbs and other natural remedies for natural healing.

The church in Mali is small due to the sad fact that the previous secretary separated from the church, taking some of the interested souls with him. Brother Christian went to visit him every day, but the man is adamant that he refuses to return. He has started his own church and he allows the members to eat meat.

We were able to hold the Sabbath service in the hotel lounge free of charge. The work is small in Mali; however, the Holy Spirit is not dependent on numbers, but on willing servants.

Soon a young man from Madagascar (Eric) will be going to Mali to help with the work. After Sister Leila and I left, Brothers Judicail and Christian remained about ten more days and were able to find a suitable place to rent for the headquarters. There is a family man who will move in. Along with Eric this man will work to bolster up the church in Mali.

The work is difficult in Muslim countries, but not impossible. The only impossibilities lies in our human minds. The Lord’s resources are limitless.

Although the work is difficult, the workers are of good courage. Let us pray for them.

Brother Christian, although stationed in The Gambia, travels to many of the surrounding nations to help and encourage the believers. He teaches them the health methods for missionary work.

May God help us to help our brothers and sisters around the world. We are all one in Christ.

“Fear not, O land: be glad and rejoice for the LORD will do great things.” Joel 2:21. Amen.

Wendy Eaton

Senegal



Left: Brother Judicail and his wife Dorcas with their two children, Angel and Smyrna.

Right: Mariama from the Gambia, Enoch, Daniel, Isaac and Immanuel from south Senegal. On right, Brother Simon, newest church member in Senegal



The Gambia

Mali



Top: believers in the local church on Sabbath (there are two church groups in the Gambia).

Left: Brother Christian Gadoxor who pioneered the work in: Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali



Bother Konate and his family

These are our only members at the moment. There is some good interest and people preparing for baptism.



Jamaica



Youth Conference in St. Ann. October 22 to 26



In December 16, 2016, over seventy persons gathered together at our church in Annotto Bay, St. Mary, where four lovely souls were baptized in the Caribbean Sea which washes along the shore in front of our beautiful church. After the Baptismal Service they were welcomed into the Church of God. In the afternoon we also had the Lord's Supper. All glory and praise to the God of Heaven for sending these four souls to His Church. Let us pray for them always.



Uganda

**Left:
Delegate's
session
Uganda
Field**

CONGO



**The Kashamata Church in Lubumbashi.
The women in uniform are part of the choir**

Uganda




Lango Centre church northern Uganda

Nigeria



Benin





“God would have us learn lessons from the water-lily that opens its pure white blossoms upon the bosom of the lake. The flower reposes in spotless loveliness while all around it, in the water, may be unseemly and obnoxious things. The lily strikes its roots deeper and still deeper into the rich soil far beneath the surface of the lake, and, refusing everything that would taint and pollute its purity, draws to itself only those properties that will aid its development into a spotless and beautiful flower. . . .

“Shall we not learn a lesson from this? Although we are in a world teeming with moral corruption, we have no need to gather to our souls the disgusting pollutions of earth. We may refuse the evil. We may choose the good. We may gather to our souls the precious, the pure, the heavenly; we may put into our character-building solid timber, that will make a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.” –*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, April 1, 1889