

The Reformation
Messenger

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 6, JUNE 2018



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

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PHOTO CREDITS

Helen Marttinen: Front Cover, USA; page 3, Canada; Back cover, Belize; inside front cover, USA.

The Reformation Messenger is published monthly. It is an Official Publication of the International Missionary Society the Seventh-Day Adventist Church Reform Movement, Canadian Field. Subscriptions can be paid online on the website or by mail.

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COST:

Black & White x \$27.00 per year. Colour x \$47.00 per year. (Add \$10.00 North America and \$20.00 overseas shipping & handling)

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Fly Higher

heart; for without this it is impossible to please God. Faith is the hand that takes hold of infinite help; it is the medium by which the renewed heart is made to beat in unison with the heart of Christ.

“In her endeavors to reach her home, the eagle is often beaten down by the tempest to the narrow defiles of the mountains. The clouds, in black, angry masses sweep between her and the sunny heights where she secures her nest. For a while she seems bewildered, and dashes this way and that, beating her strong wings as if to sweep back the dense clouds. She awakens the

HAWK

“Have you ever watched a hawk in pursuit of a timid dove? Instinct has taught the dove that in order for the hawk to seize his prey, he must gain a loftier flight than his victim. So she rises higher and still higher into the blue dome of heaven, ever pursued by the hawk, which is seeking to obtain the advantage. But in vain. The dove is safe as long as she allows nothing to stop her in her flight, or draw her earthward; but let her once falter, and take a lower flight, and her watchful enemy will swoop down upon his victim. Again and again have we watched this scene with almost breathless interest, all our sympathies with the little dove. How sad we should have felt to see it fall a victim to the cruel hawk!

“We have before us a warfare--a lifelong conflict with Satan and his seductive temptations. The enemy will use every argument, every deception, to entangle the soul; and in order to win the crown of life, we must put forth earnest, persevering effort. We must not lay off the armor or leave the battlefield until we have gained the victory, and can triumph in our Redeemer.

“As long as we continue to keep our eyes fixed upon the Author and Finisher of our faith we shall be safe. But our affections must be placed upon things above, not on things on the earth. By faith we must rise higher and still higher in the attainments of the graces of Christ. By daily contemplating His matchless charms, we must grow more and more into His glorious image. While we thus live in communion with Heaven, Satan will lay his nets for us in vain.” —*My Life Today*, p. 105

EAGLE

“The follower of Christ must have faith abiding in the

doves of the mountains with her wild cry in her vain endeavors to find a way out of her prison. At last she dashes upward into the blackness, and gives a shrill scream of triumph as she emerges, a moment later, in the calm sunshine above. The darkness and tempest are all below her, and the light of heaven is shining about her. She reaches her loved home in the lofty crag, and is satisfied. It was through darkness that she reached the light. It cost her an effort to do this, but she is rewarded in gaining the object which she sought.

“This is the only course we can pursue as followers of Christ. We must exercise that living faith, which will penetrate the clouds that, like a thick wall, separate us from heaven's light. We have heights of faith to reach, where all is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” — *Messages to Young People*, p. 102–103

“Like the eagle, Luther had been shut in by dense clouds of superstition and Romish heresy, and he had been beaten about by the fierce tempest of opposition; but on the wings of a mighty faith he had risen above the storm, and was now grandly free, with the sunlight of Heaven shining upon his soul.” —*The Signs of the times*, July 26, 1883

“We may be surrounded with difficulties, discouragement, and darkness. Falsehood, calamity, injustice, shut us in. There are clouds that we cannot dispel. We battle with circumstances in vain. There is one, and but one, way of escape. The mists and fogs cling to the earth; beyond the clouds God's light is shining. Into the sunlight of His presence we may rise on the wings of faith.” —*To Be Like Jesus*, p. 243

Ellen G. White



Are We True Reformers?

The most urgent need in our world today is a reformation. It is the solution to all the problems that exist in our world today. If Sodom and Gomorrah had had even ten reformers, they would not have been destroyed. The churches that are existing today are in need of reformation because the lukewarm condition has lulled people to sleep; therefore, they do not see their lost condition. Individually we need a reformation. It is the only chance we have to escape the coming doom.

Sister White wrote in 1902, "God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them His children." —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 128

Where do we begin the work of reformation? Is it not in our own personal lives? Before we try to reform others, we must work out a reformation in ourselves. The first thing is to examine ourselves, and compare our life to the life of Christ, and to the law of God, and make a list of all areas where we come short. Then present this list to God, and ask in prayer for His help to overcome all these weaknesses, and make a confession to God, and when necessary to our fellow men.

Next, cast out all idols from our homes. This includes worldly literature, magazines, and books, also unwhole-

some foods and drinks. Throw out all items of vanity, including worldly music, and videos, even clothing that is not modest. All these items give Satan the right to enter into our homes, because his things are found in there.

Thirdly, we must restore true Sabbath-keeping. This means guarding the edges of the Sabbath, and watching our conversation, that it stays spiritual; even our thoughts must not wander into forbidden channels.

"The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207. There are things we can do on Sabbaths. We can visit the sick, we can give Bible studies, we can write articles, and prepare sermons, but there is something we must not do. "It is displeasing to God for Sabbathkeepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 704

The fourth area for reform is to begin systematic Bible reading, and along with it, the reading of the Spirit of Prophecy books. Bible study purifies our minds, and gives us the knowledge that is



necessary for our warfare against the devices of Satan. The Bible is called the Bread of Life, which will sustain our spiritual condition.

An important thing for a Reformer is prayer life. We must make sure that it is continuous. "No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 530

Miracles happen as a result of prayer. Jesus said, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke 11:9

The sixth area for personal reform is to select our friends carefully, with whom we associate. Our best friend may be Satan's agent to tempt us. Relatives and family members may also bring us down, if they are not faithful to God. Lukewarm professors of religion can put us into spiritual sleep. It is very contagious. In the company of true faithful Christians, we receive the right influence to sustain our faith.

Also, health reform has much to do with our sanctification. To gratify our appetites



and desires will weaken our willpower. There

are sins that can be overcome only by fasting and prayer. Not only are we to eat wholesome foods, but also at proper times and in proper amounts. Many will be lost by indulging their appetites. Paul writes, "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly." Philippians 3:19

The eighth area in our personal reformation is missionary work. If you have neglected this, you may be counted as the servant with one talent, who hid it, and did

not use it. By saving others we save ourselves. Jesus went about doing good; and if we neglect doing as He did, we are not His followers, but we will be guilty of the blood of the sinners around us. "When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." Ezekiel 33:8

Also, how we spend our money is part of reform. We must check if we have faithfully paid our tithes and offerings. No true reformer is unfaithful in tithes; this would mean that we rob God and break the eighth commandment. If there is nothing else wrong in our lives, this alone would



keep us out of heaven. It is a lack of faith when someone does not trust God that He will really open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing, so much that there is not enough room to receive it.

The tenth area for reform is our love to God and to our fellow men. We may have faith to move mountains, but without love it will not benefit us (1 Corinthians 13:2). True reformers are the only ones who know divine love, who are willing to sacrifice for others, whose love is extended even to their enemies.

Many other areas of reform could be mentioned, but if we are faithful in these ten areas, then we can take the next step and start helping others to reform. Amen.

Timo Martin

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The Two Covenants



“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. . . . In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:7, 13

The existence of a new covenant presupposes the existence of an old covenant. Through Jeremiah the Lord declared: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.” Jeremiah 31:31

If there is a new covenant it is because there was an old one, which became unnecessary when the new one was enforced. Obviously, the validity of the new pact overrides or supersedes the first.

Christ Himself introduced the new covenant saying: “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:28 MKJV

“In the same way He took the cup also, after supping, saying, ‘This cup is the New Covenant in My blood; as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me.’” 1 Corinthians 11:25 MKJV

The apostle Paul explains that the establishment of a new covenant involves the removal of the old, which had not yielded the expected results, and therefore had to be replaced: “But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” Hebrews 8:6

“Who also has made us able ministers of the new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive.” 2 Corinthians 3:6 MKJV

THE OLD COVENANT

“And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even Ten Commandments;

and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.” Deuteronomy 4:13

A careless interpretation of this text has led some to conclude that the old covenant is the law. Following this trend, the covenant of the law should be removed because it was a yoke of bondage, useless for man’s salvation; and therefore, a new covenant, without the presence of the law, was necessary. They reach the conclusion that when the new pact was enforced, the law that constitutes the old pact, expired. The new covenant is taken as the covenant of grace, and in the presence of this grace, according to this assumption, the law is eliminated. This assumption implies the failure and removal of the Ten Commandments and leaves the impression that God is ultimately responsible and guilty for the mistakes of Israel by imposing a law that was an unbearable yoke of slavery. The failure of the pact would then be the failure of God. The deficiencies of the law would be the shortcomings of God. The yoke of the law would be a yoke imposed by God.

We can quite logically ask: Was God wrong in proposing and enforcing His law in the first covenant? Is the new covenant a correction of the mistakes made by God in the first one? Who bears the final responsibility for breaking the covenant? Keep in mind that the law was given by God, He is the author of the law, and it is impossible to condemn and reject the law without condemning and rejecting the author of it by association. To better understand this issue we need to define what a covenant is.

A covenant is an agreement in which two or more parties, under the regulation of accepted terms, commit themselves to fulfill their respective part to achieve the mutual goal. A covenant is always established between rational and thinking beings. They must be entities that are capable of making decisions, contracting responsibilities and getting commitments. There are no pacts between a living party and an inanimate one; therefore there is no such a thing like a covenant with the law of God. The law cannot agree with anyone, it does not have decision-making capabilities. The law can certainly be taken as the regulatory terms of a



covenant, but it is the deal agreed upon by the parties which really constitutes the covenant. That was the case of God with Israel. It is crucial to understand this fact, because it is not the law that infringes or breaks the covenant. It is not the law that fails to fulfill its commitment. Neither is it the reason or cause of the failure of the pact. The violation or breaking of a covenant is the responsibility of one of the parties.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

“And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.” Exodus 19:7–8

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.” Exodus 34:27

A good example of a pact is the marriage covenant. A man and a woman agree to unite their lives, to procreate and to support each other. The terms governing the marriage relationship, which establishes the rights and duties of spouses, is the law of marriage. When the wedding vows are violated, nobody blames or attributes faults to that law, nobody declares the law guilty of adultery, and neither creates a new marriage code. God purposely uses the figure of the marriage or the spouses' relationship to illustrate His covenant with Israel:

“Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, *and entered into a covenant with thee*, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest Mine.” Ezekiel 16:8

“And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.” Hosea 2:19–20

God committed Himself to take the position of a loving protector and husband to Israel. God would provide for their material needs. He would protect them from enemies and pests, but above all, He would give them spiritual blessings and would cover them with His love: “And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.” Deuteronomy 7:13–14

PURPOSE OF THE COVENANT

Every covenant has a particular purpose. In the case of

marriage, the happiness of the couple, procreation, and legal authority are the goals for this particular covenant. The Bible also presents the goal of God's covenant with Israel, which was in actuality the resumption of the covenant that had already been established with Abraham.

“In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” Genesis 15:18

“And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” Genesis 17:7

“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Genesis 12:3

“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.” Genesis 22:18

The essential purpose of the covenant was to make Israel an instrument of blessing for the world. Israel was to be the means used by God to evangelize the nations, and to bring freedom and salvation to all men; the offspring of Abraham would become a blessing for all nations. To achieve that goal, God presented to Israel the terms or the law that would regulate the pact. The faithful obedience to that law as the binding principle of the covenant was the way Israel could become a great and mighty nation—not to master over the world, but to be a channel of blessing and salvation for the inhabitants of the earth. This was God's covenant with Israel:

“Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:5–6

“Hear thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for: *that all people of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel*; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by Thy name.” 1 Kings 8:43

The pact stated that God was to reveal Himself through the nation of Israel. The Hebrew nation would become the means used by God to make known to the other nations His real character. The world was to see in Israel the personification of the goodness, mercy, and loving character of the true God. The promises of greatness that God made to Israel did not include earthly glory as the supreme goal. Israel's glory and distinction was dependent on being the channel through which God would bring light to the nations covered by the darkness of sin. Israel's greatness lay

in being the instrument used by God to free the people from the bondage of ignorance, superstition, vice, degradation, and all satanic bondage. God in Israel, and through Israel, was to be the light and salvation for the whole world. This was the purpose of the first covenant.

The children of Israel were to occupy all the territory which God appointed them. Those nations that rejected the worship and service of the true God were to be dispossessed. *But it was God's purpose that by the revelation of His character through Israel men should be drawn unto Him. To all the world the gospel invitation was to be given. Through the teaching of the sacrificial service Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live.* All who, like Rahab the Canaanite, and Ruth the Moabitess, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God, were to unite themselves with His chosen people. *As the numbers of Israel increased they were to enlarge their borders, until their kingdom should embrace the world.*" – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 290

The dream of a conquering Messiah that would lead Israel to become a political empire that would rule the world and to whom all nations would be tributary was a total distortion of the purpose of Israel's covenant with God.

FAILURE OF THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

Unfortunately the objectives set by God when He covenanted with Israel were not met. With few exceptions the nation forgot the pact with God and followed crooked ways in opposition to God's plan. The history of Israel has two main stages in its performance as a people in covenant with God. The first, from Sinai to deportation, is mainly characterized by apostasy. The second, from Babylon to Christ, is characterized by religious fanaticism, nationalism and religious isolation. The Apostle Paul approaches the issue of the two covenants using an allegory:

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: *for these are the two covenants*; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." Galatians 4:22–28

Abraham was 75 years old when, following the instructions of God, he left Haran and settled in Canaan. Over time, his wealth had increased to such a point that he had to be separated from his nephew Lot, because of the abundance of his possessions. Sadly, he saw that the years were passing

by and the possibility of having an heir of his legitimate wife was becoming more and more remote. Sara did not conceive children, and as time went on his hopes vanished before the inevitable effects of age and the barrenness of his wife. When God promised him that his descendants would inherit the land on which he was, Abraham took occasion to mention his childless condition.

"And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." Genesis 15:3–4

Undoubtedly Abraham told Sarah everything the Lord had promised, yet after ten years, the promise remained unfulfilled. Sara then took it upon herself to fulfill God's purposes through her own human capabilities. She utilized a clause of the Hammurabi Code, in which a barren wife could take a female servant and give her to the husband to beget children from this servant. The lawful wife received the child on her lap, and this son of the servant became the legal child of the wife and mistress.

"Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife." Genesis 16:1–3

This experience of Abraham and Sarah is used by Paul to illustrate and explain the failure of the first covenant. Sarah and Abraham decided to take the matter of the son of the promise into their own hands. They proceeded by their own wisdom, following a man-made method. They drew on a legal resource designed by man, according to the standards of the society of their time. What the couple decided to do is the human effort to facilitate the fulfillment of God's promise. It was man helping God to keep His word. They thought that this was the way God would fulfill His promise. It was man doing the work of God by his own means and his own ability; man taking the place of God to do things according to their way. The birth of Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar, is the fruit of human endeavor—the product of man's capacity in pursuit of doing the will of God. Ishmael is not the fruit of faith, but a



product of the flesh.

The apostle saw in this illustration a conduct similar to the life of the people of Israel in their dealings with the pact made with God: “But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone.” Romans 9:31–32

“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:3

Israel committed solemnly to comply with all the terms of the covenant. They proclaimed, “All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.” Exodus 19:8. Their intention was honest; they were really willing to do their part. Their ruin was that they trusted in themselves to obey the law. They took the matter of the covenant in their own hands and decided to act by themselves, following their own methods, adding to and removing from the law all that in their opinion was necessary to fulfill God’s plan.

“But He answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:3–9

The Hebrew nation repeated the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar. They put human methods into action, using formulas created by men so that the promise of God would be fulfilled. Once more, in the mistake of taking the place of God to do by themselves in their own power, the task of God is repeated. In the prayer of the Pharisee who went to the temple to pray, we see a clear example of the Jewish mentality and attitude regarding the law and other people:

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Luke 18:10–12

The pride and self-sufficiency of the Jewish nation finds a fit model in the example given by Christ. The arrogance and self-satisfaction expressed in the prayer of the Phari-

see manifested the feelings of the nation. His obedience was the fruit of the selfish desire to be seen and considered superior and better than others. The law that had been given to Israel as the instrument to make known the justice, goodness, mercy and love of God, instead became a wall of separation because of the conduct of the nation. The nation perverted the laws intended purposes, using it to exalt themselves and to condemn and reject others. The covenant established at Sinai with the purpose to fulfill the promises made to Abraham, that Israel was to become a blessing to the world, was never achieved. The conduct of the people that professed to follow God, instead of revealing the character of God, bore witness to the meanness and selfishness of the nation. They professed to follow God but denied Him with their character and behavior. They boasted of being superior and better than others. They were proud of their race for being descendants of Abraham, and regarded themselves as the blessed of the Lord while others were cursed because of their privilege of being the chosen people, bearers of the covenant and the law. The world around them, rather than being attracted to the God of Israel, came to hate Him because of the rejection they experienced from the Jewish nation.

The fruit of the Jewish religion was the product of lives dominated by selfishness and pride, revealing the spiritual slavery in which they were mired. The Jewish religion, like the slave Hagar in giving birth to Ishmael, only produced fruits that were legal before men; however, in reality and in the eyes of God were still slaves of sin:

“What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant: and He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.” Isaiah 5:4, 7



“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” Matthew 23:25–28

In the experience of Israel—the Old Covenant, represented by Hagar and Ishmael—has been shown that the capacity

and power of men are insufficient to render perfect obedience to God's law. The fruits of these efforts are as sour grapes. Such a religion is simply a dead routine, a whited sepulcher. The weakness of the flesh and the selfishness of our nature constitute a barrier that prevents us from achieving justice and holiness by ourselves. The failure of the first covenant is the failure of the flesh; it is the failure of the power of human capacities. Sister Ellen G. White states, "He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. . . . All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin." —*Faith and Works*, p. 94

REJECTION OF ISRAEL – END OF THE FIRST COVENANT

"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. . . . Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matthew 21:33–41, 34

When the Jewish people rejected Christ, they rejected the coauthor of the covenant. Israel not only failed to meet its part of the pact, but rose against the other contracting party and killed Him. The patience of God reached its limit and the Hebrew nation was rejected and abandoned as the husband who divorces an adulterous woman. Israel is no longer God's chosen people.

It should be clear that God did not divorce the law, obviously, because the covenant was not with the law. God divorced Israel because it did not fulfill its part of the covenant. It was not the law that was rejected and abandoned but the Jewish nation. If God had removed the law, that would have been God's acceptance that the failure of the pact was His responsibility for imposing a law that could not be obeyed, or that was highly defective. In that case, Israel could not have been rejected as the chosen people. Removing the law would have eliminated the evi-

dence that incriminated the nation and no longer could judgment be given against Israel.

The rejection of Israel is the categorical proof that the law was never abolished or eliminated.

THE NEW COVENANT

Fourteen years had passed since the birth of Ishmael. Abraham was now 100 years old and Sarah 90 years old.

"Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" Genesis 17:17

The chances for a woman to bear a child at the age of 90 are humanly impossible, and we have to add to the effects of age the affliction that Sarah had always been barren. From a biological point of view, her stage of a woman suitable for reproduction would have ended some 30 years earlier. Adding up all these factors, there was not the remotest possibility that Sarah could conceive a child.

Here is where God intervenes and makes it entirely clear that what is impossible with man is possible with God. Against all reason and logic, Sarah conceives and gives birth to a perfectly normal and healthy child. It puts in evidence that when all human resources have been exhausted, when there are no more man-made formulas, then God takes over, and brings a solution. When human methods are barren and useless, God shows that beyond human weakness, He is almighty.

Following Paul's allegory, Sarah and Isaac represent the new covenant. This is the pact where the methods and power of men have no place. Paul shows us that as it was impossible for Sarah to conceive and to give birth to a child at the age of 90, having been barren all her life, so it is impossible for human weakness to obey the law and remain loyal to the covenant.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7

But in the new covenant God takes the initiative. He takes over and makes for man what man is not able to do. It is the grace of God at work; it is the work of God in man and for man. It is the power of God, overcoming all the limita-



tions and weakness of the human flesh and making the obedience to the law a reality, which was impossible before.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of *the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*” Hebrews 13:20–21

“Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.” —*Faith and Works*, p. 94

In this covenant, God is the main actor; He is the author and finisher of faith, justice and salvation. In the life of every believer who surrenders to the will of God, the Holy Spirit takes over and makes a work of transformation of character and conduct as miraculous as the conception of Isaac. Against all reason and logic, man, that could only yield the polluted and sour fruits of selfishness and sin, now becomes an instrument of justice. Through the human instrument, possessed by the Holy Spirit, God reveals His character in genuine works of heavenly love. But, I insist on it, it is the work of God; it is the power of God working in man. It is Christ keeping the law in us; it is Christ revealing His love through us; it is Christ living His life in us.

Isaac, the legitimate son of Abraham, is really free, conceived and born only by the power and grace of God. In Paul’s analogy, Isaac represents the fruit of the work of God in the life of man. It is the freedom from the bondage of sin and the legitimate obedience to the law as the fruit of God’s action and work.

THE LAW IN THE NEW COVENANT

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.” Hebrews 8:10

The new covenant was not established because the law was defective: “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 19:7. “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Romans 7:12

The law continues being an essential part, as the ruling terms, of the new covenant; but not anymore as an external object, alien to man, and as a dead letter. Now the law is going to be written in the heart; it becomes part of the soul itself, as a living letter and the motivating principle in

human life. The law takes again the place that God originally assigned to it in man’s life when Adam was created.

The new covenant is established to achieve the objectives that, because of the betrayal and the failure of Israel, were not achieved with the first one. God intends to do through the Christian church what was not possible to do through Israel.

In the old covenant the people of Israel, as a nation, were the contracting agent of such a commitment. Of course, the individual had a part to do, but mainly, the nation as a whole, was responsible for the covenant with God. The leaders, kings and priests and later on the Jewish Sanhedrin were responsible before God for the conduct and decisions of the nation.

“In the parable of the vineyard it was the husbandmen whom Christ pronounced guilty. It was they who had refused to return to their Lord the fruit of His ground. *In the Jewish nation it was the priests and teachers who, by misleading the people, had robbed God of the service which He claimed. It was they who turned the nation away from Christ.*” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 304

“For the rejection of Christ, with the results that followed, they were responsible. *A nation’s sin and a nation’s ruin were due to the religious leaders.*” —*Ibid.*, p. 305

In the new covenant, the terms of the pact with Israel, namely the law, are transferred to the church as a body, but unlike the first, in this one, it is given to the individual having much more participation. Each human being now assumes his individual responsibility before God and His law, not depending on a group of leaders to decide for him. Everyone has to make his own covenant with God.

The second covenant, as stated before, pursues essentially the same purposes of the first. The spiritual descendants of Abraham are to bring the light of God to the whole world. What the biological children were not able to do, by relying upon the flesh, God intends to do with the children of Abraham by faith.

“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” Galatians 3:7

Since the law is the transcript of God’s character, writing it in the heart involves the implantation of the heavenly love principle in human life.

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:8–10

The barren soul, empty, fruitless, becomes, by the presence of Christ in it, a fruitful plant that yields abundant and delicious fruits. The grace of the Spirit of Christ implants in the soul the nature of heaven.

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

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Galatians 5:22–23

This is the fruit that God expects from every believer. Every soul who bears these fruits will inevitably become an agent of justice, a love instrument that in the hands of God and by His grace will be a blessing for the whole world. In this way, God will make known to the world His true character. This is the new covenant.

“It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth. . . . 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. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.” *–Ibid.*, p. 415

CONCLUSION

The new covenant contains the intervention and the exercise of divine power because the human effort to keep the law has failed. The old covenant has revealed the complete human inability to obey the law by itself. But now, in the new covenant, what Israel could not carry out, making use of all human faculties, God intends to achieve through spiritual Israel, taking the initiative, control and action in the human life. When God takes this control, the human being becomes a channel through which God makes Himself known to the world. Man’s responsibility in any case, is to open the heart, to accept the dominion and control of Christ in his life and to allow being possessed entirely by the Holy Spirit. The submission must be such that the self disappears and only Christ remains supreme in life.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

The conflict of the conscience and the failure of the carnal man portrayed in the man of Romans 7 and the contrast presented in the next chapter, properly correspond to the two covenants. Likewise, the allegory argued by Paul quoting the experience of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar masterfully exemplifies the two covenants.

Neptali Acevedo

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
Biological Israel – Abraham’s carnal children	Spiritual Israel – Children of Abraham by faith
Covenant of the nation as a whole	Addressed to the church – Individual covenant
Responsibility of the leaders	Individual responsibility
Portrayed by Hagar and Ishmael	Portrayed by Sarah and Isaac
Use of legal human resources	Use of God’s resources
Human power action	God’s power action
Work of men	Work of God
Failure of the flesh	Triumph of the Spirit
Defeat of the human power	Triumph of God’s power
The law written on tablets of stone	The law written in the heart
External legalism	Genuine obedience of heart
Comparable to the man of Romans 7	Comparable to the man of Romans 8



Everlasting Gospel

Part 2



under the same sentence of condemnation as were Chorazin and Bethsaida. Shall not these warnings be heeded? Shall not these admonitions have weight with us?" —*Christian Educa-*

tion, p. 140

"Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. We are to stand as minute men, ready for service at a moment's notice. The opportunity that is now ours to speak to some needy soul the word of life may never offer again. God may say to that one, 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee,' and through our neglect he may not be ready. (Luke 12:20.) In the great judgment day, how shall we render our account to God?" —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 343

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8

BEWARE OF NEGLECTING OPPORTUNITIES

"In the great judgment day those who have not worked for Christ, those who have drifted along, carrying no responsibility, thinking of themselves, pleasing themselves, will be placed by the Judge of all the earth with those who did evil. They receive the same condemnation." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 365

"The gospel invitation is to be given to all the world—'to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.' Revelation 14:6. The last message of warning and mercy is to lighten the whole earth with its glory. It is to reach all classes of men, rich and poor, high and low. 'Go out into the highways and hedges,' Christ says, 'and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.'" —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 228

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14

"It is a fearful thing to have great light and blessing, to have many opportunities and privileges, and yet make no saving use of them. Those who do not make a saving use of their opportunities, will be condemned by the privileges God has granted to them; but those who walk in the light will have increased light. Those who have had the light of truth, and yet have failed to walk in the light, are

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Matthew 11:20

"The day's record passes above, and 'wanting' is written against that man's name. He professes to be a servant of Jesus Christ, but has served only his own interest. He is an unfaithful servant. You are surrounded with men and women who will appear in the judgment against you. They will say, 'You believed these things, and why did you not tell me? Your houses and lands were of more interest to you, than my soul's salvation.'" —*The Review and Herald*, March 29, 1870

"The gospel of Christ is from beginning to end the gospel of saving grace. It is a distinctive and controlling idea. It will be a help to the needy, light for the eyes that are blind to the truth, and a guide to souls seeking for the true foundation. Full and everlasting salvation is within the reach of every soul. Christ is waiting and longing to speak pardon, and impart the freely offered grace. He is watching and waiting, saying as He said to the blind man at the gate of Jericho, 'What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?' I will take away thy sins; I will wash you in My blood." —*Evangelism*, p. 552

Dear reader the Lord warns us through Jeremiah 7:2–3, "Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD. Thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place."

"God has ever been faithful to punish crime. He sent His prophets to warn the guilty, denounce their sins, and pronounce judgment upon them. Those who question why the word of God brings out the sins of His people in so plain a manner for scoffers to deride and saints to de-

plore, should consider that it was all written for their instruction, that they might avoid the evils recorded, but imitate the righteousness of those who served the Lord.” —*The Review and Herald*, January 22, 1880

WALK WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME BEFORE DARKNESS COMES

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:1–2

“God is as powerful to save from sin today as He was in the times of the patriarchs, of David, and of the prophets and apostles of Bible times. The multitude of cases recorded in Sacred History, where God has delivered His people from their iniquities, should make the Christian of this time eager to receive divine instruction, and zealous to perfect a character that will bear the close inspection of the Judgment.” —*The Review and Herald*, January 22, 1880

“Young and old, God is now testing you. You are now deciding your own eternal destiny. Pride, fashion, empty conversation, and selfishness are evils which, if fostered, will increase, and choke the good seed sown in your hearts, till soon the word will be spoken concerning you, as was said of Eli’s house, that your sins shall not be purged with sacrifices nor offerings forever. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize what will be required of him, in order to pass the close and searching test of the Judgment. Dear readers, do not deceive yourselves concerning your condition. You cannot deceive God. Says the True Witness, ‘I know thy works.’” —*The Review and Herald*, April 8, 1880

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would you wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:14–17

“God has no use for listless souls. Ministers sometimes tell the people that they have nothing to do but believe; that Jesus has done it all, and their own works are nothing. But the word of God plainly states that in the Judgment the scales will be balanced accurately, and the decisions will be based on the evidence adduced. One man becomes ruler of ten cities, another of five, another of two, each man receiving exactly in proportion to the improvement he has made on the talents intrusted to his keeping. Our

efforts in works of righteousness, in our own behalf and for the salvation of souls, will have a decided influence on our recompense.” —*The Review and Herald*, October 25, 1881

“Brethren, the biographies of good men of the past will not meet the demand for this time. The Saviour whom you profess to love and serve, wants you to have an experience of your own to relate. What do you believe? Is probation soon to close? Is the time at hand when the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and we be judged according to our works?” —*The Review and Herald*, December 20, 1881

“Jesus is wounded and insulted by His professed followers whose unconsecrated lives disgrace their profession. He would purify the temple courts of the soul; but if His efforts to warn and reprove are not heeded, His forbearance and compassion will be changed to severity and judgment.” —*The Review and Herald*, January 11, 1881

“I entreat the youth, for their souls’ sake, to heed the exhortation of the inspired apostle. All these gracious instructions, warnings, and reproofs, will be either a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. Many of the young are reckless in their conversation. They forget that by their words they shall be justified or condemned. Take heed to the words of our Saviour: ‘A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.’ How little regard is paid even to the instructions of the Heavenly Teacher. By many of the young, the word of God is either neglected altogether, or if studied at all, its solemn admonitions are unheeded, and these plain truths will rise up in the Judgment and condemn them.” —*The Review and Herald*, March 11, 1880

“Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” John 12:35

WHERE ARE YOUR CHILDREN?

“That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.” Deuteronomy 6:2

“What iniquity, which the Lord declared was not to be forgiven forever, might have been saved! Shall not our hearts as well as our ears tingle as we read the denunciation of God against the godless sons of Eli? Parents, take this lesson home, and in the place of educating your chil-

dren in the path of self-indulgence, self-gratification, and disobedience, learn of Abraham. Abraham commanded his household and his children after him to keep the way of the Lord. The Searcher of hearts said of him, 'I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.' O for wise and judicious commanders, who will walk in the way of the Lord as did Abraham, to deal justly and love mercy, who will despise every phase of falsehood and deception! Abraham walked in the counsel of God." —*The Review and Herald*, April 6, 1897

"Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring on Abraham that which he has spoken of him." Genesis 18:18–19

"It is Satan who tempts children to follow in a course of sin and disobedience. . . . If they refuse to walk in the light, if they refuse to submit their will and way to God, and persist in following a course of sin in their impenitence, the light and privileges they have had will rise up in judgment against them, because they did not walk in the light, and knew not whither they went. Satan is leading them, and they become a subject of remark in the world. People will say, 'Why, look at those children! Their parents are very religious, but you see they are worse than my children, and I do not profess to be a Christian.' In this way children who receive good instruction and yet do not heed it cast a reproach upon their parents, dishonoring them, and putting them to shame before an ungodly world. They also bring a reproach upon the religion of Jesus Christ through their wicked course of action." —*Child Guidance*, p. 173

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

"The curse of God will surely rest upon unfaithful parents. Not only are they planting thorns which will wound them here, but they must meet their own unfaithfulness when the judgment shall sit. Many children will rise up in judgment and condemn their parents for not restraining them and charge upon them their destruction. The false sympathy and blind love of parents cause them to excuse the faults of their children and pass them by without correction, and their children are lost in consequence, and the blood of their souls will rest upon the unfaithful parents." —*Child Guidance*, p. 563

"In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because

his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever." 1 Samuel 3:12–14

"The neglect of Eli is brought plainly before every father and mother in the land. As the result of his unsanctified affection or his unwillingness to do a disagreeable duty, he reaped a harvest of iniquity in his perverse sons. Both the parent who permitted the wickedness and the children who practiced it were guilty before God, and He would accept no sacrifice or offering for their transgression." —*Child Guidance*, p. 276

"You must be in earnest to secure your soul's salvation. You must begin the work of overcoming now. Don't put it off. It will soon be for ever too late, and the lamentation upon every side will be 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended and my soul is not saved.'" —*The Review and Herald*, July 25, 1854

"When God Asks, 'Where Are the Children?'"—Parents who have neglected their God-given responsibilities must meet that neglect in the judgment. The Lord will then inquire, 'Where are the children that I gave you to train for Me? Why are they not at My right hand?' Many parents will then see that unwise love blinded their eyes to their children's faults and left those children to develop deformed characters unfit for heaven. Others will see that they did not give their children time and attention, love and tenderness; their own neglect of duty made the children what they are." —*Child Guidance*, p. 561

Finally, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12:13–14

May God help us that we do our best for our salvation and for others salvation in Christ Jesus. Amen. Peace be unto you all. **Jenifer Akello, Uganda**



Fly Like an Eagle



Have you ever had a dream about flying, soaring over the landscape, high above the earth? I have, and it was such a sense of freedom and exhilaration. Unfortunately, it was only a dream from which I woke up.

As you watch the birds in the air, they seem to be defying gravity as they seamlessly soar in the skies above the earth.

I will mention the eagle in this article because an eagle has been described as the “King of Birds” similarly as the lion is the king of the beasts. What is special about the eagle?

For one, eagles can fly at great speeds. They can fly at 50km/h when soaring in the sky, but when they swoop to attack their prey, they can reach speeds of 160 km/hr.

The eagle is used as a symbol in the Bible to describe various situations.

Job compared his life to the swiftness of an eagle; his days on earth seemed to be passing quickly by. “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.” Job 9:25–26. Have you ever felt that your days are passing swiftly as an eagle?

The Lord had promised to nurture His people, as long as they were faithful. “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto Myself.” Exodus 19:4

However, when they departed from the Lord, the prophesied curses followed. The Bible uses the eagle also as a symbol to describe the speed of the enemy coming to teach the disobedient children of Israel a lesson.

“Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed My covenant, and trespassed against My law.” Hosea 8:1. In this verse, the eagle refers to the King of Assyria, who was soon to come down from the north to invade Palestine with a rapid dread swoop as that of an eagle upon its prey.

The Lord had warned them what would happen if they were disobedient. “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.” Deuteronomy 28:15, 49. The nation of Israel was not faithful so the Lord did send the Assyrian nation to swoop down on the nation of Israel, and later the Babylonian nation to swoop down on the nation of Judah. The attacks of the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian armies were swift. “Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.” Jeremiah 4:13. “Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.” Lamentations 4:19

In Daniel’s vision, the nation of Babylon was thus described. “The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings” (Daniel 7:4), an appropriate symbol for Babylon. The winged lion is found in Babylonian objects of art. The eagle fittingly represents the empire of Babylon at the height of its glory. A lion is noted for strength and the eagle is famous for the power and range of its flight. King Nebuchadnezzar’s power was felt not only in Babylon but from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf and from Asia Minor to Egypt. The lion was provided with eagle’s wings—a combination of strength and speed.

The Babylonians were swift, not only against the nation of Judah, but also the surrounding nations. “Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.” Jeremiah 49:22. “They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him. For thus saith the LORD; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall

spread his wings over Moab.” Jeremiah 48:39–40. The eagle here is in reference to the Babylonians.

“Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.” Habakkuk 1:8

The Lord even told a riddle about Babylon, comparing it to a great eagle:

“Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel; And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar: He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs. There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.” Ezekiel 17:2–7

The great eagle here represents the king of Babylon. “Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon.” Ezekiel 17:12

Lebanon represented Judah—likely one of Solomon’s houses. “But Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house. He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon.” 1 Kings 7:1 (see also 1 Kings 10:17, 21)

The vine was Jerusalem under King Zedekiah which prospered for a time, until it bent its roots towards the second great eagle (Egypt). When King Zedekiah sought the aid of the Egyptians, that act was the beginning of the final end of Judah before it was destroyed by the Babylonians.

FLY LIKE AN EAGLE

Eagles do not fly like other birds do. Although they do flap their wings from time to time, for the most part they use the air currents and they soar. They will often sit on a tree or rock for a long time, waiting for the correct air current. They have an inborn ability to sense the motion of air currents. As the eagle waits for the correct wind current, we also learn to wait on the Lord. We need to wait until we catch the wind of the Spirit. When connected with the Lord, true Christians will be so close to the Lord that they will move when the Spirit calls them and will wait until they know what God’s will is.

Most birds do not like storms, but eagles love storms because the storm forces them higher and higher. An eagle can

detect when a storm is approaching long before it breaks. It will actually fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. It uses the strength of the storm to rise above it. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above to the sunshine above the clouds. The eagle simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us, we, too, can rise above them. We can lift ourselves above adversity by setting our minds and our hearts toward God. The storms do not have to overcome us any more than they overcome the eagle. We can allow God’s power to lift us above them. We can use adversity for gain and learn from trials—to grow from the experience and be made better. “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have [her] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” James 1:2–4. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” 2 Corinthians 4:17

The height that eagles fly keeps them out of reach of predators as they are often flying higher than their enemies. Sometimes in our battles we try to fight in the enemy’s territory and eventually get defeated. The Lord never intended for us to fight this way. We need to soar above our enemies to the Son of Righteousness, who has healing in His wings (Malachi 4:2). He will save and protect us. In our life’s struggles, we are not to fight against the wind currents in the storm, but fly with the currents, and find out what the Lord wants from us in the storm. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” John 5:19. We need to learn from the example of Jesus.

NESTS

“Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.” Job 39:27–29

Job here describes the location of the nests eagles build, as well as their eyesight. If possible, eagles build their nests on the face of cliffs that are inaccessible except by flight. There is more safety there than on a tree or even on the top of a cliff. No place is too rugged or inaccessible to be the home of an eagle. The nest is built with great skill—not using little twigs, but great branches



woven together in an immensely skillful way. They are very comfortable. Their centres are carefully lined with feathers and leaves, and the eggs are placed there. When they hatch, the mother begins the process of feeding the babies.

Have you ever heard of someone being described as having “eagle eyes?” A person with eagle eyes has keen eyesight—the ability to notice details and see what others may not see at first glance.

Eagles, noted for their keenness of vision, sense the presence of prey from an incredible distance, and swoop down from their high nests to seize their victim. They also can identify a rabbit moving almost 1.5 km away or see a tiny lizard on a rock at 300 metres above. An eagle flying at an altitude of 300 metres over open country could spot prey over an area of almost 8 square kilometres from a fixed position.

We need to have keen eyesight spiritually to discern the truths of the Bible, noticing the fulfillment of prophecy and being aware of the signs of the times fast fulfilling.

Nehemiah: “He watched with eagle eye the movements of their enemies, who at times collected at a distance and engaged in earnest conversation, as if plotting mischief, and then drawing near the workmen, attempted to divert their attention and hinder the work.” —*Christian Service*, p. 175

Elijah: “The morning passes and noon comes, and yet there is no move of their gods in pity to Baal's priests, the deluded worshipers of idols. . . . Elijah stands by, watching with eagle eye lest any deception should be practiced; for he knows that if, by any device, they could kindle their altar fire, he would be torn in pieces upon the spot.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 282

We need to see by eyes of faith that God can work in the midst of difficult circumstances and somehow bring some benefit to us. We should not be negatively affected by obstacles, but always see the purpose of God for our character building in the worst of times.

Going back to the nests, the eaglets cannot remain in their comfortable nests forever. “For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.” Deuteronomy 32:9–12

The Lord took the nation of Israel from their captivity in Egypt and gently led them through the Red Sea into the desert. He protected them, led them, nurtured them and educated them, as an eagle who nurtures her offspring when they are very young (Exodus 19:4). However, we read

that the eagle “stirreth up her nest.” The eagle parents provide such a safe environment for their little eaglets, that they would want to remain there forever, but there is a time for the eaglets to spread their own wings and fly. The parents teach the eaglet to fly, and then one day they have to leave the nest. The Lord has promised to take good care of us, but things may not always go on like this forever, because the nest is not only a place of feeding, but it is a school. Once we mature, we may be asked by the Lord to spread our wings and fly also out of our comfort zone.



Sometimes the Lord has to stir up our nest—our world. We were not made to remain in the comfortable surroundings of our nest-like world forever. We have been created in the image of God, made to fly and train our young to do the same.

From the life of Ellen G. White we read the following experience:

“My husband left the railroad, and with his ax went into the woods to chop cordwood. With a continual pain in his side, he worked from early morning till dark to earn about fifty cents a day. He was prevented from sleeping nights by severe pain. We endeavored to keep up good courage, and trust in the Lord. I did not murmur. In the morning I felt grateful to God that He had preserved us through another night, and at night I was thankful that He had kept us through another day. One day when our provisions were gone, my husband went to his employer to get money or provisions. It was a stormy day, and he walked three miles and back in the rain. He brought home on his back a bag of provisions tied in different compartments, having in this manner passed through the village of Brunswick, where he had often lectured. As he entered the house, very weary, my heart sank within me. My first feelings were that God had forsaken us. I said to my husband: ‘Have we come to this? Has the Lord left us?’ I could not restrain my tears, and wept aloud for hours, until I fainted. Prayer was offered in my behalf. When I breathed again, I felt the cheering influence of the Spirit of God, and regretted that I had sunk under discouragement. We desire to follow Christ and to be like Him; but we sometimes faint beneath trials, and remain at a distance from Him. Sufferings and trials bring us near to Jesus. The furnace consumes the dross and brightens the gold.

“At this time I was shown that the Lord had been trying us for our good, and to prepare us to labor for others; that He had been stirring up our nest, lest we should settle down at ease. Our work was to labor for souls; if we had been prospered, home would be so pleasant that we would be un-

willing to leave it; trials had been permitted to come upon us to prepare us for the still greater conflicts that we would meet in our travels.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 82–83

“In all the dealings of God with His people there is, mingled with His love and mercy, the most striking evidence of His strict and impartial justice. This is exemplified in the history of the Hebrew people. God had bestowed great blessings upon Israel. His loving-kindness toward them is touchingly portrayed: ‘As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him.’ And yet what swift and severe retribution was visited upon them for their transgressions!” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 469

The Lord counsels His church: “People are encouraged to settle in Battle Creek, to give their influence to the building up of a modern Jerusalem. This is not after God’s order. Thus other places are deprived of facilities that they should have. Enlarge ye; spread ye; yes, but not in one place only. Go out and establish centers of influence in places where nothing, or next to nothing, has been done. Break up your consolidated mass; diffuse the saving beams of light into the darkened corners of the earth. A work similar to that of an eagle stirring up her nest needs to be done.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 150

RENEW STRENGTH AS AN EAGLE

The eagle is used to describe the strength that the Lord wishes to give to His children.

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:28–31

It is a very magnificent sight to see a wild eagle soaring in the sky, higher and higher, with seemingly little effort. Similarly, the child of God who draws his strength from above is enabled to go ever onward and upward, always reaching new heights of achievement. Day after day it is the privilege of the Christian to go on from grace to grace and from victory to victory. Strength is added to strength and progress is constant. Higher and still higher goals come into view and eventually the Christian attains to the “prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:14

The Lord who never fails imparts strength to the fainting hearts. Whatever man’s needs may be, God has abundant

resources to supply them all. Those who in meekness and lowliness of spirit realize their own frailties and shortcomings are the most certain of having their needs supplied. God’s ear is always attuned to the cry of those who feel themselves insufficient for the tasks at hand and who desire the help of Heaven. It is in the weakness of humanity that God’s strength is made perfect. That fact has been proven in the lives of countless thousands. Young men at the height of their vigor may become weary and exhausted; even youths in the prime of life reach a point beyond which their strength fails. Many a struggle is lost because of weakness of body or spirit, even on the part of the strongest. But if you wait upon the Lord and look to the Lord in sincerity and humility for wisdom and strength and then patiently wait for guidance, He will not fail you. Strength is expended in service to the Master but there are always new supplies of grace and vitality available from Him who knows no weariness. He who does not continue to receive strength from God will soon find himself in a position where he is unable to serve the Lord.

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” Psalm 103:2–5

“THE EAGLE HAS LANDED”

This expression was originally used by Neil Armstrong (USA) when the first man-made craft (the “Eagle”) landed on the moon (1969). Today, it is often used now to indicate the completion of a “mission objective”—to denote a great accomplishment.

One day your eagle (you) will land. Where will you land? The mission objective of the Lord is for the salvation and redemption of mankind. When He returns to earth, will your eagle land in His arms? Will the Lord’s mission objective be successful in your life? Or will you land in the enemy’s camp? The devil is also on a mission—for the destruction of mankind. Your eagle will land in one camp or the other. Which one will it be? May your eagle land safely in the arms of Jesus. We will then not just land on the moon, but we will find ourselves landing in the paradise that Jesus has gone to prepare for us, which is far beyond the moon, beyond the heavens as we see and know.

It is my prayer that your eagle will land in safety. Amen.

Wendy Eaton





CHILDREN'S CORNER



Reconciliation: Make peace



As Mother and the children drove back from church, while listening to hymns, Mother overheard the children quietly having a conversation. She started to pay attention to what they were saying.

"Annie, you have to speak to Priscila. You know she is offended by what you said," Maxi said.

"Why should I speak to her? She is quite sensitive you know. Anyways, if she has something to say to me, she should come speak to me," Annie said, with pride in her voice.

Mother was stunned with what she had heard. Priscila was one of Annie's good church friends. They would often sit with each other at lunchtime to eat. Mother then realized that on the past two Sabbaths, Priscila had not sat beside Annie. Mother decided she would speak to Annie at home.

At home, after the children got ready for bed, Mother went into Annie's room. She found her practising her violin for a special she was preparing for the coming Sabbath.

"Annie, I would like to speak to you about something; please come sit here with me," said Mother as she patted the bed, indicating the spot beside her.

"Yes, Mother?" asked Annie sweetly.

"Well, when we were in the car coming back from church I heard you and Maxi speaking about something that happened with you and Priscila. I would like to know what happened."

"Oh, yes, but truly mother, it is not a big deal," said Annie sincerely, "the thing is two weeks ago while we

were practising our violins together, Priscila kept making mistakes. So I said to her, 'Priscila, it is obvious you have not been practising much, you should really do so.' And she said to me, 'I have practised, Annie, but the hymn you chose is really difficult for me. You have to remember, I am still a beginner.' Then I said, 'Priscila, that is no excuse; if you practise every day for half an hour you will do well, just like me.' That was the end of it. Afterwards, I noticed she was distant, and especially at lunchtime, she just stopped sitting with me."

"Well, it seems to me that Priscila is offended about something you said or did. Do you not think so?" Mother asked.

"Yes, but nothing I said was offensive," Annie defended herself.

Mother then remembered a verse she had memorized years ago when she found herself in a similar situation.

"Listen to this Annie, Matthew 5:23–24: 'Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' I realized that you are practising a special song for the Lord on Sabbath; however, it is important that before Sabbath, you need to try to make peace with those who have something against you. There is nothing more beautiful than to be at peace with our brothers and sisters at church. When situations like these arise, the key is to speak to one another."

"You are right, Mother, and truly I had forgotten about what God tells us to do in Matthew 5:23–24. But what if Priscila doesn't want to speak to me? What if she doesn't want to make peace?"

"At least you have done your part. We can only do our part, and others must choose to do theirs. However, I



am sure she will be willing to speak to you.” Mother smiled.

At Wednesday night prayer meeting, after the service was ended, Mother saw Annie and Priscila speaking in the office. They finished their conversation with smiles and a big hug.

Challenge Fifteen

Complete the puzzle.

I	Y	T	V	X	S	E	R	S	R	J	J	R	K	S
D	R	F	V	Q	C	Z	P	A	Q	Q	J	E	P	O
Y	I	I	M	N	J	E	L	Z	T	O	U	B	D	A
G	U	G	E	A	C	I	F	O	J	L	E	M	D	R
S	O	F	G	I	T	X	G	I	V	K	A	E	F	G
Y	F	V	A	G	P	T	T	G	N	J	G	M	S	Q
O	T	L	Y	K	M	S	H	Z	S	F	N	E	X	M
E	C	A	E	P	A	C	U	E	E	R	D	R	G	L
A	C	T	B	E	S	B	T	L	W	I	I	U	C	D
Z	Q	R	G	F	K	D	T	L	U	E	H	Y	S	V
M	V	M	J	I	Z	C	N	F	P	N	N	P	D	R
L	X	J	W	F	P	I	A	C	J	D	D	L	P	X
B	R	O	T	H	E	R	V	U	H	S	T	S	C	S
P	W	Y	R	O	Y	C	L	W	I	D	T	S	M	P
Q	M	M	F	M	Z	S	I	V	H	G	T	R	L	X

ALTAR

BROTHER

FRIENDS

GIFT

HUG

MATTHEW

OFFENCE

PEACE

REMEMBER

SPECIAL

Email your challenges here:

veronicoemigarcia@gmail.com





The Cross of Jesus

God's Son was innocent, yet we read how His body was hanging on the cross, wounded from scourging. His hands, which were always ready to bless others, were nailed to the cross. His royal head was pierced with the crown of thorns, and from His trembling lips was heard an agonizing cry. He who calmed the raging sea, and walked on its foaming waves, He who made evil spirits to tremble, and who expelled sicknesses, and who opened the eyes of the blind, and who raised up the dead back to life, gave Himself a sacrifice for you on the cross because of His love towards you.

Let the cross be the separating wall between us and the world. If the world is tempting you to sin, then go to Calvary to behold the price that was paid for your redemption; it gives us victory over temptation. If you doubt God's love, then lift up your eyes to look upon the cross. God's love upon the cross is the great floodlight which has cast its light into the dark night of the world for thousands of years. In this light the believers of the old covenant traveled, and in this light we are prepared to lift the cross of Calvary.

Paul writes, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14. The cross was the glory of Paul; it had become very dear to him. But only a few years earlier the cross had destroyed the faith and hope of the followers of Jesus, and pressed them into utmost despair, and into

the greatest disappointment, greater than what God's people had ever met before.

When we turn our faces to look to our Redeemer being nailed to the cross, then we have a better understanding of the greatness and the meaning of the sacrifice given for us by the majesty of heaven.

As we are looking at our Redeemer being nailed to the cross, the plan of redemption comes clearer to us. When we contemplate the scenes of Calvary it awakens in our hearts strong and holy feelings. To him who is beholding our Saviour's marvelous love, his thoughts will be ennobled, his heart will be purified, and his character will be transformed. The more we contemplate on the cross of Christ, the more completely we join with the words of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Amen.

Enni Marttinen

(translated from Finnish by her son Timo Marttinen)



HEALTH MATTERS:

ROSEMARY:

AN IMPRESSIVE HERB



In the remote village of Acciaroli in southwest Italy, about one in every ten people is over 100 years old. Researchers studied the town's incredibly healthy, long-living population and found that one thing they did was cook with lots of rosemary. The local version of the herb is especially pungent and reportedly smells ten times stronger than the one most people are familiar with. So, could this aromatic herb do more than add tasty benefits to a variety of dishes? Quite possibly.

The scientific name of rosemary is *Rosmarinus officinalis*. Rosemary is a fragrant evergreen shrub native to the Mediterranean that now grows widely in much of the world, particularly in warm, sunny climates. The plant has long, spiky needles that are green on top and silvery underneath, as well as small, blue flowers. It is a member of the mint family, along with other herbs such as oregano, thyme, basil, and lavender. In addition to being available as a fresh herb, rosemary is sold as a dried whole herb, dried in capsules, as a powdered extract, in liquid extracts such as for teas, and as an essential oil. It is used to flavour culinary dishes such as soups, sauces, and stews, to make perfumes, and for its potential health benefits. Rosemary should be used as a garnish or final spice. Heating up rosemary can cause some of the beneficial components in it to be lost. The herb has been used since ancient times for its medicinal properties. It is also a good source of iron, magnesium, calcium, potassium and Vitamins A, C and B6. It is high in dietary fiber. Although the small amounts used to flavor food are not considered large enough to have a major effect on one's health, regular addition of rosemary leaves to one's food will allow the body to derive accumulative benefits from the compounds and phytochemicals in the leaves.

The active components in rosemary have multiple

health benefits, including as an antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial and anti-carcinogenic. These four properties demonstrate that rosemary can strengthen our immune system and protect the body against many different diseases and infectious agents.

Rosemary is a rich source of a variety of antioxidants, including rosmarinic acid, caffeic acid, betulinic acid, and carnosol, which neutralize harmful particles in the body called free radicals, which can cause cell mutation, including the development of cancer cells. This is the second line of defense in the body, next to the immune system. Its antioxidant properties are also good for your brain specifically. Rosemary contains an ingredient called carnosic acid, which can fight off damage by free radicals in the brain.

Rosemary is powerful anti-microbial, especially against bacterial infections, particularly those in the stomach. *H. pylori* is a bacteria which many people harbour in their stomachs without it causing disease; however, given the right conditions, can cause gastritis, stomach ulcers, and can even lead to cancer. Studies show that when there is an excess of free radicals in the body, *H. pylori* can cause disease. Rosemary has been shown to prevent the growth of *H. pylori* because of its antioxidant and antibacterial properties. Similarly, it is linked to preventing staphylococcus infections (this bacteria typically sits on the skin and does not cause a problem unless it gets into the body's internal system) which kill thousands of people each year because these infections have become resistant to most antibiotics. Using essential oils such as rosemary on the skin can successfully keep the numbers of staph bacteria down, diminishing the risk of these bacteria invading the body. The multiple, complex compounds contained in these oils prevent the bacteria from targeting a specific property of

the oil to grow resistant to, thus it does not lose its efficacy in fighting bacteria.

Because it works as an antibacterial agent, rosemary works as a breath freshener that also improves your oral health. Steep rosemary leaves in a glass of hot water and then gargle or swish the water in your mouth to eliminate bacteria, and you will have naturally fresh and clean breath.

Perhaps the most important function of rosemary is its anti-inflammatory properties. Carnosol and carnosic acids are two powerful anti-inflammatory compounds found in rosemary that reduce inflammation of muscles, blood vessels, and joints. Carnosic acid is able to reduce the levels of nitric acid in the body, which is a trigger for inflammation. This makes it an effective treatment for many things, including high blood pressure, gout, muscle pain, hemorrhoids, allergies, headaches, and arthritis. It also helps in healing from injuries caused by physical exertion or during surgery. It can be used either orally or topically to produce these anti-inflammatory effects. The reduction in inflammation in the cardiovascular system can help boost heart health and prevent atherosclerosis (plaque) from forming in blood vessels.

One of the earliest documented uses of rosemary for health reasons was as a cognitive stimulant. It was said to improve memory and helped increase intelligence and focus. Some studies have suggested that the carnosic acid in rosemary may significantly help prevent brain aging and helps to improve cognitive ability in the elderly, such as in stimulating memory. Studies show the ability of rosemary in preventing or slowing down Alzheimer's and dementia by inhibiting the build-up of plaque in the nerve pathways of the brain. This is considered a breakthrough in treating these conditions that have always been considered incurable. Rosemary



may be useful for people who have experienced a stroke, by protecting against brain damage and improving recovery from a stroke. The aroma from rosemary can improve concentration, performance, speed and accuracy of tasks, and mood. Drinking rosemary before work or school will enhance brain function.

Rosemary can also help with preventing the signs of aging on the skin through its antioxidant and astringent (tightening) properties. It can be used in its essential oil form; the leaves of rosemary can also benefit skin health by ingesting it or using it topically; it has been shown to improve the quality of the skin, while also healing blemishes such as acne, and increasing its natural shine and hydrated appearance. Because rosemary improves blood flow in the body, it also increases the blood flow to the skin, which improves its appearance. Studies have specifically looked at rosemary's effects on eczema; the increased blood flow and rosemary's anti-inflammatory compounds have lessened or eliminated symptoms of this skin condition.

Rosemary has mild diuretic properties; this enables it to flush out toxins efficiently during urination. Its ability to increase the rate at which water leaves the body can also help push out pathogens (disease-causing viruses, bacteria, etc.), salts, and even excess fat when consumed regularly. This cleansing effect takes the strain off the other organs in the body.

Rosemary is shown to be beneficial in speeding up the healing of the liver, which is one of the slowest organs to heal, it can help protect the liver from hepatitis and jaundice, and cirrhosis.

Carnosic acid can also significantly promote eye health. This could provide treatments for diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, the most common eye disease in the United States.

Research has shown that rosemary extract seeks out and neutralizes free radicals, which decrease the growth of cancer cells; it specifically has been proven to slow the spread of human leukemia and breast cancer cells. Thus, rosemary may be helpful as an anti-tumour agent. Three compounds contained in rosemary, rosmarinic acid, caffeic acid, and carnosol have been linked to specifically reducing the rate of growth of breast cancer.

The aroma of rosemary alone has been linked to improving mood, reducing fatigue, clearing the mind, soothing anxiety, and relieving stress. It also reduces stress hormone levels in the body, allowing people to

relax. Whether the plant is eaten or applied topically using a salve of the leaves, it can have similar effects.

Rosemary's anti-spasmodic effects are shown to help treat indigestion. In Europe, rosemary has traditionally been used by dozens of cultures as a natural remedy for upset stomachs, constipation, bloating, cramping, and diarrhea due to its anti-inflammatory properties. It can also improve the body's intake of nutrients by relieving inflammation in the gut. Using rosemary can help you regulate your bowel movements and your gastrointestinal system. The tea made from rosemary is the most helpful for one's digestion.

Rosemary acts as a stimulating substance for the circulatory system of the body; it contains anticoagulant (prevents clotting) properties, therefore improves blood flow through the body. It also boosts the production of red blood cells. Red blood cells carry the oxygen we breathe to the rest of the body. In this way, rosemary helps oxygenate vital organs, ensuring they function properly, increases our energy, and also stimulates the movement of nutrients through the circulatory system.

As an analgesic (pain reducing) substance, rosemary has been applied on the skin in a paste or salve for hundreds of years to the area of the body affected by pain. Rosemary contains a compound called salicylate, which is similar to aspirin. When consumed orally, it acts as a pain reliever for headaches and pain from medical conditions. A popular use of rosemary is for the treatment of migraines. Boiling rosemary leaves and applying it to the temples, or simply smelling its aroma can reduce the severity of migraine symptoms. It is helpful for both acute and chronic pain.

Many people use rosemary tea or its essential oil to improve the health of their hair. Using tea made from rosemary, scrub the scalp and hair to improve the nutrient content of the hair, and also get rid of dandruff. The antibacterial properties prevent skin conditions in the scalp and promotes hair growth to prevent premature balding. Regular



use of rosemary oil helps stimulate hair follicles resulting in stronger hair. Rosemary oil also slows down the graying of hair.

It has also been shown helpful for weight loss, relieving coughs, and improving gall bladder function.

Rosemary is usually safe when taken in low doses.

However, extremely large doses can trigger serious side effects, although this is rare. These side effects include: vomiting, spasms, coma, pulmonary edema (fluid in the lungs). High doses of rosemary may cause miscarriage; therefore it is not advisable for pregnant women to take any rosemary supplements. Breastfeeding mothers should avoid using rosemary as some of the ingredients can pass through breast milk to the baby. For those who have a seizure disorder, rosemary can make this condition worse. If a person has an aspirin allergy, do not use rosemary, as it contains the same component, salicylate, as does aspirin. People with bleeding disorders should not use rosemary, as the anti-clotting nature of rosemary can make the condition worse.

As with all other herbs, rosemary is considered a medicine, and therefore interactions with other medications need to be considered. Rosemary can affect the activity of medications such as blood thinners, high blood pressure medications of the ACE inhibitor class, diuretics or "water pills", and lithium, which is used to treat bipolar disorder (can cause toxicity of this medication). Therefore, having a discussion with your doctor before deciding to take rosemary supplements is vital.

Not only is rosemary good for our health, it can be used in the house as an air freshener; a mixture of water and rosemary essential oils can remove bad odours from the air. Scattered about the house, its strong scent makes it a deterrent for pests and insects. Sprigs can be pressed inside books to discourage silver fish and placed in linen closets to repel moths.

HOW TO USE ROSEMARY?

Rosemary can be purchased in almost any natural health store if you want untreated or wild rosemary. However, for cooking, it is available in every grocery store, as it is widely used. You can also grow your own rosemary, in your garden or in your kitchen. It is a perennial, which means it will last for several years.

Rosemary tea is made by brewing the leaves and stem of the rosemary plant. Rosemary tea can be made very easily with a few sprigs of rosemary herb, hot water, and a natural sweetener. Unlike many herbal teas that require only the leaves to be steeped for a tea blend, rosemary tea is made by steeping both the leaves and the stems of rosemary. This tea can be made with either fresh or dried leaf. When making the tea, bring the water to a boil, then reduce heat. Add 1 teaspoon of rosemary (dried, fresh or powdered) into 1 cup of water and allow it to steep for 5–6 minutes. Strain it into a cup, and then add sweetener, if desired. If you use 1–2



cups daily, you will not consume it in quantities where you may experience side effects.

The essential oil made from rosemary is extracted from the leaves of the plant. It is too potent to be consumed, and should only be used externally for various problems. It can be put on the skin over areas that need treating, such as on the scalp for hair loss, on the top of the neck for memory issues, on top of the area experiencing pain, even internal pain. The oil can also be inhaled, boosting mental energy, relieving headaches and clearing the respiratory tract of congestion.

Rosemary can also be made into a poultice and applied to aching joints and sore muscles to relieve pain and speed healing. For best results, alternate hot and cold applications.

Make rosemary a part of your regular diet, or use it specifically to treat various diseases and ailments, and reap the benefits of this impressive herb.

“The true method for healing the sick is to tell them of the herbs that grow for the benefit of man. . . . They can themselves administer the simple herbs if necessary.” –*The Spalding and Megan Collection*, p. 137



“The Lord has provided antidotes for diseases in simple plants, and these can be used by faith, with no denial of faith; for by using the blessings provided by God for our benefit we are cooperating with Him. He can use water and sunshine and the herbs which He has caused to grow, in healing maladies.” –*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 289

Missionary Work in Toronto, Canada



While new laws in the province forbid door to door sales, nothing stops the members from placing free literature into the mail boxes of people.

Far left: Milton and Natalia

Left: 14 year old Stephen Newby

“There is nothing more precious in the sight of God than His ministers, who go forth into the waste places of the earth to sow the seeds of truth, looking forward to the harvest.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 369–370. We are all called to be volunteer ministers of the gospel.

Ghana



**Right: Family
of
Joe Mensah**

**Left: Joe
Mensah
baptizing his
two eldest
daughters.**



Sweden



“The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air, as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care; for ‘they sow not, neither do they reap,’ and yet the great Father provides for their needs. He asks, ‘Are ye not much better than they?’ Those who profess to be the children of God dishonor their Heavenly Father when they manifest unbelief. The great Provider for man and beast opens His hand, and supplies all His creatures. The birds of the air are not beneath His notice. He does not drop the food into their bills, but He makes provision for their needs. They must exert themselves to gather the grains He has scattered for them. They must prepare the material for their little nests. They must feed their young. They go forth singing, to their labor; for ‘your Heavenly Father feedeth them.’ ‘Are ye not much better than they?’ Are not ye, as intelligent, spiritual worshipers, of more value than the fowls of the air? Will not the Author of man’s being, the Preserver of his life, the One who formed him in His own divine image, provide for his necessities, if he but trust in Him?’ – *The Review and Herald*, September 18, 1888



“It is not the thought and anxiety of man that provides for his wants, and that causes him to grow in youth and to develop strength; but God is silently doing His work for man, adding to his stature as he progresses to maturity, and opening his mind to knowledge.” – *The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1877