

The Reformation 

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THE MYSTERY

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The word mystery, according to linguists, is derived from the monosyllable “mu”. In Greek, mystery is “musterion”. The Greeks had many mysteries in their pagan religious rites. The mysteries were secrets, which were revealed only to the initiated. Outsiders could not understand the symbols, but insiders knew their meaning and significance.

Imagine for a moment that you went up to a cow to explain to her something about mathematics. She would look at you and what would she say? “Moo, moo.” What you are saying to me is simply “mu”—musterion—a mystery!

The Apostle Paul used the same Greek word “musterion” known to Socrates and Plato, in the New Testament epistles. Paul believed that mysteries of the gospel were sealed and hidden from the unbelievers. They did not understand the symbols, parables, and prophecies because they could not. It was “mu” to them. But the same symbols, parables, and prophecies were revealed, opened, and understood to those who were spiritually minded, to those who had faith and were guided by the Spirit of God.

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,” 1 Cor. 2:7, 8, 10, 14.

What mystery was Paul specifically citing? It was the “mystery of godliness”. It was the plan of redemption hid for ages, but revealed to God’s servants over time. “The mystery of godliness is the pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy a great thing: God was manifested in the flesh, was justified by the Spirit, seen by angels, and preached among the gentiles, believed on in the world, taken up into glory.” 1 Tim. 3:16; John Wesley’s version (1)

The crux of the mystery of godliness was that “God was manifested in the flesh”—the incarnation, baptism, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the prophesied Messiah. Jesus is the revelation of the mystery of God.

The Will Over Mind

Blaise Pascal, an outstanding physicist, philosopher, and mathematician of the seventeenth century, commented on the figures or mysteries of the Word of God. He wrote, “Why was the coming of Christ prophesied? Why prophesied in an obscure way?... We can understand nothing of God’s works unless we accept the principle that He wished to blind some and enlighten others... God wishes to move the will rather than the mind. Perfect clarity would help the mind and harm the will. (Thus God would) humble their pride.” (2)

Jesus told His hearers that it was not just a matter of the mind or the heart, but a matter of the will. One must be willing to do what God wishes, only then can one understand the mysteries of the Bible. “If any man will do his will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” John 7:17.

Are you willing to do God’s will? The will is so important in understanding the mysteries of God that the Bible ends with an invitation for the “willing”. “And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:17.

The Secret Code

A few years ago, Reader’s Digest decided to print a compact Bible without all the unnecessary genealogies. It would be 40% less in volume and it would be free of the cumbersome, multiple, and long family trees. But in so doing, they were removing the secret code God was revealing to humanity over a period of 1000 years

and ten generations.

The Bible is unlike any other book. It has many mysteries. Many of them remain hidden, and many have been revealed to those who are willing to do as the Spirit leads them. Genesis 5 presents the “book of the generations of Adam”. Gen. 5:1. The first ten patriarchs in the family tree of Jesus Christ and of every other living human today, presents a secret code.

Those first ten patriarchs keep reappearing throughout the Bible. The last book in the Hebrew Bible is Chronicles. 1 Chron. 1:1-4, lists the ten patriarchs—the secret code: “Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah.”

Those first ten patriarchs are also cited in the New Testament as part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ. “Noe which was the son of Lamech, which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jarec, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.” Luke 3:36-38.

As each patriarch had a male son and gave him a name, he was unknowingly filling in the blanks of God’s great mystery of godliness. Each son had a very important name, which described as by a secret code the development of the plan of redemption. The names of the first 10 patriarchs were part of the oral Bible transmitted from father to son until the Bible was finally put in writing by Moses.

The native American Indians believed that names were sacred and foretold the life of their bearer. They would often give a name to someone or change their name based on a natural experience. They had names like crazy horse, sitting turtle, wounded owl, etc.

The Hebrews, like many ancient groups, took special care in naming their offspring. Each Hebrew name meant something important. For example, Abraham means “Father of many nations.” Gen. 17:5. He is the father of Jews, Christians, and Arabs. Melchizedek means “King of Righteousness.” He was the king of the city of Salem in Abraham’s time and was considered a righteous king. Heb. 7:1,2. Daniel means “God is judge.” The book of Daniel is centered around the great investigative judgment in heaven. Dan. 7:9, 10, 13; 8:14.

Likewise, each Hebrew name of the first ten patriarchs has an English equivalent. In 10 words, or 10 names, like the 10 commandments of God’s law, we have the mystery of God revealed. He took ten generations to reveal this awesome mystery.

This is “the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” Rom. 16:25,26.

Take Strong’s numbering system and you can easily decipher the Hebrew meaning of each of the names. Here is the meaning of the secret code of Genesis 5:

1. Adam (Strong’s no. 120) means “humanity or mankind.” Gen. 2:23.
2. Seth (Strong’s no. 8352) means “placed” or substituted. Gen. 4:25.
3. Enosh (Strong’s no. 583) means “misery”. Gen. 4:26.
4. Kenan (Strong’s no. 7018) means “fixed”.
5. Mahalaleel (Strong’s no. 4111) means “praised God”.
6. Jered (Strong’s no. 3382) means “descended”.
7. Henoch (Strong’s no. 2585) means “discipline”.
8. Methuselah (Strong’s no. 4968) means “pierced man”.
9. Lamech (Strong’s no. 3929) means “fallen”.
10. Noah (Strong’s no. 5146) means “rest or comfort”. Gen. 5:29. (3)

Thus if we join each of the 10 names listed above, we form a paragraph which says:

“(As a result of sin), humanity (was) placed (in) misery fixed, (so the) praised God descended (to a life of) discipline, (and became a) pierced man, (so that the) fallen (might have) rest.”

Because of sin, humanity was inescapably miserable, but God in the person of Jesus Christ descended and lived a life of discipline and was finally pierced on the cross, so that fallen humanity might have true peace and rest.

Jesus said that those who are lukewarm Christians are “miserable”. Rev. 3:17. Paul alludes to the misery of the convinced but unconverted Christians by exclaiming, “O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Rom. 7:24; Reina Valera version. Sin has made humanity miserable—just consider the amount of suffering, pain and tears shed because of disease, divorce, disability, and death. As the code stated, because of Adam’s sin, humanity—without God—was to be bound in a life of misery and wretchedness.

But God purposed in His perfect will to send His son Jesus. “Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in the fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. 2:5-9, 11. As the code predicted, Jesus, being God, descended from heaven to redeem us and for this He is to be praised eternally.

Jesus in His life on earth had to learn to live a disciplined life. “Who in the days of His flesh... though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him.” Heb. 5:7-9. As the code predicted, Jesus lived a life of discipline and obedience.

While on the cross of Calvary, Jesus was pierced on His side. Immediately, water and blood issued out and sprinkled the earth as if symbolically stating that by His death, He was redeeming not only humanity, but planet earth. John, who was a witness, wrote concerning this event: “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” John 19:34. As the code predicted, Jesus was a pierced man.

Jesus offers all men salvation and rest from the works of the flesh, slavery of sin, and tyranny of vice. He says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matt. 11:28. As the code predicted, Jesus is the way to find true rest—physically, mentally, and spiritually. **A Proof of God’s Omniscience**

“The Word of God, like the character of its divine Author, presents mysteries that can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects presented in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain, or even fully to comprehend.

“The difficulties of Scripture have been urged by skeptics as an argument against the Bible, but so far from this, they constitute a strong evidence of its divine inspiration. If it contained no account of God but that which we could easily comprehend; if His greatness and majesty could be grasped by finite minds, then the Bible would not bear the unmistakable credentials of divine authority. The very grandeur and mystery of the themes presented should inspire faith in it as the Word of God.

“Thus the plan of redemption is laid open to us, so that every soul may see the steps he is to take in repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved in God’s appointed way: yet beneath mysteries that are so easily understood, lie mysteries that are the hiding of His glory—mysteries that overpower the mind in its research, yet inspire the sincere seeker for truth with reverence and faith.” (4)

The Morse Code

Samuel F.B. Morse (1791-1872) is credited with the invention of the telegraph. He also invented a code consisting of dots and lines, which would be used to communicate by telegraph. The first message ever sent via telegraph wire occurred in 1844—a memorable year for Adventists—and it was Numbers 23:23, “What hath God wrought!” To those who do not know the Morse code, the dots and lines simply seem to be meaningless or a mystery. But to those who know the Morse code, the dots and lines contain a relevant message communicated via telegraph wire. Is it any different with the mysteries of the Scriptures?

In like manner, deciphering the secret code, the mystery of godliness, revealed in the interpretation of the names of the first 10 patriarchs of our human family tree, we can also exclaim: Look at what God hath wrought with His plan of redemption.

A few years before his death, Morse wrote: “The nearer I approach to the end of my pilgrimage, the clearer is the evidence of the divine origin of the Bible, the grandeur and sublimity of God’s remedy for fallen man are more appreciated, and the future is illumined with hope and joy.” (5). AMEN.

References

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4. E.G.White (1958). What to do with doubt. Steps to Christ. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publ. Assoc., p. 106, 107.
5. Henry M. Morris (1988). Men of science. Men of God. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, p. 47.

LABOUR UNIONS

Should God’s children join in labour unions and support them? Are their goals and methods of working in harmony with our principles of faith?

Often it is difficult to find employment without joining them. Most of the larger companies are organized in the unions so that even the hiring of workers is done through the unions.

Is collective bargaining in harmony with Christ’s teaching? Should a Christian fight for his rights?

The teachings of Jesus were clear. If someone hits you on the cheek, don’t fight back, but turn the other cheek. If someone compels you to carry his burden one mile, carry it two miles. Apostle Paul writes, “(Charity) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.” 1 Cor. 13:5.

“Charity seeketh not her own”, this is a sufficient reason not to fight for our rights. Jesus also added, “If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” Matt. 5:40.

UNITY IS STRENGTH

It is a well-known fact that unity is strength. Alone we are weak but united we can do much more; whether it is for good or for an evil cause. Also we must be careful with whom we are united. In Isaiah we read, "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A Confederacy; nether fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." Isa. 8:12. At that time the people of Israel made agreements with the heathen kings to help each other in case of war. Against Judah, King Ahaz made a confederacy with Assyria against them.

This kind of unity the Lord did not approve of. Yet, this is the way the labour unions function. Their members refuse to work unless they receive high enough wages, and the same time they will not permit others to do the work for less money. By this they deprive their neighbours of freedom of action with which God Himself will not interfere. God grants each person a freedom to do good or evil. The commandment of love will not permit us to interfere with our neighbour's freedom. We cannot force anyone to pay higher wages than someone else is willing to accept.

The Spirit of Prophecy gives us a clear counsel in regard to labour unions. "The trade unions and confederacies of the world are a snare. Keep out of them, and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them. Because of these unions and confederacies, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities." Gen. Conf. Bulletin April 6, 1902.

"We are not to unite with secret societies or with trade unions. We are to stand free in God, looking constantly to Christ for instruction. All our movements are to be made with a realization of the importance of the work to be accomplished for God." Test. Vol. 7. Page 84.

"These unions are one of the signs of the last days. Men are binding up in bundles ready to be burned. They may be church members, but while they belong to these unions, they cannot possibly keep the commandments of God; for to belong to these unions means to disregard the entire Decalogue." Country Living page 11.

"Those who claim to be the children of God are in no case to bind up with the labor unions that are formed or that shall be formed. This the Lord forbids. Cannot those who study the prophecies see and understand what is before us?" Country Living page 12.

"The wicked are being bound up in bundles, bound up in trusts, in unions, in confederacies. Let us have nothing to do with these organizations. God is our Ruler, our Governor, and He calls us to come out of the world and be separate." 4 BC p. 1142.

"The trade unions will be one of the agencies that will bring upon this earth a time of trouble such as has not been since the world began." Country Living p. 10

Brother and sisters, is not the message clear to us? Should we heed the message that God has given us or should we ignore it? Let us not take chances with our salvation. God has spoken in a clear language. If he asks us to do something, He will provide a way to accomplish it. It is a question of faith. Do we believe his promises or do we depend on human wisdom? If we seek the kingdom of God first and His righteousness; all these things will be added to us.

Let us remember that only those who would rather die than commit the smallest sin will be counted faithful.

May the Lord help us to obey Him also in this point. AMEN

Timo Martin

AARON AND HUR

“Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.” Exodus 17:8-12.

Here we witnessed a crisis. Israel was seemingly dependent on Moses’ raised hands for their victory, however Moses tired. Aaron and Hur were near at hand. They could have become angry with Moses and blamed him for Israel drawing back at that moment. Yet they said not a word. They simply came over to where Mose[^] was standing, had him sit down and they held up his hands. Without being asked, they saw a need and stepped in to fulfil the need. They saw the leader needing help and they helped. Not one word of criticism was spoken.

CRITICISM

I want to contrast criticism in comparison to Aaron and Hur’s action in this article. We see that Aaron and Hur did not criticize. However that is not always the case in our lives and associations with others. It is easy to criticize when we see things are not done very efficiently or are completely neglected, or perhaps simply done in a manner different from what we are used to.

What is criticism? When we hear of critics, we may think of those professionals who are hired to give their views on certain works of art.

There are art critics, book critics, and even music or movie critics. Their whole duty is to view these various works of art and to write up their honest opinion so that others may read their criticism and decide whether they want to read the book or watch the movie. Sometimes the criticism is positive and sometimes it is negative. Usually these types of criticisms are purely a person’s opinion based on his feelings and values.

Where does criticism fit in to God’s church? Does it belong? If criticism is purely based on a persons’ opinion then there is no place for it. Man’s opinions of what is right and what is wrong—or how things should be done—have no place in God’s church.

In the history of God’s church from ancient times, regular members have been criticized when their habits of life seemed suspect - they seemed to be out of the ordinary way of doing things. For example, when the tribes of Israel to the east of the Jordan River set up a memorial, the tribes to the west automatically thought they were setting up an alternate form of worship. “Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD?” Joshua 22:16. Before hearing an explanation the princes of Israel assumed it was a rebellion and asked them why they had sinned. When the children of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh had an opportunity to speak for themselves it was found out that there was no rebellion or sin involved at all. It was simply a memorial that they had set up. In reply they said, “The LORD God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, ..Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.” Joshua 22:22, 28, 29. And when the princes of Israel heard this it pleased them. The matter was settled, however there should have been no accusation in the first place. There should have been a simple request for an explanation.

Sometimes, criticism has been false where the person has done nothing wrong, as in the case of these tribes, and a simple explanation should suffice. What if the person really has done something amiss? Should he then be criticized? Did Jesus criticize? No, while He brought reproof and counsel,—never criticism. What is the difference? Criticism offers no help -it is just an opinion. Reproof and counsel should offer help and alternatives.

OF MISSIONARIES

Sometimes missionary workers have been criticized because they are doing things differently than they have ever been done before. This also is wrong. As long as no principles are being broken, we should help out the worker. Perhaps this worker sees something we do not see and has a certain vision or idea that will be a blessing. When on this earth, Jesus brought, what everyone thought, a new way of looking at the law and He was severely

criticized by the religious leaders of His day. When, in fact, He was really pointing them back to the truths that they had lost sight of.

Perhaps we watch a missionary worker with careful scrutiny and decide that he is not very efficient, as the Pharisees were watching Jesus very carefully, waiting for Him to make one small mistake. If perhaps we find he is not working up to his full potential, do we have a right then to criticize? Maybe the worker is tired and needs help and encouragement. Again what did Aaron and Hur do when Moses got tired? They held up his hands and helped him. They could have sat on the side, watched Israel being defeated and then blamed it all on Moses. What would that have accomplished? No, they stepped in and helped.

“There are many who find special enjoyment in discoursing and dwelling upon the defects, whether real or imaginary of those who bear heavy responsibilities in connection with the institutions of God’s cause. They overlook the good that has been accomplished, the benefits that have resulted from arduous labour and unflinching devotion to the cause, and fasten their attention upon some apparent mistake, some matter that, after it has been done and the consequences have followed, they fancy could have been done in a better manner with fairer results; when the truth is, had they been left to do the work, they would either have refused to move at all under the attending discouragements of the case, or would have managed more indiscreetly than those who did do the work, following the opening of God’s providence.” 4T, p. 196.

OF INDIVIDUALS

We must be an Aaron and a Hur to our fellow believers also. “Every man has his peculiar defects of character. One may be free from the weakness which he sees in his brother, yet he may at the same time have faults which are far more grievous in the sight of God. This unfeeling criticism of one another is wholly satanic.” 5T, 35.

“You see that your brethren do not come up to the Bible standard, that there are defects in them; and you dwell upon these defects. You feed upon them instead of feeding upon Christ, and by beholding you become changed into the same image. But criticize no one; do not contrast your own exact course with the deficiencies of others. You may be in danger of wanting to correct others and make them feel their wrongs. Do not do this. This is not the work God has given you to do. He has not made you a church tinker. There are many things which you view in the light of the Bible. But though you may be in the right on some points, do not get the impression that your positions are always correct; for on many points your ideas are distorted and will not bear criticism.” 5T, p. 334.

“The inclination to criticize is the greatest danger of many. The brethren whom you are tempted to criticize are called to bear responsibilities which you could not possibly carry; but you can be their helpers. You can do great service to the cause if you will, by presenting your experience in the past in connection with the labors of others. The Lord has not given to any of you the work of correcting and censuring your brethren.” Ev., p. 107.

DUTY TOWARDS LEADERS

“As young men go forth to preach the truth, you should have seasons of prayer for them. Pray that God will connect them with Himself and give them wisdom, grace, and knowledge. Pray that they may be guarded from the snares of Satan and kept pure in thought and holy in heart. I entreat you who fear the Lord to waste no time in unprofitable talk or in needless labor to gratify pride or to indulge the appetite. Let the time thus gained be spent in wrestling with God for your ministers. Hold up their hands as did Aaron and Hur the hands of Moses.” 5T, p. 162.

“And let those who love the Lord and His truth unite by twos and threes to seek places of retirement to pray for God’s blessing upon the minister who can hardly find time to pray because he is constantly engaged attending to so many requests, sitting in councils, answering inquiries, giving advice, writing important letters. Let the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous ascend to God, that the word spoken may be a message of truth to reach the hearts of the hearers, and that souls may thereby be won to Christ.” RH July 24, 1883. “The negligence on the part of the ministers has discouraged the people and the lack of interest, self-sacrifice, and appreciation of the work on the part of the people has discouraged the ministers.” 5T, p.257.

“Happy the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously.” 4T, p. 531.

We see several times in the Bible when Paul requested the prayers of his fellow believers. “Ye also helping together by prayer for us. . .” 2 Cor. 1:11. “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;” Romans 15:30.

SATAN'S HELPERS

In Sister White's day she saw a danger creeping into the church and she gave counsel to the church regarding the problem. All of her counsels and admonitions to the believers in her day are a warning for us, so we do not repeat these mistakes. She saw Satan's helpers in the church. May the Lord help us not to be a helper of Satan, but a helper of Jesus instead.

"Satan has many helpers. Many who profess to be Christians are aiding the tempter to catch away the seeds of truth from other hearts. Many who listen to the preaching of the word of God make it a subject of criticism at home. They sit in judgment on the sermon as they would on the word of a lecturer or a political speaker. The message that should be regarded as the word of the Lord to them is dwelt upon with trifling or sarcastic comment. The minister's character, motives, and actions, and the conduct of fellow members of the church, are freely discussed. Severe judgment is pronounced, gossip or slander repeated, and this in the hearing of the unconverted. Often these things are spoken by parents in the hearing of their own children. Thus are destroyed respect for God's messengers, and reverence for their message. And men are taught to regard lightly God's word itself." COL, p. 45/46.

Elders Jones and Waggoner were criticized for the Christ our Righteousness message they brought in 1888 at the General Conference session in Minneapolis. Unfortunately the church rejected the message. Sister White had a message for the church at that time. "To accuse and criticize those whom God is using is to accuse and criticize the Lord who has sent them." TM, p. 466.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

The term "constructive criticism" is used often to denote positive criticism that is given to help a person. Is it possible to have positive criticism? These words are two mutually exclusive terms. Criticism has a negative connotation, while constructive a positive one. To criticize you think of putting something down - to construct you think of building something up.

According to the dictionary criticism is: "Faultfinding, censure." A critic is: "A person who censures - finds fault" and also "a person who reviews literary, artistic or musical works." Criticize "Find fault with or censure" and "Discuss critically." I do not see very much in the way of positive thoughts from these dictionary definitions. In fact they sound quite negative.

How can these two words be used together? Not very well especially in a spiritual setting. Some people like to criticize and therefore make excuses by using this term, in an attempt to try and turn this criticism into a positive and acceptable tiling. It can't be done.

"In the work of helping others, we may gain most precious victories. We should devote ourselves with untiring zeal with earnest fidelity, with self-denial, and with patience, to the work of helping those who need to develop. Kind, encouraging words will do wonders. There are many who, if a constant, cheerful effort is put forth in their behalf, without faultfinding or chiding, will show themselves susceptible of improvement. The less we criticize others, the greater will be our influence over them for good. Too many, frequent, positive admonitions will do more harm than good. Let Christlike kindness be enjoyed upon all." Ev., p. 537.

She mentions that too many "Positive admonitions" will do more harm than good. Do these two words "positive admonitions" sound similar to "constructive criticism?"

Not "constructive criticism," but encouragement is what we want. What is the difference? Encouragement and instruction are important for younger workers and those new in the faith. Encouragement is: "To give courage, confidence, or hope to someone. To urge or advise, promote, or assist." Is this not what we want to do to our fellow believers?

The Bible tells us that if we see a brother in the wrong (Matthew 18) we are not to leave him in the wrong nor are we to criticize him, but go and encourage him to turn back to the right way. There is a right way to do it and a wrong way. We must be an Aaron or a Hur to them.

While living in Denver, Colorado before my children were born, I was working in an office of a wholesale warehouse. On the nice warm summer days I preferred to go and eat my lunch outside. Across the road was a small park with a lake in the middle. Here I frequently went for lunch. There were many geese that made this lake their home. Having walked around the lake the first day, I looked for a place to sit down. There was no place at all. Not a picnic table or a bench. I thought this quite odd considering the amount of warehouses across the road with many people who would like to come for lunch outside. However, due to the lack of seating no one else came. Day after day I went to the park and walked around. With all the geese around, sitting in the grass was out of the question with their washroom habits. One day as I was walking around the lake I saw some park workers trimming the bushes and went

over to them to explain my frustration at the lack of seating. I asked them who I could contact to get some seating put in. They gave me the name and address of the local government official in charge. Then one of the men gave me some very important counsel that has stayed with me since that time. He told me that if I wanted to get something done, I had to tell them how much I appreciated their work; how wonderful the park was; how many people want to use it but can't due to the lack of seating. I wrote such a letter and it was not long after that I received a reply. Not long after that the benches were put in place. The important lesson I learned was that whenever you want something done, or if you see something amiss, never criticize. Find something positive to say about the person or the situation - look at all the good points, and then bring up the concerns. Encourage - then ask. You see a brother doing wrong - first point out something positive in their character to them and then bring them your concern. It has worked many times for me.

UNFAITHFUL MINISTERS

“We have been inclined to think that where there are no faithful ministers there can be no true Christians, but this is not the case. God has promised that where the shepherds are not true He will take charge of the flock Himself. God has never made the flock wholly dependent upon human instrumentalities.” 5T, p. 80.

If a minister or leader makes a mistake and it causes difficulties with some members it is easy to blame them because we think they are to lead exemplary lives. Yes, it is true they are to lead exemplary lives, however they are not infallible. If we believed that they were, then we would have a Papal system. Then seeing as they are not infallible, they will make mistakes - expect it. However the important part is how we react when we see a mistake made. Do we criticize? Or do we step in like Aaron and Hur and offer help? I think if we all worked together to help our missionaries and leaders, the work would go forward with greater efficiency.

Even if a minister has done something we see as wrong, we are still to respect them and offer help. Maybe we see a minister or worker who we think is lazy and not working as hard as he should. Do we have a right to criticize then? No, again we are to offer help. We do not know what kind of difficulties they are going through at the moment. Perhaps they had some trying experiences that caused them to become discouraged. It happens easily because bearing burdens for the Lord is challenging at the best of times. While it is not hard, physical labour, it is mentally very taxing. Not everyone is called to enter full time missionary work. It is a high calling and those that are called, need a lot of help and encouragement. We don't want them to quit through discouragement. Who will fill their place? The harvest is ripe and the labourers are few. Let's help those few that we have so we don't lose them.

“While your president neglected his work and failed in his duty, your attitude was not such as to give him any encouragement.” 5T, p. 281.

Again in Sister White's day there were problems in Battle Creek. I pray we will not make the same mistakes. “Many thank God for the truth and then turn around and question and find fault with the very means which Heaven has ordained to make them what they are or what they ought to be. How much more pleasing to God it would be for them to act the part of Aaron and Hur and help hold up the hands of those who are bearing the great and heavy burdens of the work in connection with the cause of God. Murmurers and complainers should remain at home, where they will be out of the way of temptation, where they cannot find food for their jealousies, evil surmisings, and faultfindings, for the presence of such is only a burden to the meetings; they are clouds without water.

“Those who feel at liberty to find fault with and censure those whom God has chosen to act an important part in this last great work would better seek to be converted and to obtain the mind of Christ. Let them remember the children of Israel who were so ready to find fault with Moses, whom God had ordained to lead His people to Canaan, and to murmur against even God Himself. All these murmurers fell in the wilderness. It is easy to rebel, easy to give battle before considering matters rationally, calmly, and settling whether there is anything to war against. The children of Israel are an example to us upon whom the ends of the world are come.

“It is easier for many to question and find fault in regard to matters at Battle Creek than to tell what should be done. Some would even venture to take this responsibility, but they would soon find themselves deficient in experience and would run the work into the ground. If these talkers and faultfinders would themselves become burden bearers and pray for the labourers, they would be blessed themselves and would bless others with their godly example, with their holy influence and lives. It is easier for many to talk than to pray; such lack spirituality and holiness, and their influence is an injury to the cause of God.” IT, p. 527.

I have noticed over the years, that those who are the most vocal in criticizing missionaries, leaders and elders are those who do the least amount of missionary work. They don't end up staying in God's church very long either, when they become critical. They find fault with everyone it seems. If Jesus were here they would probably find fault with Him also.

IN CONCLUSION

There is one time when criticism is allowable and even encouraged. “We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.” COL, p. 331.

“Evilspeaking has a two fold curse, falling more heavily upon the speaker than upon the hearer. He who scatters the seeds of dissension and strife reaps in his own soul the deadly fruits. The very act of looking for evil in others develops evil in those who look. By dwelling upon the faults of others, we are changed into the same image.” MH, p. 492
Every person is different on the face of this earth. Each has his/her own way of thinking and performing certain actions. If we ever hope to get along we must learn tolerance of each other’s differences here on earth. This is not only true in regular friendships and in families, but also in a church setting. Each church member is different. Although the pillars of the truth are to remain firm, each has his/her own lifestyle differences and we are to accept each person the way they are - as long as they are living up to God’s standard.

Then there are missionary workers. Whether they are ministers, canvassers, Bible workers or simply church leaders or elders, each one is different and works in a different manner. Just because one worker does not do things exactly as another worker will, this does not mean that one is wrong and one is right - or one is better than the other.

Sister White counsels that it is important to have workers move occasionally so that a church does not conform to a minister and depend wholly on him. The Lord wants members in His church that will conform to Him and this is why the counsel came to move workers. The new worker coming into an area will most likely do things in a manner completely different from the previous worker. This does not mean that the new worker is wrong - or consequently it does not mean that the previous worker was wrong either, necessitating a new worker to improve on a situation. The Lord loves His church and it is our duty to respect and help out whomever the Lord will send to lead each particular church.

So let’s not sit back and watch our workers and leaders with a critical eye — waiting to catch them in a mistake or see them getting tired. (They will get tired, as they are human). Let’s be like Aaron and Hur and quietly step in and lend a hand. AMEN.

Wendy Eaton.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF EVIL

Parts

“All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies. 1 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. But peace shall be upon Israel. 2 Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways.” 3

It wasn’t until after I had read “the Testimony of Jesus,” which is “the Spirit of Prophecy,” I began to understand “the way, the truth, and the life” of a Christian. A Christian is “one who professes belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ.” 4 “The fact that men are in the church does not prove them Christians.” 5 “That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God...” 6 “Falsehearted professor, Jesus knows thy works.” 7

“Consider, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord has a people, a chosen people, His church, to be His own, His own fortress, which he holds in a sin-stricken, revolted world.” 8 “It is the purpose of God to glorify Himself in His people before the world.” 9 “The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory.” 10

“The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth.” 11 “By the word and the Spirit of God are opened

to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is “holy, and just, and good,” a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character.” 12 “No one but Christ is given us as an example. He is our true Pattern, and each should strive to excel in imitating Him.” 13 “He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. When He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” 14

“Everyone whose name is registered on the church roll is under obligation to represent Christ by revealing the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit.” 15 “Every person, upon becoming a member of the church, pledges himself to be a representative of Christ by living out the truth he professes.” 16 (If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.) 17 “All who have professed to be followers of Christ have, in taking this step, pledged themselves to walk even as He walked.” 18 “The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners.” 19

“There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away.” 20 “Your thoughts, your words, and your actions, as well as your appetites and passions, must be brought into subjection to the will of God.” 21 “The law of God will be satisfied with nothing short of perfection, of perfect and entire obedience to all its claims.” 22 “Sin must be given up, hated, and the righteousness of Christ must be accepted by faith.” 23 “You cannot serve self and at the same time be servants of Christ. You must die to self, die to your love of pleasure...” 24 “Self must be slain.” “If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified.” “Perfection of character cannot possibly be attained without self-sacrifice.” “It will require effort, perseverance, and earnestness to obtain the victory over long-established habits which have become as second nature.” it may take time to attain perfect submission to God’s will, but we can never stop short of it and be fitted for heaven.” “We must expect difficulties. Trials will come. Christ, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering. His followers will encounter the enemy many times and will be severely tried, but they

need not despair. Christ says to them: “Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.’ John 16:33.” “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. Amen.

Chester Cosby

1 Psalm 25:10

2 Psalm 125:5

3 Psalm 128:1

4 Merriam Webster’s Dictionary

5 COL p. 74

6 Romans 9:8

7 1Tp. 195

8 TMp. 16

9 9T p. 21

10 COL p. 415, 416

11 SC p. 60

12 GC p. 469

13 1Tp. 126

14 1 Peter 2:22, 23

15 9T p. 22

16 4T p. 464

17 Ephesians 4:21

18 2T p. 32

19 COL p. 142, 143

20 SC p. 39

21 3T p. 538

22 1Tp. 416
 23 5T p. 632
 24 2Tp. 129
 25 3T p. 475
 26 MB p. 143
 27 9T p. 53
 28 2T p. 80
 29 3T p. 538
 31 8Tp. 212

Current Scene

Will The Vatican Achieve Its Plan For a New World Order?

1. Moral Authority and the Economy Back in 1992, the May/June issue of *News Watch* magazine ran a report on the interview between the much talked about former Jesuit professor, Malachi Martin, and talk show host, J.P. McCarthy. Martin said the Vatican believes the pope has the “moral authority” to help the world solve its problems. Martin also said that in the not too far distant future (2000 A.D.?) we will see an omni-national trading system designed to bring the world’s failing economy under control; and the pope, whoever he may be, will act as head of a supervisory agency which will oversee the movements and decisions of this new economic system, **As of March 1995, Europe had forged a free-trade zone of 19 nations with 380 million consumers. We have the *World Trade Organization (WTO)* and *NAFTA* and *GATT* in today’s world. We also have seen the *International Monetary Fu/io*’ (IMF) created with Michel Camdessus, a Roman Catholic, as managing director. The *National Catholic Register (NCR)*, of July 1997, reported that Camdessus believes in the redistribution of wealth and views the spiritual values of a nation as key to its economic health. It is no accident that the pope holds and espouses the same concepts.** The NCR further quotes Camdessus as saying he believes the *International Monetary Fund* can make or break struggling nations. **He is quoted as saying:**

“We are here to help build the new heaven and the new earth, as it says in the book of Revelation. I am called to act in such a way that by making better this world here I prepare, in a better way, for the new earth.” This man believes that, as head of the IMF, he can make life better for countries; and, in that capacity, he is doing God’s will.

Unfortunately, the IMF, WTO, and other organizations are doing the pope’s bidding. **Only ten years ago the NCR, of March 13, 1988, reported on Pope John Paul II’s encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*.** Dealing with social concerns, the encyclical stated:

“World peace is inconceivable unless the world’s leaders come to recognize that interdependence **in itself demands the abandonment of the politics of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military or political imperialism and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration.**”

In other words: a one-world government. **The encyclical goes on to say this:**

“It is necessary to state once more the characteristic principle of Christian social doctrine: the goods of this world are originally meant for all . . . private property, in fact, is under a social mortgage . . . the universal destination of goods.” In the NCR of November 20, 1997, under the headline, “*Vatican Calls for the Broader Debt Reduction for Poorest Countries,*” it says:

“In his 1994 letter on preparing for the year 2000, the pope said the Jubilee year would be an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not canceling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations.”

Let us remember that the one-world economic system will be able to control nations for the New World Order. The technology is already available. **The *Burroughs Corporation* provides the hardware for the *Society of Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications*, representing 1,000s of banks on five continents. Revelation 13:17 speaks of a time when no man can buy or sell unless he has the mark, the name, or the number of the beast power.**

In February 22-28, 1998, the NCR reported:

“The *World Bank* and the world’s major religions are to establish joint working groups on development issues, it was announced today at the end of a high-level, two-day dialogue at Lambeth Palace, the

Archbishop of Canterbury's London headquarters.”

In summary, we can say that it doesn't take much faith anymore to believe Bible prophecy. 2. Catholics Determined to Reclaim America Priest John A. Perricone, the founder of *Christ/Fideles, Saving America's Soul*, says that October 17, 1993, was the beginning of the campaign to “*Make America Catholic*,” with Catholic values. Pope Leo XII compared the proper relation between Church and State to “the union of the soul and the body in man.” In this forum, America was pictured in a crisis and in dire need of the only solution: Catholic action, which is social, political, and moral. It was pointed out that Rome owns America by right of discovery by a Catholic, Christopher Columbus.

Let us trace this campaign to 1998. Consider the following:

“**The facts:** A new Catholic organization seeks to restore Catholic values in a post-Christian society.

“**The impact:** The mission of the *Catholic Campaign for America (CCA)* is **nothing if not ambitious**; the group has set out not to just influence laws on Capitol Hill but to change the very hearts and minds of America. **The executive director of CCA [which has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.] is Thomas Wykes. He said: “We have an obligation to persuade, and the American people have not been persuaded effectively enough yet.** The goal of CCA is to restore Catholic values to society by galvanizing Catholic citizens, increasing the Catholic electorate's influence in public policy, and focusing attention on Catholic moral and doctrinal teaching. Those leading out say the Catholic moment is now and the country is ready for just this kind of bold initiative. **Mary DeTurris, National Catholic Register, May1, 1994.** “The *Catholic Campaign for America* has a full head of steam. With a membership that has doubled in one year's time and an ambitious plan designed to get Church teachings out of the pews and into the public eye, it is fast becoming a force to be reckoned with. Both parties in 1996 should be made aware of the Catholic vote” **said Thomas Wykes, executive director.” National Catholic Register; “Public Catholicism, “March 26,1995.**

“**Ten major markets to get Catholic Radio in a \$58.2 million dollar deal that will bring Catholic Radio 24 hours a day by this fall:** The goal is to reach the widest possible audience with radio that is based upon Catholic principles **said Joseph Fessio, SJ, of Ignatius Press.” National Catholic Register, May 3,1998.**

This is just part of the Catholic Campaign for America, to convince the hearers that Rome has changed. She is now presenting a fair and benign face to the world. “In a formal papal Bull the pope urges repentance for [the year 2000] Jubilee. **The Church should kneel before God and implore his forgiveness;** He urged a new culture of international solidarity in which wealthy nations and the private sector accept an economic model that serves everyone. A panel of Vatican theologians is working on a list of sins to be unveiled by 2000, which include the Crusades, the Inquisition, forced evangelization of the New World and the Church's failure to speak out strongly against slavery and the Jewish Holocaust during the Nazi era”. *Statement by Vatican City, quoted in Dallas Morning News, November 28, 1998.*

This papal Bull is in exact fulfillment of a prophecy Ellen White made many years ago.

“The Roman Church now presents a fair front to the world, **covering with apologies her record of horrible cruelties.** She has clothed herself in Christ-like garments; but she is unchanged.” *Great Controversy, “Aims of the Papacy, “p. 571.*

Rome tells the world she has changed. As a proof of this, the Archbishop of Taurin noted that the pope has spoken out on the Middle East peace process and war in the former Yugoslavia, as well as other world trouble spots. What many do not realize is that while appearing to bring peace she has had her hand in much of the trouble to begin with, and is playing a double role.

The Scriptures, in Micah 4 and Isaiah 2:2-22, speak of a great peace movement in the “last days.”

“**Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob and He will teach us of His ways, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Isaiah 2:3.** The prophecy goes on to say:

“**He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” Isaiah 2:4.**

Though this may well apply to Satan when he appears to the nations as Christ, in a large measure we now see the papacy trying to act as the world's peacemaker.

The rest of Isaiah 2 tells us God is not in this peace movement.

“**Therefore thou hast forsaken Thy people [they claim to worship God] the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the East, and are soothsayers like the Philistines [they are occult] and please themselves in the children of strangers (ecumenical dialogue with non-Christian religions). Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands.” Isaiah 2:6, 8.** The answer to this peace movement is found in another Bible prophecy:

“**For when they say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them . . and they shall not escape.” 1 Thessalonians5:3. 3. The Crowning Deception**

We see events occurring which will cause the people of the world to call for a strong leader who will take

charge of Earth and bring order out of chaos. **As earthquakes, storms, crimes, disasters, and wars increase and grow more frequent and violent, people are asking, "What do these things mean?"**

Elizabeth Bird, a sociologist of the University of Minnesota, said: "Supermarket tabloids speak for a large number of people." **There is widespread interest in the supernatural today. The reports of Marian appearances around the world continue to grow. Horoscopes are the rage. "Ancient Prophecies" have been aired on television. The UFO craze is popular. Many books have been written on this subject.** The Vatican has a radio telescope on Mt. Graham in Arizona, designed to listen for advice from outer space. Will Satan communicate with the Vatican?

In conclusion: Final battle plans of the devil are fast taking shape. How will he do it? Since World War II, Satan has been setting up a plan for world domination and invoking the personal worship of himself. **He has always wanted the worship that belongs only to Jesus Christ. See Isaiah 14:12-14.** The one-world government plan is already in place and ready to be implemented as soon as events permit. **Then Satan plans to receive the worship he has always coveted. The people are ready to accept this false Christ.** The leaders allied with Satan want a world crisis of just the right proportions to set final events in motion, **so that, with their false christ in place, the people can sin with confidence.**

Yet God has held things in check. Satan can move only as rapidly as God allows. For the sake of His people and for those He still hopes to save, our Lord has held back those momentous events, but for how much longer? God's people must work for souls as never before. Time is very short. **4. So Close to the End**

We are living in a time when we may see this one-world economic system come together. Because of her Constitution which gives freedom of expression and worship, America has stood in the way until now. Rome has controlled South American nations by a union of church and state. Quoting from the Jesuit magazine, America.

"The institutional church in Colombia has been historically linked with the state. The church is accordingly seen as a source of secular power and influence. Its financial resources and political capital have served the wealthy." *America*, a U.S. national Jesuit magazine.

This is an interesting admission concerning social justice issues and it is typical of what happens in a land which Rome rules. Until recently, the United States has been Protestant. **But, on March 29, 1994, leading Protestant Evangelicals and Catholics signed a joint declaration to work together in the third millennium.**

We are rapidly moving toward a total reaching of hands across the gulf, when Protestantism will completely sell out the Reformation to the Papacy.

Do we see the influence of the occult in the churches? **The so-called Jesus Seminar is typical and has been adopted by most seminaries of the Catholic and mainline Protestant denominations.** More than 100 seminary professors from almost all major denominations are members of the Jesus Seminar.

What are their beliefs? They believe that many basic Bible facts were fabricated by the early church Fathers, to take the place of Scripture.

This includes the Jewish instigation of the crucifixion of Jesus, the Lord's prayer, any of the parables of Jesus, as well as other statements in the Bible.

Satan offers the manifestations of Mary, along with *Earth and Spirit Conferences*, to call together the people from traditional faiths and environments.

In 1990, Carl Sagen stated, "To safeguard and cherish the environment we need to be infused with a vision of the sacred." He was a member of the Earth and Spirit Conference associated with Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

In 1885, Ellen White wrote:

"When under the influence of this three-fold union [Catholic, apostate Protestants, and the occult], our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions; then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." *5 Testimonies, 451. 5. "A New Age Dawns: It's Catholic"* That is what the *National Catholic Register* said on April 11, 1999.

A special article, written by Cardinal Paul Poupard, was printed in the April 11 and 17, 1999, issues of the National Catholic Register (HCK). Pope John Paul II has given Poupard several important assignments, two of which include the "Evangelization of Peoples [of the world] with Catholic Education" and directorship of the *Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue*. The quotations given below are from this NCR Article. It is discussing how the year 2000 will usher in the Catholic New Age;

"We must try to bring the politicians back to Christ . . . **It is the duty of the Church . . . to help man recover his religious dimension. This enormous task is what I call the new humanism for the new millennium.**"

"We are planning many things for the year 2000. **In my travels throughout the world, I see great anticipation for the JUBILEE, especially in young people. It is a momentous time for the Church. To return to the job of the Pontifical Council for Culture, the time is ripe for the Church to speak the language of Man in order to help man learn the language of God.**"

From the above quotations we can see how the Church considers herself the *vehicle* to convert the world for "Christ." She also has, on many other occasions, spoken out on *Apivthls* is to be accomplished. Consider this:

1. "Pope calls for United Europe" *Jack Chick, Battle Cry, May/June, 1987.*
2. "Pope Seeks to Promote Vision of United Europe" *BangorDailyNews, Octobers, 1998.*
3. "Catholic Bishops Declare U.S. the World's Peacekeeper" *The Monitor, McAllen, TX, November 18, 1993.*
4. "U.S. Catholic Conference: Intervention [in world affairs] is U.S. Responsibility" *National Catholic Register, 1993.*

"The United States has a /pore/responsibility to intervene in Bosnia's war, including with military force, the chairman of the U.S. Bishops Conference told the U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher."

5. The Pope-Gorbachev meeting that brought down Communism in Russia was an "immense, epochal fact of great historic significance" said Cardinal Paul Poupard, head of the Vatican's dialogue agency with non-believers. "The great significance is in the fact that it is a major advance for the pope who is candidating to become the *moral leader* of World. This historic meeting was the capstone of 27 years of work by Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State."

6. "Public Catholicism: The *Catholic Campaign for America* has a full head of steam. It is fast becoming a force to be reckoned with." *National Catholic Register, March 26, 1995.*

7. "Sunday must be sanctified. A violator should be punished as a heretic." *Detroit News, July 7, 1998.*

8. "Vatican diplomat outlines Holy See's peace efforts, based on law and justice and to foster international one world order." *National Catholic Register, May 9, 1998.*

9. "Democracy's Big Gains since John Paul II: As he carried out his global mission over the past 18 years, the Polish pope has emerged as the world's most important and effective advocate of freedom and democracy." *National Catholic Register, May 3-9, 1998.*

6. Summary

Let us take a look at History and Bible Prophecy:

To bring everything into the proper perspective, we need to research into the past and into what God's Word has prophesied concerning the role Rome is to play in final events.

"From the beginning of his pontificate, John Paul has been talking about the convergence of the nations. He would endow his papacy with an international profile and, as pope, move around among world leaders and nations, vindicating a position for himself as a leader among leaders, because in that competition he plans to emerge as the victor." *Keys of This Blood, Malachi Martin, 480. Quoting further from Keys of this Blood:*

"The competition is about who will establish the first one world system of government that has ever existed in the society of nations . . . As to the time factor involved, those of us under seventy will see at least basic structures of the new world government installed . . . Those of us under forty will surely live under its legislative, executive, and judiciary (religious) control. This New World Order is not something around a distant corner of time, but . . . imminent. As a system that will be introduced and installed in our midst by the end of this final decade of the second millennium." *Keys of This Blood, Malachi Martin, 15-16.*

History Repeats itself:

Historians now know that, in ancient Rome, Bishop Sylvester I, "pope" of Rome (314 to 335), and Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (260-340), were two of the principle church leaders who worked closely with Emperor Constantine and influenced him to enact the first Sunday Laws. This was supposedly done in order to save the nation of Rome from the catastrophes that threatened the nation, both military and economic.

Later, in one of his writings, Eusebius mentioned with pride about the change in Bible teaching he had a part in carrying out:

"All things whatsoever it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's Day." *Patrologia Graeca, Vol. 23, Col. 1171.*

After working closely with Constantine on six national Sunday Laws, the official Church edict on the subject was then issued at the Council of Laodicea in 336 A.D. In the Roman Catholic official *Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, page 50, we are told: "Question: Which is the Sabbath day?" "Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day." "Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?"

"Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."

The Bible tells us that an "image" of the Roman hierarchy is to be formed in the last days by the beast coming up out of the earth, which has two horns like a Lamb, but speaks as a dragon (*Rev. 13:11*). This image to the first beast will be a carbon copy of it. The United State of America has power to give life to this image of the first beast (*Rev. 1:14, 15*). The Sunday is a mark of the authority of the first beast, and it will be the means to control the New World Order, by which no man will be able to buy or sell unless he has the mark

of the beast (*Rev. 13:17*). To bring about a worldwide condition of things (events) which will accept the "New World Order" David Rockefeller, the then powerful leader of the *Council on Foreign Relations*, said: "We are on the verge of a Global Transformation. All we need is the right major CRISIS, and nations will accept the New World Order." *Newsweek, January 1991*. According to today's newspapers, "the world is filled with storm and war and variance." Yet, **we are told**, "under ONE HEAD the papal power, the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate." *7 Testimonies, 182*. "...*For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord.*" *Isaiah 26:9,10*.

We know that the judgments of the Lord are the next thing to happen-the very thing that the forces of apostasy are awaiting in order to institute the new world order.

"I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful to the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood. All the world will be warned that there is a God who will display His authority as God. His unseen agencies will cause destruction, devastation, and death. All the accumulated riches will be as nothingness." *MR 4, 90* What role will the apostate "Protestants" play in the One World Order?

Pat Robertson of the "Christian" Coalition; has joined politics with religion, the very same tactic Rome used throughout her history.

We have been told this:

"Protestantism and Roman Catholicism will join hands and unite their views of how America will return to God and morality. Restoring morals should be the number one priority and the prime work of Congress, national polls show." *Reported by Rush Limbaugh, September 9, 1998*. The low state of national morals has set the stage as it were, for the fulfillment of prophecy, the grasp of political power by the churches, and the creation of a "need" for Sunday Laws to bring the nation "back to God." **Pat Robertson has suggested ways to skirt election laws and align the "Christian" Coalition behind a single Republican presidential candidate in the year 2000.** Robertson said:

"We said we'd have conservative control of Congress by 96; and we did it in 94. We also said by the year 2000 we'd have the presidency and that's the next goal." *Pat Robertson, quoted in Americans United, April 16, 1999*. **Question: Are these the words of a non-partisan religious leader or a party boss with a political agenda for America?**

"To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few this will be our test!" *5 Testimonies, 136-137*.

7. Will Rome Achieve Its Global Plans for New World Order?

Will the Vatican actually take over the world? The Vatican wants a New World Order formed, which, in practice, consists of a degree of Vatican control over the governments of the world.

That, admittedly, is a very ambitious plan! Will it actually take place? In one way it will: If Rome can get apostate Protestantism in America to coerce the U.S. Congress into enacting a National Sunday Law, under American influence that law could spread to the other nations. And, according to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, this is exactly what is going to happen.

We are told that, through Sunday exaltation, Rome will regain its former power and influence in the world.

And then will come the end.

Why would the U.S. Congress pass such a law? Lawmakers are desperate to do anything to ensure their own survival in their plush, high-paying jobs. Satanic excitement in the churches could lead to such an enactment.

Why would other nations enact similar laws? Because of the powerful satanic delusions which will quickly result. The entire world will be astounded with the overwhelming power of enchantments/judgments which would be released, as soon as the U.S. National Sunday Law is enacted.

Edited by Jerry Eaton

EARTHWATCH -MALARIA

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

MALARIA

Malaria is caused by parasites, and when a mosquito carrying malaria bites a victim to suck up the blood, it first injects saliva to prevent coagulation. The saliva contains the infective forms of the parasite (sporozoites). The incubation period following the bite of a mosquito bearing the infection is at least five to ten days - but as long as a year may elapse before symptoms appear.

EFFECTS

The principal symptoms are fever, malaise, chills with sweating, and heart and abdominal pains. Jaundice, and coma sometimes develop rapidly. Generally the severity of the illness is related to the number of parasites in the blood. Sometimes it can include liver and kidney failure, severe anemia and convulsions.

A bite from an infected mosquito in a hot country is not the only way of acquiring malaria. Occasionally mosquitoes hitch a ride in a plane and jump off somewhere like Paris, Rome, Gatwick or New York. A person may develop malaria following the inoculation of infected blood. Drug addicts occasionally transmit malaria when they share a syringe and needle. NOTE: AIDS is NOT transmitted by mosquitoes!

TREATMENT

Treatment by anti-malarial drugs are varied. Resistance of the malarial parasite to drugs is now widespread. Many scientists believe that drug treatment is of little value today, particularly, chloroquine. Others that are used but too may be questionable, are proguanil, maloprim, doxycycline, quinine sulfate and fansidar. Even if one decides to follow an antimalarial regimen carefully, an attack of malaria may still occur, though it is much less likely to be fatal.

Pregnant women are at special risk and should not travel to malarial areas, as malaria is more severe in pregnancy. A woman's resistance to malaria falls during pregnancy; both mother and fetus may suffer. British research, in a study done in Africa found that pregnant women attract twice as many mosquitoes that can carry malaria as women who are not pregnant, and should take special precautions to protect themselves. Pregnant women are more appealing to mosquitoes because they send out more bug-alluring signals. During pregnancy, women produce a greater volume of exhaled breath. As the baby grows the mother tends to take more frequent breaths, causing her to exhale a "cocktail of chemicals in the breath" that mosquitoes use to zero in on a meal. Also, pregnant women have a little furnace in them -the fetus - so they tend to be hotter, which causes an increase in skin bacteria that attract mosquitoes. This is especially dangerous, because malaria increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and low-birthweight babies, and it can lead to life-threatening anemia.

In any case one should deliberate on following a drug regimen, and ponder the risk factors seriously without such a program. Consultation with a physician and public health authorities are of the utmost importance before undertaking independent steps in the prevention or cure of malaria, and weighing the consequences of neglect, delay and ignorance.

PREVENTION

a) Outdoors:

Personal protection from insect bites out of doors are also varied and in some ways ineffective, but it is important, nevertheless, to take measures. Perhaps the best protection is a chemical repellent. Apart from the hazard of the disease, insect bites can be a nuisance in some places on the globe. In Howrah, near Calcutta, 500 bites by Culex mosquitoes per person per night (about one a minute throughout the night) are usual, and in such cases visitors would need encouragement to take measures for personal protection. Any chemical should be carefully treated and applied as it can be harmful to some, causing adverse reactions or unpleasantness. Some popular repellants are Deet, DMP, Off, 6/12, and in Australia a mosquito repellent soap has been recently

developed. This leaves a residue on the skin that can be washed off with water when no longer required; (sounds great! Maybe the brethren could send me some samples to try on the wary Greek mosquitoes).

These repellents are apparently effective against all free-flying, biting insects. When applied to the skin deet remains effective for only a few hours. But, when impregnated into cotton (not synthetic) material it remains effective for several weeks, especially if the material is kept in a plastic bag or tin when not in use. Clothes can be impregnated with deet; (1 ml deet and 8 ml water per 4g cotton or around 25 ml deet and 200 ml water for an average size shirt). This suspension is more economical by concentrating it in water. Clothes can be sprayed direct, too, with an aerosol deet. Spray clothes in vulnerable areas—ankles, wrists, and neck or impregnate netting.

Buzzers electronically devised are said to simulate the sound of a male mosquito and is a repellent to hungry mated females, but no scientific evidence substantiates its effectiveness. All agree these devices are worthless.

Clothing should be with long sleeves, and long trousers to be worn after dark to minimize risk of mosquito bites. Canvas mosquito boots make it impossible for mosquitoes to bite the ankles. Denim jeans are thick enough to be impenetrable to the proboscis of blackflies, which attack the lower leg (at last a practical use for blue denim jeans!) Blue clothing is said to be very attractive to tsetse flies and should be avoided in those areas of Africa.

b) Indoors:

Personal protection against insects biting indoors, too, are varied, and useful when the “target area” is in a house, cabin or hotel. Tight closing of windows will help, but this can be uncomfortable in a hot climate unless the room is air-conditioned. Air conditioning can be expensive too, and impractical in areas such as the bush or jungles of Africa, where no electricity is available. Ceiling fans, I have found, help to distract the blood seeking flight of insects.

Windows kept open for ventilation should be screened, but this is seldom completely effective in keeping mosquitoes out of rooms, so other lines of defense are needed. Aerosols are good for clearing out mosquitoes that are lurking in a room before one goes to bed, but have no residual effect on mosquitoes that enter later on during the night. The old fashioned and still the most effective way of dealing with these insects is to light a slow-burning, “mosquito-coil” which will smoke gently giving off pyrethrum. It is considered to be ‘safe’, and burns for 6-8 hrs. These are available cheaply in many tropical countries. Tests have shown, however, that some fraudulent brands contain no pyrethrum.

A modern version of the same idea is a small main-operated heating plate that slowly vaporizes a mat containing pyrethroids. These are more effective than the coils, but again, electricity sources may be a problem and mats or tablets may not be available in some parts of the tropics.

Vapona strips slowly give off vapour of the insecticide, dichlorvos without any need for heating.

The vapour emitted by coils, vaporizing mats, or vapona strips kills mosquitos in sealed rooms, but in comfortably ventilated rooms the vapors do no more than repel or stun insects so that they do not bite. So, if on a porch, or tent, or verandah, one should place the source of vapour upwind of those to be protected and at floor level, to deter mosquitoes from ankles.

NETS

Mosquito nets are my favorite; “chemical free” and are the safest way to deter mosquitoes that carry malaria and bite at night. The net must be of good quality, as slippage of the weave would allow mosquitoes to enter. Tears should be repaired or blocked with cotton wool and the net tucked in carefully under the mattress. Don’t sleep with your body against the net, as mosquitoes never miss an opportunity. Rectangular nets are better than “tent” type. Increased security can be had by spraying the nets with permethrin (a pyrethroid) when is effective for several months. When entering the net at night, check for holes, and take a flashlight with you to bed. Nothing is more disturbing an “awakening” than a mosquito trapped inside the net, and its Bzzzzzz. The consolation is that it is easy prey for the sleeper with just a whack between two hands. So. inspect for holes, and again, buy a good quality net.

FIGHTING FOODS

Another favorite of mine and other believers are the herbal oils and extracts, namely cajeput. and echinacea. The food warriors are garlic, cayenne, and ginger, carob, zinc, and kelp (sea-vegetables, anti-bacterial and antiviral), soy, green vegetables, fruits with the color orange, kiwi, strawberries etc.

SWEET GOOD-BYE

Lastly, avoid all simple carbohydrates; that means sugar, and all sugar containing products; fruit juices—bottled or fresh, canned sugar-containing products, all soft drinks, soda pop, ice-cream, cookies, cakes, pies, doughnuts, sugar}’ breakfast cereals, bottled salad dressings, ketchup, mayonnaise, chewing gum. dried fruits, sugar cane, overeating of fresh fruits—especially when over ripe. Remember that mosquitoes love these and those who devour them.

Eat the proper diet, God’s original diet, the “herb of the field”(Genesis 3:18). This was meant for Adam and Eve and for us to eat. Grains, fruits, nuts and vegetables.

Bzzzzzz... Got it!! Get it?

Dr. John S. Theodorou, Greece

Function of the Brain

Part 7 (Conclusion)

Remedies for the Individual

“God has spoken to the people, and He designs that they shall hear and obey His voice.” *CDF 77*

“Christ has said of His people, ‘Ye are the light of the world.’ We are the Lord’s denominated people, to proclaim the truths of heavenly origin. The most solemn, sacred work ever given to mortals is the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel’s messages to our world. In our large cities there should be health institutes to care for the sick, and to teach the grand principles of health reform.” *CDF 76*

“You need to carry out the health reform in your life; to deny yourself and eat and drink to the glory of God. Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. You need to practice temperance in all things. Here is a cross which you have shunned. To confine yourself to a simple diet, which will preserve you in the best of condition of health, is a task to you...

“In order to render to God perfect service, you must have clear conceptions of His requirements.” *Ibid.*
83

“The Lord has given me light for you on the subject of temperance in all things.” *Ibid.* 137

“The Lord has chosen you to do His work, and if you work carefully, prudently, and bring your habits of eating in strict control to knowledge and reason, you would have many more pleasant, comfortable hours than if you acted unwisely. Put on the brakes, hold your appetite under strict charge, and then leave yourself in the hands of God. Prolong your life by careful supervision of yourself. *Ibid.* 162

“What does the great Medical Missionary say? ‘If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’” *Ibid.* 165

“Temperance in all things has more to do with our restoration to Eden than men realize.” *Ibid.* 43

“The only safe course is to touch not, taste not, handle not, tea, coffee, wines, tobacco, opium, and alcoholic drinks.” *Ibid.* 428

“In order to preserve health, temperance in all thing is necessary,—temperance in labor, temperance in eating and drinking. Our heavenly Father sent the light of health reform to guard against the evils resulting from a

debased appetite, that those who love purity and holiness may know how to use with discretion the good things He has provided for them, and that by exercising temperance in daily life, they may be sanctified through the *truth* “*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene* 52

“Keep the work of health reform to the front, is the message I am instructed to bear. Show so plainly its value that a widespread need for it will be felt. Abstinence from all hurtful food and drink is the fruit of true religion. He who is thoroughly converted will abandon every injurious habit and appetite. By total abstinence he will overcome his desire for health-destroying indulgences.” *Ibid* 457

“Said the angel, ‘Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.’ You have stumbled at the health reform. It appears to you to be a needless appendix to the truth. It is not so; it is a part of the truth. Here is a work before you which has yet been brought to bear upon you. While you hesitate and stand back, failing to lay hold upon the blessing which it is your privilege to receive, you suffer loss. You are stumbling over the blessing which heaven has placed in your path to make progress less difficult. Satan presents this before you in the most objectionable light, that you may combat that which would prove the greatest benefit to you, which would be for your physical and spiritual health.” *Ibid.* 39

“The Lord has given His people a message in regard to health reform. This light has been shining upon their pathway for thirty years; and the Lord cannot sustain His servants in a course which will counteract it. He is displeased when His servants act in opposition to the message upon this point, which He has given them to give to others. Can he be pleased when half the workers laboring in a place, teach that the principles of health reform are as closely allied with the third angel’s message as the arm is to the body, while their co-workers, by their practice, teach principles that are entirely opposite? This is regarded as a sin in the sight of God...

“Nothing brings such discouragement upon the Lord’s watchmen as to be connected with those who have mental capacity, and who understand the reasons of our faith, but by precept and example manifest indifference to moral obligations.

“The light which God has given upon health reform cannot be trifled with without injury to those who attempt it; and no man can hope to succeed in the work of God while, by precept and example, he acts in opposition to the light which God has sent. *Ibid.* 38

CONCLUSION

“To make natural law plain, and to urge obedience to it, is a work that accompanies the third angel’s message.

“Ignorance is no excuse now for transgression of the law. The light shines clearly, and none need be ignorant; for the great God Himself is man’s instructor. All are bound by the most sacred obligations to heed the sound philosophy and genuine experience which God is now giving them in reference to health reform. He designs that the subject shall be agitated, and the public mind deeply stirred to investigate it; for it is impossible for men and women, while under the power of sinful, health-destroying, brain- enervating habits, to appreciate sacred truths. *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene* 9-10

“Christ fought the battle upon the point of appetite, and came off victorious; and we also can conquer through strength derived from Him. Who will enter in through the gates into the city? -Not those who declare that they cannot break the force of appetite. Christ has resisted the power of him who would hold us in bondage; though weakened by his long fast of forty days, he withstood temptation, and proved by this act that our cases are not hopeless. I know that we cannot obtain the victory alone; and how thankful we should be that we have a living Saviour, who is ready and willing to aid us!” *Ibid.* 19

“God always honors the right. The most promising youth from all the lands subdued by the great conqueror had been gathered at Babylon, yet amid them all, the Hebrew captives were without a rival. The erect form, the firm, elastic step, the fair countenance, the undimmed senses, the untainted breath, - all were so many certificates of good habits -insignia of the nobility with which nature honors those who are obedient to her laws.

“The history of Daniel and his companions has been recorded on the pages of the inspired word, for the benefit of the youth of all succeeding ages. What men have done, men may do. Did those youthful Hebrews stand firm amid great temptations, and bear a noble testimony in favor of true temperance—the youth of today may bear a similar testimony...

“The lesson here presented is one which we would do well to ponder. Our danger is not from scarcity, but from abundance. We are constantly tempted to excess. Those who would preserve their powers unimpaired for the service of God, must observe strict temperance in the use of His bounties, as well as total abstinence from every injurious or debasing indulgence.” *Ibid.* 27

“It is he that overcometh who will be honored, and whose name will not be blotted out of the book of life.” *Ibid.* 37

“It is not an easy matter to overcome the appetite for narcotics and stimulants. But in the name of Christ this great victory can be gained, His love for the fallen race was so great that He made an infinite sacrifice to reach them in their degradation, and through His divine power finally elevate them to His throne. But it rests with man whether Christ shall accomplish for him that which he is fully able to do. God cannot work against man’s will to save him from Satan’s artifices. Many must put forth human power to resist and conquer at any cost; he must be a co-worker with Christ. Then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God, and partaker with Christ of His glory. ‘No drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God’; but ‘to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.’” *Ibid.* 40

“We entreat of you to turn your attention to the work of overcoming. Those who shall at last have a right to the tree of life, will be those who have kept God’s commandments.” *Ibid.* 40

“The Lord is waiting for His people to become wise in understanding. As we see the wretchedness, deformity, and disease that have come into the world as the result of ignorance in regard to the proper care of the body, how can we refrain from giving the warning? Christ has declared that as it was in the days of Noah, when the earth was filled with violence and corrupted by crime, so shall it be when the Son of man is revealed. God has given us great light, and if we walk in this light, we shall see His salvation.

“There is need of decided changes. It is time for us to humble our proud, self-willed hearts, and seek the Lord while He may be found. As a people we need to humble our hearts before God; for the scars of inconsistency are on our practice.

“The Lord is calling upon us to come into line. The day is far spent. The night is at hand. The judgments of God are already seen, both on land and on sea. No second probation will be granted us. This is no time for making false moves. Let every one thank God that we still have an opportunity to form characters for the future eternal life.” *CDF* 40

“Every man has the opportunity, to a great extent, of making himself whatever he chooses to be. The blessings of this life, and also of the immortal state, are within his reach. He may build up a character of solid worth, gaining new strength at every step. He may advance daily in knowledge and wisdom, conscious of new delights as he progresses, adding virtue to virtue, grace to grace. His faculties will improve by use; the more wisdom he gains the greater will be his capacity for acquiring. His intelligence, knowledge, and virtue will thus develop into greater strength and more perfect symmetry.

On the other hand, he may allow his powers to rust out for want of use, or to be perverted through evil habits, lack of self-control or moral and religious stamina. His course then tends downward; he is disobedient to the law of God and to the laws of health. Appetite conquers him; inclination carries him away. *Ibid.* 41

“God grant that we may be wide awake to this awful evil. May He help us to labor with all our power to save men and women and youth from this effort of the enemy to ensnare them. We do not take into the church those who use liquor or tobacco. We cannot admit such ones. But we can try to help them to overcome. We can tell them that by giving up these harmful practices, they will make their families and themselves happier. Those whose hearts are filled with the Spirit of God will feel no need for stimulants.

“Men and women have many habits that are antagonistic to the principles of the Bible. The victims of strong drink and tobacco are corrupted, body, soul, and spirit. Such ones should not be received into the church until they give evidence that they are truly converted, that they feel the need of the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. The truth of God will purify the true believers. He who is thoroughly converted will abandon every defiling habit and appetite. By total abstinence he will overcome his desire for health-destroying indulgences.” *Temperance* 165-6

God’s word tells us that our destiny is in our hands - it depends on us. We have to choose between life and death. Let God help us to understand His calling to obey the commandments and natural law. In this way only we can proclaim the message of health reform to the world. We have to be overcomers if we would live unto Jesus. Because this is the last article in this series, I wish you God’s blessings to follow in His way and then surely we are promised eternal life. AMEN.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

DON'T GIVE A FINGER

It is said that if you give Satan a little finger, he will take your whole hand and then the natural result is that he takes all of you. Often some sins are considered small, and this is especially a danger when young people are reaching an age when they want to "spread their wings," and deviate slightly from their parents warnings and admonishments -just to try a little of the world. Only a little bit. You say you will not go completely into the world, but what is the danger of just a little? That little bit can lead to something larger without your realizing what is happening at first.

Here is a true story that shows how Satan works from small beginnings. It is a story told by a lady called Mara Moor. Mara, in the Bible, means "Bitterness". When the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea and proceeded into the desert, there was no water to drink and everyone was thirsty. Finally someone spotted some water and there was joy in the camp. However, this joy was quickly turned into sadness when it was discovered that the waters tasted bitter. Thankfully the waters did not remain bitter. God instructed Moses to throw a tree into the water and the water became clean. This place was still called Mara even though the water was cleansed. The name remained to remind the descendants of the Israelites forever after of the miracle of the healing of the water. They would always ask why sweet tasting water was called Mara and then the story of the miracle would be told.

This story - told by Mara Moore, concerning her brother, unfortunately does not have a happy ending like the waters at Mara, but I hope it serves as a warning to all young people, to not give Satan that finger. And remember it is a true story.

It was in the large living room of a mansion in the state of Missouri where, on a pleasant October evening, ten or twelve young people gathered from the richest families in the city. Among them was a young woman who, though she was always kind and social with other young people, was always wearing black clothing as a sign of mourning and sadness. She had also changed her name to Mara. This was not the name she was born with, but she had gone through such terrible grief and bitterness about seven or eight years earlier and was left without any family, that she decided to change her name.

The hours flew by and the young people were having a very pleasant evening until about half past ten in the evening, when one person pulled out a pack of cards and flung them on the table where Mara Moore was sitting. This person wanted to simply have a game of cards and this was his way of asking a few people to play with him. It just happened that Mara was sitting at the table near the place where the cards landed. Mara's reaction was startling to everyone. Her face became deathly pale; she trembled, arose from her seat, staggered across the room, and sat down in a corner as far away from that table as she possibly could. Her turmoil was so great that everyone noticed it. They stopped what they were doing and just looked at her, wondering what was wrong.

One young person, who had been studying law for some time, did not imagine how serious was her anguish. He went over to her and started to tease her a little. He jokingly threatened her with a legal prosecution before the jury in case she refused to return to her place at the table, and submit to the rules of the evening. While the lawyer was urging her to return, a thoughtless young man of the company stepped up to them and placed a few cards in her hand. She jerked her hand away, and wiped them vigorously as if trying to get rid of the contaminating filth of the cards; and, with an agonizing scream, she began weeping and sobbing as if her heart would break.

Everyone was surprised at this new outburst; the lawyer realized his mistake and tried to soothe her wounded spirit. When Mara finally calmed down he, as well as everyone else, encouraged her to tell them all the reason for her terrible agitation. At first she did not want to tell them why she was so troubled, but when everyone urged her so strongly, she finally consented. At the first word a shudder passed through her entire body; she paused, regained her self-control and went on with her story:

"When I was nineteen years old, I was living in an Eastern city, in one of the happiest homes within its limits. A rich and kind father, with a loving and gentle mother, and as bright and true a brother as ever a sister could want, were my companions in the delightful home of my childhood. Wealth and comfort smiled upon us, and prophesied of future happiness, until, with my own hand, I brought down the greatest curse possible to my family.

"It happened that two of our cousins were visiting us, a brother and a sister.

We spent the evening in pleasant conversation as we did here this evening; and just as those cards were thrown upon the table, and at about the same hour, (my parents having gone to bed already), our cousin threw a deck of cards upon our table. They two and I sat down to play, while my dear and tenderly loved brother, not liking the idea of playing cards, turned to his music, which he was composing as a graduating exercise for examination day, and went to work at that. We three needed a fourth person in order to play the game properly, and we began trying to

persuade my brother to come and take part with us; but he said he thought it was not right to waste time playing cards. He said that it was an amusement of the lowest character, and he did not want to get into it.

“We used all our arguments to encourage him to play with us, but he still refused to come and play. Finally I went to him, put my arm around his neck, and told him that I was a Christian, and was trying to get to heaven, and thought it no harm to play cards just for amusement; that I thought he ought to lay aside his scruples and come and help us, as we could not have fun with only three of us; besides he was being a little too fanatical, anyway. With these final words he arose from his seat, very reluctantly, and came, protesting all the way that he did not know how to play and didn't really want to play. We told him we would teach him and he would quickly learn. And he did; only he learned too quickly. In no time at all he was as good as the rest of us; and when the rest of us had become tired of playing, he was so delighted with it that he sat for an hour studying the cards and shuffling them.

“We laughed heartily at him for his interest in the cards, and finally went to bed, leaving him with the cards. Next morning he took the cards again, and tried to encourage us to play with him; but our cousins had to go home, and soon left us, taking the deck of cards with them. But the fatal act had been done. That night my brother was in the city until a late hour, which was something he had never done before.

When he came home he seemed very sad. We tried to ask him what was wrong, but he refused to answer.

“The next night he was out again; and this continued for many nights, until his money - about two hundred dollars - was all gone. He then went to father for more, and, as he had great trust in his son, father very readily gave him quite a large amount of money without asking him what he was going to do with it. This was soon all gone. When he asked for more, father desired him to tell what he was doing with so much money. My brother would not give a direct answer so father only gave him a small amount of money this time, and told him he would not get any more unless he would give a clear report of the use he made of his money. This money was soon spent and when he went for more, but was unwilling to give account as to where the money went, father refused to give him more. With this refusal he became angry, and told father he would make him willing to let him have the money. My brother then went into the city again, and, as usual, into the gambling den, where he managed to get a little money. Sometimes he just went and watched. He didn't come home for a whole week.

“During this time my mother neither ate nor slept; and when my brother was brought home drunk, she became so ill and went to bed, never getting up again, but died of a broken heart, within a few days.

“We hoped this would stop my brother's course of action, but it did so only for a short time. He soon began gambling and drinking again; and, being young and not used to so much drink, it was not long before he was brought home in a trembling, delirious state. When this happened, Father took to his bed in sorrow. He too died of a broken heart, leaving my brother and myself alone in this world. O, how I wished I could die, too! But it seemed that God determined that I should see the end of my work in wrecking our family, and I was still alive, to reap the harvest of my own doings.

“I tried every thing possible to help my brother, but to no avail; and, O, how I prayed for him! But it was of no use! He went even more rapidly down the way of ruin now that father was dead and out of his way. Only a few weeks after I had followed my father to his resting-place in the silent grave, my brother was brought home again in a state of delirium, and after suffering for a short time the most terrible agony, the poor boy died, and was laid in a drunkard's grave. O how I prayed to God! Why was I ever born? Why cannot I die, too? But what will my eternity be for having thus ruined my own brother, the bright and beautiful boy! This is why I have changed my name to Mara.”

Soon after Mara began her sad story, some of the young people in the company began weeping; and when it was finished, they were all sobbing as if their hearts would break; and the eyes of all, both girls and boys, were moist. The cards had long since disappeared, and everyone in that company solemnly vowed to never again be guilty of engaging in that sport, but that they would always do their best to encourage others to also not take part in it. If they could, they would stamp this practice completely from society.

So you see Mara's brother played only one small game of cards but we see where he ended up. Although the game did not affect Mara this way, she should not have tempted her brother. Everyone has a different weakness and while we may be strong in some points we should never lay a stumbling block in front of others, as we do not know how this “minor” sin will affect them. The best policy is to put away every sin and encourage our friends and loved ones to also put away every sin. Let's not encourage each other to sin, as did Mara, but rather let's encourage each other to put away sin.

AMEN.

THE BIKE THIEF

It was our first Sabbath Day as a family, a new and sacred experience. We returned home after an inspiring worship service on the Ten Commandments. The day was sunny, but briskly cold for September (in Greece).

My neatly aproned wife, Maria and daughter, Amelia were warming up the wholesome food, prepared the day before, and mixing the crisp salad. My younger sons, Spero and Peter, were helping to set the table with the fine table linen and china. The seven-place candlestick was lit, each sharing this ritual, too.

It was much like the early Israelites, I imagined, in keeping the tradition of the Sabbath, a holy day, a special day, a day to be remembered, we learned from a study of the fourth commandment.

All this calm, peace, and excitement of the day, however, was suddenly broken, as my son, Spero, breathlessly dashed into the dining room from the veranda, screaming out, “Daddy, Daddy, someone’s stealing my bike!” I quickly followed Spero out to the veranda, and saw a shadowy figure hunched over a bike, peddling frantically as he sharply turned at the corner in a cloud of dust, disappearing into the cool, thin air.

“Daddy, what should I do now?” asked Spero. Without thinking I hastily replied, “Take Peter’s bike and chase him! Quickly! What else!”

I thought again, Why Lord on the Sabbath Day? A trial, a test, perhaps? What will the children think? You said, Lord, the Sabbath Day is a delight and joy. Why did you allow this on your day? Are we lacking faith? Oh, how these questions haunted me.

Meanwhile, Spero remained where he was, unmoving, looking up at me, a little puzzled, tight-lipped, and shaking his head. He then firmly answered me, “I can’t chase him on the bike, Daddy.” Again without thinking, I blurted out, “Why not?” He answered again, “because, Daddy, I can’t ride a bike on the Sabbath day. It’s pleasure.” I was flabbergasted, stunned, and speechless. I paused a moment, coughed, sniffed and mumbled something like, “Well, uh, hmmm... you’re right about that. Let’s all gather and pray about it first and then have our Sabbath lunch. After sunset we’ll all go out and look for your bike.”

It was a quiet, solemn lunch; very few words were exchanged. All eyes were soulfully focused on the flickering candles. I felt like the troubled psalmist, “my heart is smitten, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread.” Psalm 102:4. Now was to begin the “heart work”, heart searching, a test of faith, above all... patience. God’s hand was silently at work.

What next? The long awaited closing of the Sabbath. A hymn, a prayer, a very short sermon, a closing prayer, then the clasping of hands in a ceremonial circle, and the traditional “have a good week”.

Then, all eyes were clearly fixed on the door. In quick order, from the youngest to the oldest, we all dashed out onto the street and scattered like autumn leaves in different directions, asking passersby, neighbours, anyone and everyone if they saw “the bike”.

A gloomy darkness finally fell upon us. I felt like a “pelican of the wilderness, like an owl of the desert, as a sparrow alone upon a house.” Psalm 102:6,7. Hearts were pounding; a silent prayer shot up heavenward. “Lord, help!” I thought of Isaiah 30:15, “in quietness and confidence He will be your strength.”

Suddenly, from out of the deep shadows of the night, Spero’s familiar voice cried out, “Daddy, Daddy, I found it. It’s here.” We all heard his shrieks and zeroed in on his voice. Here he was, beaming widely, perched on his bike, which was found under an equally beaming lamppost. We all cried out with sheer joy, hugging each other as if we found a lost dark treasure. We, indeed, discovered a heavenly treasure—God’s leading hand and answer to prayer. “I will give thee treasures of darkness.” Isaiah 45:3.

It seems that a neighbourhood boy merely took the bike for a “joy ride”. It was a “joy ride” for us, too. A bittersweet triumphant journey of patience mixed with faith—a Sabbath day to be remembered.

THE UNFAILING FRIEND

One there is, above all others,
Well deserves the name of Friend!
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once His kindness prove
Find it everlasting love!
Which of all our friends, to save us,
Could or would have shed their blood?
But our Saviour died to have us
Reconciled in Him to God.
This was boundless love indeed!
Jesus is a friend in need.
Could we bear from one another
What He daily bears from us?
Yet glorious Friend and Brother
Loves us though we treat Him thus
Through for good we render ill,
He accounts us brethren still.