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The Reformation Messenger



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The Reformation *Messenger*

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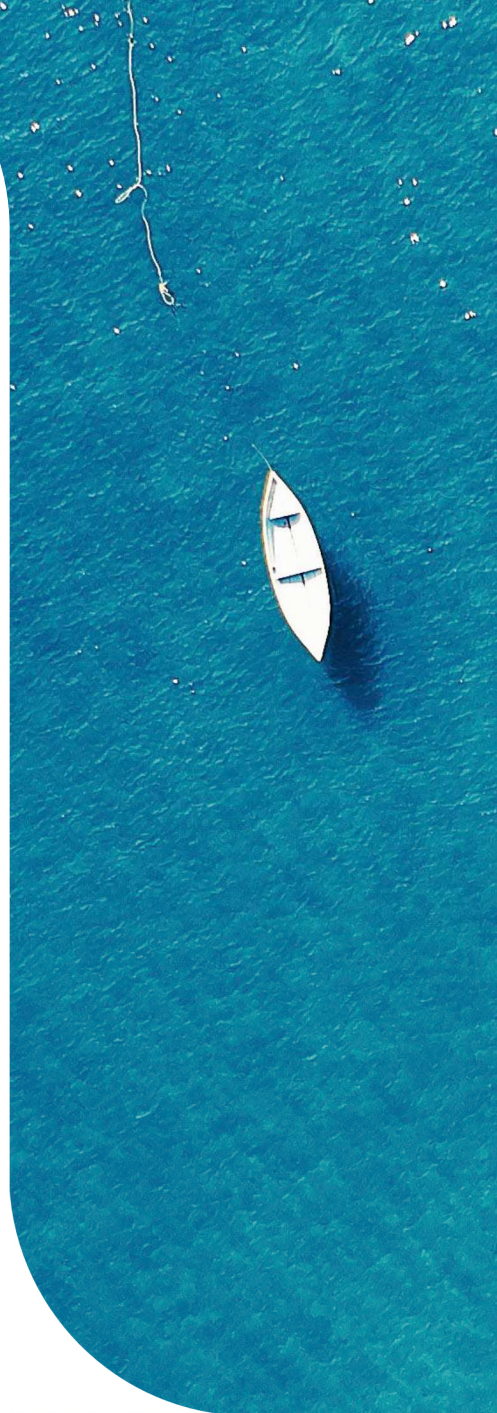
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It Is Well with My Soul

By Ellen G. White

“We have a most decided work to do to prepare for the judgment. The great question is, ‘How is it with my soul? Have I followed the light that God has given me?’ If you have faith now to grasp the promises of God, you will have faith when greater trials come. The present time is all-important time to us. Now is the time to know that Christ is formed within, the hope and glory.” *—The Review and Herald, March 19, 1889*

“Long ago I learned never to depend upon my feelings. I have heart disease. Sometimes when heavy burdens come upon me, I suffer constantly from pain in my heart. At such times I walk the floor, not daring to close my eyes in sleep for fear I should never wake. It is then that I plead with the Lord, and He gives me the victory. Then I am able to go to rest, with the sweet assurance that it is well with my soul, and with confidence that God will take care of me. As far as feeling is concerned, I feel no better. But what has feeling to do with faith? It is just as distinct from faith as is the east from the west. Your faith should rest upon the Word of God. It is your privilege to claim His promises by faith. Plant your feet firmly on a ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ and you will not need to consult your feelings.

“People often ask me, ‘How do you feel this morning?’ I tell them that I do not say much about my feelings. But when I am the weakest, when I feel the most pressed by the enemy, I know there is a victory to gain, and this victory I am determined to gain. In the faith that I have, I feel today that I can take hold of the Mighty One, and that He will spare my life just as long as He sees best.

“Let us all have confidence in God. Press your way through the shadow which Satan throws across your pathway, and take hold of the arm of Jesus, the Mighty One. Let your case rest in His hands. Let your prayer be, ‘Lord, I present my petition to Thee. I put my trust in Thee, and I ask for the blessing that thou seest will be for my present and future usefulness and my eternal good.’ When you arise from your knees, believe! When the enemy comes with his darkness, sing faith and talk faith, and you will find that you have sung and talked yourself into the light.” *—Manuscript 91, 1901*

“We should contemplate the wonderful love of God and the infinite sacrifice made for us, that we might reach the highest standard possible. Oh, what a theme to contemplate, that man, depraved and lost in his natural condition, may be renewed and saved by the gracious help that Christ gives him in the gospel. The love of Jesus in the soul will drive out the enemy who is seeking to take possession of man. Every trial patiently borne, every blessing thankfully received, every temptation faithfully resisted, will make you a strong man in Jesus Christ. All this grace may be gained in [the] prayer of faith. Jesus, precious Saviour! . . . Do not disconnect from God. Let gratitude be cherished in your hearts for every token of good. It is well to often enter into a close examination of self. Is all right between my soul and God? Is it well with my soul? Jesus taught that men ought always to pray and not to faint. Lay hold upon strength from above. Even Jesus, when preparing for some great trial, would resort to the solitude of the mountains and spend the night in prayer to His Father. May God help you and bless you.” *—Letter 11, 1886*



Heart Pollution

Adapted from a sermon by Timo Martin

The world in which we live is polluted. You can hardly find a clean place anymore. The rivers and lakes are dirty. The air is polluted. Our food is not safe to eat anymore. This pollution is causing great damage to the health of plants, animals, and people. But, where is there is the worst pollution—the one that is the most harmful to people? The answer is: in the human heart, the source of our thoughts, feelings, and actions.

The human heart is the place where you will find the worst defilement and corruption. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?” Jeremiah 17:9. Often the condition is incurable. And as Jeremiah states, so little is known about the human heart. We are afraid of outside enemies, but few can recognize their own, greatest enemy—their own heart.

The heart can be very sensitive, easily hurt, it can contain sorrow, joy, pride, bitterness, hatred, love, forgiveness, and selfishness. It can ache. It can be broken.

Just like ourselves, our fellow men also possess a heart. Do we consider their hearts as well, their thoughts and feelings?

In Jeremiah 17:10 we read, “I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” The Lord searches the heart, and what He finds within determines our final destiny.

What does God often find in the human heart? “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lascivi-

ousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Mark 7:21–23

These evils flow naturally from the human heart, and are what defile man, not any pollution from without. The heart is the foundation of our thoughts, words, and actions. If our heart is not pure, our thoughts, words, and actions cannot be pure.

"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth." Psalm 10:3. The wicked is proud that he is able to obtain that which his heart desires. He admires those who seek their own gain. He brags about cheating others, taking advantage of others.

"Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have known My ways." Hebrews 3:8–11

The children of Israel knew the law of God. They saw the miraculous works of God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt and sustained them in the wilderness. Yet, they rebelled against God, they refused to trust His leading.

What spoils our hearts? Why are they defiled? What happened in the heart of Judas? How did it become so evil? "And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him." John 13:2

It was the devil who also enticed Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge. Eve had received a pure heart from God. Now, suddenly a sinful desire sprang up. Her heart was no longer clean. And her unclean heart caused her to eat from the tree.

Can it happen to us that the devil may put into our heart a desire to sin—to dislike someone, to speak evil, unkind words to someone, to eat forbidden foods as did Adam and Eve, to listen to worldly music, to seek worldly entertainment, to speak evil of someone, to be bitter, dissatisfied, angry? Satan puts these and more into the heart—jealousy, envy, pride, covetousness, misery, unhappiness. Eve had no desire to sin until the devil put it into her heart. By sowing seeds of doubt, he made her think. Is it really so important what God has told us not to do? Would He let us die for this little thing?

Can it also be that Satan can put sinful desires into the hearts of faithful Christians, faithful Reformers? Yes, it is very much possible.

The condition for salvation is a pure heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

To have a pure heart is our life's work. This is our purpose for living on this earth. This is the purpose of our Reformation message, to bring about a pure heart. Yet this is a task that is impossible for man to do alone. No man can change a defiled, corrupted heart. It takes the power of God, a new creation to cleanse our heart from sin. The natural heart always has the tendency to go away from God. It is always seeking opportunities to gratify the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and ears. It seeks human recognition, praise, and attention; it may perform charitable acts for selfish reasons. It is revengeful, unforgiving, and selfish in all its motives, easily offended.

If there is any good in us, it is wholly attributable to the mercy of a compassionate Saviour. Therefore, to look down on someone else, to despise someone for their weaknesses or failures is a great sin. Paul says, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Romans 7:18. Only with Christ living within us and doing His marvelous work in us can we do any good. Should we become proud and look down on others who are not as good as we are, it is a great blindness and the spirit of Satan dwelling in our hearts.

Some Christians have a divided heart, a heart which wants to serve God yet also wants to enjoy this world. This is the greatest deception in our world today; Christ will not enter into a divided heart. A divided heart is the property of Satan. A divided heart pleads for indulgence rather than denial, always seeks an easy way out. In a divided heart, there is no desire for missionary work, no desire for self-sacrifice. The cross is not the center of glory anymore. Yet we may flatter ourselves that our hearts are clean.

"Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how

fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God." —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 320

As we read in Jeremiah, who can know his own heart? We are often surprised when God reveals characteristics in our own hearts that we thought never existed. In certain circumstances it may be revealed that there was some jealousy left, there was a little root of bitterness, there were still traits of selfishness and self-glory, maybe a revengeful spirit, all while we were thinking that our hearts were pure.

"This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me." Matthew 15:8. Although men may speak of God, their hearts are filled with selfish plans. There is love for self in the heart. Love to God and their fellowmen have no place in their hearts. Yet they pray to God and profess to be Christians.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18. God will not hear the prayers of those who will not put away their sin, whose hearts are not pure.

From a pure heart, nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow. It is an altar upon which God's love is to burn on. A pure heart can love his enemies, while a divided heart has difficulty loving even his own family members, or brothers and sisters in the church.

Among Christians, two developments are taking place. Some are cleansing their hearts and becoming more faithful, more loving, more generous, and more humble. At the same time, others are becoming more selfish, self-centered, more independent of others, more self-confident. "Look what I am doing, see how good I am." They are more critical of others, and prouder of themselves. Thinking of themselves as holy, and looking down on others as sinners. "Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." Isaiah 65:5

These two classes can be called those who are persecuted and those who are persecuting others. Since 1888, Sister White stated that she had seen the spirit of persecution enter into the church. Persecution starts from a very small root. There are people who work for God, they sacrifice and put out an effort, while others do not join in.

There is a great danger that a person becomes dissatisfied with others, thinking himself as good and others bad. This is a sign that their efforts were put forth from selfish motives, and not from genuine love. Their hearts are deceiving themselves that they are doing God's work.

Religious persecution arises when others do not come up to your standard of goodness, as defined by your deceptive heart. This persecution may not always be done with swords and guns, but with the weapon of the mouth—evil speaking. With one's countenance—by angry looks, ignoring others, cutting them off from one's friendship, by neglecting those who we do not like. It may not always be called by its proper name, yet it is the same spirit as was recorded in the Middle Ages, by the persecuting powers, when 50 million martyrs were tortured to death.

To show how far this spirit can lead us, there is a story in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* about a Protestant minister was tortured daily for a month. Every day he was made the subject of derision and mockery, trying to exhaust his patience. They spit in his face, punched him in different parts of his body. They made him run between lines of soldiers, where each one beat him with fists, sticks, and ropes. They hung him upside down until blood poured out of his nose and mouth. Each day the torture was more painful. Next they hung him from his right arm so that it dislocated, and the next day they repeated it with his left arm. Then they placed burning oily papers between his fingers and toes. His flesh was torn apart with red hot pincers, and next they put him on the rack. Then they pulled off the nails of the fingers from one hand, and then from the other hand. Then they cut his ears and his nose. Next they pulled off the nails from his toes. In between he was suspended by ropes, hanging in the air. Then the next day they pulled out all his teeth, followed by pouring hot molten lead upon his fingers and toes. Finally they tightened a band around his head, forcing his eyes out. A month later, finally, mercifully, death relieved his pain.

This was not an isolated case. Millions were tortured and put to death in the most inhumane ways by religious Christians who thought themselves holy, and others as deserving punishment. This is the most Satanic spirit. One person causes misery and sorrow to another person, whether it is done in a small way or on a large scale, yet it is

the same spirit. And this all stems from the human heart. From the heart that has been hardened, that it cannot feel, cannot sympathize, cannot forgive—destitute of the Spirit of God.

Sister White writes that our heart is hardened in disobedience and rebellion—by every art of sin or evil habit, frivolous amusement, indulgence of appetite, pride, self-confidence, selfish interests, love of the world, and unbelief. By rejecting rebukes and chastening, it finally becomes hard as stone, that nothing can touch it anymore. “But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” Hebrews 3:13

A pure heart is a faithful heart; there is no false sympathy that causes them to excuse their faults, to allow sin and wrong to fit into it. It keeps the commandments of God from love. Moses had a pure heart when He called out, “Who is on the LORD’s side?” and commanded them to take a sword and put to death all the rebellious people who worshipped the golden calf. Christ had a pure heart, when He said to the woman caught in adultery, “Go and sin no more.”

We need guidance to know in which direction we should go, in the way that God wants to lead us. A pure heart is our best guide. An unclean heart leads us in the wrong direction. Our heart is a battlefield; a terrible war is being waged there between good and evil. And multitudes are falling victims to their own deceitful hearts yet flattering themselves with their own goodness.

The good seed has been sown in the heart, yet often it has produced wild grapes, and bitter fruits. Years ago a tree fell on our property; it was rotten inside, the cause of its fall was the many years of decay that had slowly taken place.

The heart is a garden which needs to be cultivated. What happens if you leave a garden alone, unattended for even a few days? The weeds start to grow, and the good seeds and plants get choked out. Our heart needs cultivating just like a garden needs sunshine, water, and weeding, constant care. God has not left us alone to do the work.

“God is constantly pruning His people, cutting off profuse, spreading branches, that they may bear fruit to His glory, and not produce leaves only. God prunes us with sorrow, with disappointment and affliction, that the outgrowth of strong, perverse traits of character may be weakened and

that the better traits may have a chance to develop.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 354

To form gold and silver, the metal is placed in a hot furnace. The hard metal becomes soft and melts so that it can be remolded. So, the human heart is made tender and malleable by trials, through suffering. Read *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, and you will never complain again, instead you will see a purpose in all your afflictions.

Paul said, “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:10

Peter also said, “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:7

Both Paul and Peter realized the need for a pure heart that is brought about by their trials and afflictions. Their hearts were cleansed. At the same time that pruning takes place, water and sunshine are given to the trees. Through these actions, God is showing His love to us to expel sin from our hearts.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28. This verse says, “all things.” If your life is hard sometimes, and your burden heavy, think of the glory that will be revealed in you by this light affliction. The pure heart will emerge, a heart that knows how to love, that is full of kindness and gentleness.

“And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 11:19. The entire church will have one heart; this is the picture of perfect unity. The heart of stone will be taken away, and a heart of flesh given to us. A pure heart is always happy, never complains, everything is always well. A pure heart is your passport to heaven. It is a guarantee of eternal happiness.

Sister White wrote that the greatest joy to God is to see hearts purified by His grace in His children. This will also be our greatest joy, to have hearts pure from the pollution of sin, to have the heart of Jesus in us.

Amen.



I will

By Wendy Eaton (ON)

When someone says “I will,” it is with the expectation that they will follow through with whatever it is they intend to do. *I will* come help you tomorrow. *I will* loan you something, or *I will* return what I borrowed, tomorrow. The list is endless. When you ask someone a favour, you would hope they respond with an “*I will*.”

Not every time when someone says, “I will...” do they actually follow through with what they said they will do. The next time they come to you and say “I will”, you will be less likely to trust them that they actually *will*. . . So they add the word *I promise I will*. . . They hope to make you really believe that they will this time. However, there will still be people who do not follow through with what they said they *will* do. If you are a person of your word, when you say “I will”, people will believe you right away and you do not need to add the “I promise.” Or you do not need to “swear that you will” do as you say. You are a person of your word.

Jesus told a parable of two sons. Their father asked them to go work in the field. One son said “I go, sir: and went not.” Matthew 21:30. This was a deliberate defiance and refusal to do as he said he would. This is true with many people. They are agreeable, but they have no intention of following through with what they said they *will* do.

The disciple Peter said He would go with Jesus to prison and death, “And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death.” Luke 22:33. Not long after we see that Peter denied his Lord with swearing and cursing. This was not as intentional as was the son in the parable. Peter did not openly change his mind due to defiance. It was fear, and in the spur of the moment, he did not think clearly.

We have to be very careful about our actions when we say, “*I will*.”

In the Bible we can read hundreds of verses where God said, “*I will*.” We know that God “who can-



not lie," *will* do what He says He *will* do. This has been shown in 100% of the times that God said "*I will*." Sometimes it is good, when He promises to comfort the distressed, and at other times it is punishment for evildoers.

We need to have 100% confidence that what the Lord says He will do, He *will* actually do. He has never failed in the past and will not fail in the future. He is God and never changes.

You can read verses where the writer has full confidence in what God can do, so they write, *God will*, or *He will*.

Even though we know that God is Almighty and "nothing is impossible for Him" sometimes we are tempted to not believe that He really *will* do as He said. Sometimes we need to see the evidence first before we believe that He *will*. Our faith is weak. There is a saying in English "God said it, I believe it, and that settles it." That should be our attitude.

Let us read a few of the verses where the Lord says, "I will," and take them to heart, and believe that He *will*.

"And I *will* give them one heart, and I *will* put a new spirit within you; and I *will* take the stony heart out of their flesh, and *will* give them an heart of flesh." Ezekiel 11:19. And, it is repeated in Ezekiel 36:26. When we get disheartened at seeing the sinful condition of our heart, and when we seem to fail over and over again, it is easy to lose hope, but we can thank the Lord that He has promised to take out the stony heart and give us a heart of flesh. It is something we cannot do on our own. He never said, "I might", or if you are good, I *will* consider changing your heart. He simply said, "I *will*". And so He *will* if you ask Him.

We never need to feel alone on this earth because the Lord promised, "And I *will* pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." John 14:16. The promise is a guarantee that the Holy Spirit *will* be sent to those who ask.

"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11:11-13

Do you pray for the Holy Spirit? It should be a part of our daily prayers. Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matthew 7:7-8. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matthew 21:22. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that *will* I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:13. We only have to believe that He *will* do as He promised.

There is no reason to doubt that God listens to and hears your prayers. "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I *will* hear." Isaiah 65:24. Do not wait for some evidence or some special feeling that your prayer has been answered. Simply believe—before you ask, God has the answer ready. He has all your problems figured out. He knows the future

and is leading you—all you have to do is follow. “Call unto Me, and I *will* answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” Jeremiah 33:3. His plan for our lives is often greater than we can imagine. He has great plans for each sincere believer in Christ. Just believe.

We never need to feel lost because, “Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands command ye Me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I *will* direct all his ways.” Isaiah 45:11–13

Although, we find many promises in the Bible where the Lord says He *will* help, save and protect His children; He *will* forgive them of their sins and iniquities, we need to take heed also when He says... “The day of the Lord *will* come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:11

This is a solemn warning. The Lord *will* come. We know not when, but we see the signs fast fulfilling. He *will* come and save His children. The wicked *will* be punished. There is no possibility of it being otherwise because God said it.

Troublous times are ahead for the children of God, and although we know that the Lord has promised to be with us, do we really believe He *will* see us through? We need to have complete trust in Him when the world is against us. “So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I *will* not fear what man shall do unto me.” Hebrews 13:6

When tempted to take matters into our own hands in the troublous times when people are against us, we have to trust the Lord’s promise when He says, “For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I *will* recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people.” Hebrews 10:30. Leave it to the Lord.

We look forward to the time when the Lord will perfect our Christian character. Together we work with the Lord and He has promised. “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. He *will* prepare your heart and character for heaven if you allow Him to work in and through you. If we do decide to separate from the world, this wonderful promise is ours. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I *will* receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Corinthians 6:17–18

As you read through your Bible, give an extra thought to the many other verses when you see the Lord saying, “I *will*”. Meditate on His words and do not doubt.

He *will* cleanse every sinner that repents. He *will* direct you. He *will* answer your prayers. He *will* comfort those that are in distress. He *will* save to the uttermost all who come to Him by faith (Hebrews 7:25). He *will* be with you in every trial. He *will* change your stony heart into a heart of flesh. He *will* save you when He comes if you have let Him work His will through your life, and He *will* be a Father to you. There are many more promises He has made that He *will* follow through on. Take comfort and trust in Him.

Now, since the Lord has made us so many promises, what *will* we do for the Lord?

The nation of Israel said, “All that the LORD hath spoken we *will* do.” Exodus 19:8. Not long after they were found dancing around a golden calf. Some people’s “promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 47

Although when we use the word “vow” it has a stronger meaning than simply saying we *will* do something. A vow carries a heavier weight. Solomon wrote: “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.” Ecclesiastes 5:4–5. However, the same principle holds true. Better to not say you *will* do something and then not do it, rather than say you *will* and then you do not. Yes, circumstances do arise in life that may make it difficult to follow through such as injury, family emergencies, or the weather. But, if there are no good reasons to not follow through, then it is better to keep your word.



I will follow Thee my Saviour

wheresoe'er my lot may be.

After an inspiring sermon, have you ever told yourself, *I will* do more missionary work, *I will* be on time for church, *I will* give more donations, *I will*... and then later hesitate to follow through?

The Lord is looking for your cooperation, so in your personal life, follow the Lord's example and when He calls you, answer Him by saying "I will". Do not be like the son in the parable at the beginning who said he would go work for his father but did not, or like the nation of Israel who soon forgot and made a feast for an idol. Your words mean little if there are not corresponding actions to your words.

Let us rehearse the words of the following song regularly:

*"I will follow Thee my Saviour,
wheresoe'er my lot may be.*

*Where Thou goest I will follow;
Yes, my Lord I'll follow Thee.*

*Though the road be rough and thorny,
Trackless as the foaming sea,*

*Thou hast trod this way before me,
And I'll gladly follow Thee.*

*Though I meet with tribulations,
Sorely tempted though I be;*

*I remember Thou wast tempted,
And rejoice to follow Thee.*

*Though Thou leadest me through affliction,
Poor, forsaken, though I be;*

*Thou wast destitute, afflicted,
And I only follow Thee.*

*Though to Jordan's rolling billows,
Cold and deep, Thou leadest me,*

*Thou hast crossed the waves before me,
And I still will follow Thee."*

If life provides you challenges and you are having a rough time, do not give up. The Lord *will* see you through. He *will* lead you in the path that He has chosen for you to walk for your own salvation, and the salvation of those close to you.

Take comfort. The Lord loves you and *will* work in every heart that comes to Him by faith. Just make a decision that you *will* follow Him and then He has promised that He *will* lead you in the paths of righteousness and prepare you for eternity. That is guaranteed. He *will* keep His word. Amen.

“Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent,



REPENT REFORM & REVIVE

By Makoto Matsumoto (AB)

Do you have a dream? Dreams are incredibly powerful. They fuel us, keep us motivated, and give us purpose. But sometimes, we are tempted to give up on them when things get complicated. In this article, we will explore a dream shared by an individual, a nation, and even God—one so sacred and robust that it faced relentless attacks from the enemy.

Dream of Israel

“In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”
Daniel 9:2–3

Daniel is known as a man of prayer. He opened his windows and prayed three times daily toward

Jerusalem—well, toward where it used to be, as it was ruined by Babylon by this time. Why did he pray so hard? It was because he had a dream. A wish in his heart was burning like a fire: to restore Jerusalem.

Why was this his dream? “Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.”
Daniel 9:17–19

Daniel's dream was not for himself but for God's name and His glory. And Daniel was not the only one with this purpose in their hearts. All his nation was hoping the same, and it was also God's

and do the first works.” – Revelation 2:4-5



plan to do so. Finally, the day came when God answered his prayer.

Under Cyrus's decree, the first group of Israelites returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest. They faced many challenges. Yet, the temple was finally rebuilt with Darius's second decree and the help of the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah. However, this was not the end of the project.

As we can see in Daniel's prayer, the goal is to restore "the city Jerusalem." The temple is only a part of the city. The project is not done until they reach the restoration of the city's walls.

The wall was built about 70 years after the temple, under Artaxerxes' decree and through Ezra and Nehemiah's leadership. It is surprising that there was such a long gap—70 years! Why was there such a long break? Why did they stop?

Lost Dream of Israel

"Among those who had returned to Jerusalem in former years, there were many who had remained true to God as long as they lived; but a considerable number of the children and the children's children lost sight of the sacredness of God's law. Even some of the men entrusted with responsibilities were living in open sin. Their course was largely neutralizing the efforts made by others to advance the cause of God; for so long as flagrant violations of the law were allowed to go unrebuked, the blessing of Heaven could not rest upon the people." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 618

As a nation, they were losing interest in their dreams. They stopped pursuing the dream of restoring the city in God's name. What was the cause? It was sin. Sins were getting into their lives, distracting them from their sacred purpose. Then, what sins were they committing specifically?

"Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass..." Ezra 9:1–3

The biggest problem in Israel at this time was marriage to the heathen. When Ezra heard about it, he was shocked.

"...And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished. Then were assembled unto me every one that

trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice." Ezra 9:3–4

He was so shocked that he tore off his garment, plucked off his hair, and sat down, looking into the air until evening, when he finally opened his mouth. "And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens." Ezra 9:6. Why was he so shocked? Was he overreacting? Is marriage with the heathens such a big deal to be called a sin that is "grown up unto the heavens?"

Yes, it is. It is a great sin in itself. Yet, what makes it even worse is its result. In the following verses, we can see what this sin caused the Israelites in Ezra's time to do: "In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals." Nehemiah 13:15

As a result of marriage to the heathens, their customs and influences started growing in Israel. Eventually, it reached a point where Israel began breaking the Sabbath as if it were no big deal.

Another result could be found in their tithes. "And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field." Nehemiah 13:10. Levites were not to have their land nor to farm, as they were to live from the tithes that people brought to the sanctuary. However, as everyone neglected the tithe and the service in the temple, the Levites started to go out and do work that was forbidden to them.

This is why Ezra cried so hard. Marriage to the heathens became a distraction to their minds away from God's business. This was the cause of losing the dream. As a result, they turned their eyes to the worldly pleasures that their heathen spouses brought, eventually breaking the holy commandments.

Our Dream, Our Jerusalem

We are called to restore Jerusalem also. We are called to be reformers who rebuild the destructed

“And thou shalt be called,

Isaiah 58:12

THE REPAIRER OF THE BREACH,

The restorer of paths to dwell in.”

city of Jerusalem. What is our Jerusalem? Firstly, it is our own hearts and bodies. We must restore His temple in us, which was once destroyed by spiritual Babylon, which is sin and the world. Also, we have to restore our family. God designed families to be a miniature of heaven on this earth, hence Jerusalem. Our family should be the holy city where God can be worshipped and people can find heaven.

Another Jerusalem we must restore is our church. Satan constantly attacks the church and tries to sneak sins into it. As watchmen of God, we must keep it pure and alert others to the enemy's attack. Furthermore, we have the truth to restore. The truth and His words are the sacred city that protects us from evil forces. Satan has been trying hard to trample on this temple, especially through 1260 years of the Dark Ages. However, we are called to restore this Jerusalem. Among all, we should especially hold the banner of the Sabbath high. When all these Jerusalems are restored, finally, the day will come when the new Jerusalem in heaven will come down to this earth and be placed where it belongs.

Thus, we are called “the repairer of the breach” (Isaiah 58:12), just as Daniel, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Then, why is it so hard to see passion in the church? Where is the fire in our hearts? Why are we so disinterested in God's business? What happened to our dream of restoring Jerusalem?

“The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands... For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.” Ezra 9:1-2

We do not need to marry people outside of the church to repeat the sin of Israel, as we can also marry the world spiritually. It might be money. It might be pleasure or entertainment. It could be

career, honour, fame, worldly music, friends, famous stars, or even family. Anything that distracts our hearts and decreases our interest in the restoration of Jerusalem is marriage with the heathen. We might seem to keep the law of God for now. However, this sin will eventually lead us to forsake the Sabbath. Is it hard for you to believe that is going to happen? Let me prove it to you from history.

Lost Dreams Throughout History

The Pharisees seemed to live sacred lives, being more passionate about God's law than anyone else. However, their hearts were filled with worldly ambitions. Because of this spiritual marriage to the world, they could not understand the word of God correctly even when they read it. Eventually, they killed Jesus, who is the founder of the very law of God they claimed to be strict about.

What about the Protestants? It started with the restoration of the heavenly sanctuary. Martin Luther restored the yard, and John Calvin restored the first room of the sanctuary. However, as written in the message to the church in Sardis, they stopped (Revelation 3:1-2). They did not pursue their dreams. They stopped restoring Jerusalem. Why?

When the Protestants were given the freedom to keep their beliefs, they were satisfied with worldly peace. This condition became even worse when the Industrial Revolution started, and their minds were preoccupied with thoughts of earthly wealth. Well, they continued going to church every week. However, when the Advent movement began, they refused the message.

Unfortunately, the same history was repeated, even in the Adventist church. Many Adventists who claimed to believe in the third angel's mes-



sage did not truly experience the two former messages, which were the messages of repentance.

“Many who embraced the third message had not had an experience in the two former messages. Satan understood this, and his evil eye was upon them to overthrow them; but the third angel was pointing them to the most holy place, and those who had had an experience in the past messages were pointing them the way to the heavenly sanctuary. Many saw the perfect chain of truth in the angels’ messages, and gladly received them in their order, and followed Jesus by faith into the heavenly sanctuary...” —*Early Writings*, p. 256

Many people regard the first and second angels’ messages as mere historical events. If so, why would Sister White emphasize the need to experience the two former messages? God would be unfair if we failed because we did not live in the early 19th century. The first and second angels’ messages are messages of repentance and separation—in other words, to break the marriage in our hearts with the world.

However, Adventists did not care about this message. Their hearts were bound to the world. As a result, they were given the Laodicean message, claiming that even though they seem to keep the Sabbath, their hearts are lukewarm and without passion. This message is also known as “another angel” of Revelation 18, and sadly, they refused it.

As we can see, marriage with the world, in other words, love for the world, might not show its effects immediately. However, if not removed, it will grow in our hearts and lead us to refuse the heavenly message. Now, let us think about ourselves. Are our hearts occupied with thoughts about His matter? Is our passion burning for His business? If not, we might be in great danger.

Repent

Then what should we do? How can we restore our dreams and passion? To this question, Ezra answers: “And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do His pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.” Ezra 10:10–11

The first step is to repent. Indeed, this was the message of God whenever His people lost interest in restoring Jerusalem. To the Pharisees, John the Baptist declared, “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3:2. Jesus also started His ministry with the message that says “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17. The message of the early rain is also “Repent” (Acts 2:38). The message of the first angel to backsliding Protestants was the same.

Sister White describes the experience of the first Advent movement as follows: “Sinners inquired with weeping, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ Those whose lives had been marked with dishonesty were anxious to make restitution. All who found peace in Christ longed to see others share the blessing. The hearts of parents were turned to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents. The barriers of pride and reserve were swept away. Heart-felt confessions were made, and the members of the household labored for the salvation of those who were nearest and dearest. Often was heard the sound of earnest intercession. Everywhere were souls in deep anguish, pleading with God. Many wrestled all night in prayer for the assurance that their sins were pardoned, or for the conversion of their relatives or neighbors.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 368

However, we should note the critical characteristics of true repentance. Repentance is not merely saying, “God, I’m sorry.” It reaches way beyond. True repentance is always followed by reformation, just as Jesus said “Go, and sin no more.” John 8:11

Reform

A call for reformation accompanied Ezra’s message of repentance. “And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do His pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.” Ezra 10:10–11

Just acknowledging our mistakes of marrying heathen spouses is not enough. We should depart from it. We must give up on things that occupy our hearts, no matter how painful.

We call ourselves reformers. However, our eyes often dwell on the reformation of superficial things. We talk so much about health reform, dress reform, tithes, and observance of the Sabbath. Of course, these are essential things. However, we often fail to see their essence. Remember how the Pharisees failed to accept Jesus by focusing their eyes on the surface of the prophecies, not their core.

Those who mistake the meaning of the reformation and focus their eyes on superficial things tend to

observe how others dress or eat and start pointing these things out. However, that is not what true reformation means. We are not reformers if the spirit of kindness and tenderness is not shown in our tones and attitudes. See how Ezra reformed:

“Ezra’s motives were high and holy; in all that he did he was actuated by a deep love for souls. The compassion and tenderness that he revealed toward those who had sinned, either willfully or through ignorance, should be an object lesson to all who seek to bring about reforms. The servants of God are to be as firm as a rock where right principles are involved; and yet, withal, they are to manifest sympathy and forbearance. Like Ezra, they are to teach transgressors the way of life by calculating principles that are the foundation of all rightdoing.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 623

True reformation? It starts from our hearts and spirits. We are to restore love among families, not their appearance. We are to restore the spirit of the church first before addressing how they are dressed. It should all start from our hearts, and that is what Jesus worked so hard to make the Jews realize.

This is how Jesus led reformation also. Jesus did not point out sins harshly nor look down on others. “When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” John 8:10–11. We call ourselves reformers. If so, we should reform the way we reform. We must reform the way we talk to each other. In the world, it is said that the result justifies the process. That is not true in God’s kingdom. Every part of the Christian’s process should be just.

Now, when the reformation is made with the right motive, the right method, and the deep searching of hearts, there is a result that follows—revival.

Revive

What was the result of Ezra’s call for repentance and reformation? “Wherever Ezra labored, there sprang up a revival in the study of the Holy Scriptures. Teachers were appointed to instruct the people; the law of the Lord was exalted and made honorable. The books of the prophets were searched, and the passages foretelling the coming

of the Messiah brought hope and comfort to many a sad and weary heart.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 623

There was a great revival. The Israelites searched the Scriptures again. In this way, their passions and dreams came back. The project got back on track, and eventually, the dreams of so many, including Daniel, came true. Jerusalem was rebuilt.

Revival or passion does not mean excitement or euphoria. That was not the characteristic of the revival by Ezra, John the Baptist, Jesus, or the three angels. Let us think about how Jerusalem was built. It was a persistent, calm and diligent process. Day by day, people constructed Jerusalem, brick by brick. It is the same with the restoration of our Jerusalem. It has to be done brick by brick, word by word, and verse by verse. We have to read the Bible and pray daily. It is a quiet yet solemn and thorough process.

Sister White wrote about the experience of the first angel as follows: “With unspeakable desire those who had received the message watched for the coming of their Saviour. The time when they expected to meet Him was at hand. They approached this hour with a calm solemnity. They rested in sweet communion with God, an earnest of the peace that was to be theirs in the bright hereafter. None who experienced this hope and trust can forget those precious hours of waiting. For some weeks preceding the time, worldly business was for the most part laid aside. The sincere believers carefully examined every thought and emotion of their hearts as if upon their death-beds and in a few hours to close their eyes upon earthly scenes. There was no making of ‘ascension robes;’ but all felt the need of internal evidence that they were prepared to meet the Saviour; their white robes were purity of soul, — characters cleansed from sin by the atoning blood of Christ. Would that there was still with the professed people of God the same spirit of heart-searching, the same earnest, determined faith. Had they continued thus to humble themselves before the Lord, and press their petitions at the mercy-seat, they would be in possession of a far richer experience than they now have. There is too little prayer, too little real conviction of sin, and the lack of living faith leaves many destitute of the grace so richly provided by our Redeemer.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 373

Brothers and sisters, this is what it means to restore our dreams. Is this revival seen in ourselves? How much are we interested in the king’s busi-

Matthew 3:2

“REPENT YE

For the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.”

ness? Are we searching our hearts daily, building up the wall of Jerusalem?

Living Up to Our Names

My dear brothers and sisters, we call ourselves by many names – Christians, Adventists, and Reformers. However, are we living up to our names? How were we named Christians, after all? The disciples were talking about Christ so much that people who were sick of hearing it mockingly named us “Christians.” That is how it should be. How often do we talk about Christ, His Advent, and Reformation? Are our hearts occupied with thoughts of His business? How passionate are we for Him?

Very little is talked about in the church regarding this matter. While people talk more and more about the superficial part of reformation, there is little interest in the first and second angels’ messages. While people talk about the right arm of the third angel, very little is discussed about the centre of the third angel. When was the last time we had a deep conversation about another angel?

Brothers and sisters, it is time for us to restore our dreams. Without true revival, we will repeat the history of the Adventists in 1888. Hence, let us repent, reform, and revive. Let us search our hearts and depart from everything that distracts us. Let us search the Scriptures, not to judge others but to search our hearts. Let us again have the true revival seen in the early Advent movement. Let us put one more brick today in our Jerusalem.

It is my wish and prayer that we may “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17). Amen.

Abraham, The Friend of God

Based on Genesis 23, 25:1-5

By Edda Tedford (BC)

As time went by, there came the day,
When 127 years old Sarah passed away.
Abraham deeply wept and mourned for her, then
buried her
In the cave Machpelah before Mamre there in Hebron,
In the field he bought from the Hittite Ephron.
Then Abraham did send his faithful, oldest servant
To his former homeland,
To find a wife among his kindred for Isaac his dear
son,
Then with ten camels, presents went along.
He came back bringing Rebekah, Bethuel's daughter,
Son of Milcah the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother.
.....
Then Abraham took again a wife – Keturah.
She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian,
Ishbak and the last was Shuah.
Abraham all he owned to Isaac giving, living in the
land of Canaan.
Then his later sons with gifts he sent away toward the
East,
Through whom the Arabic nations to exist.
.....
Then at 175 the life of Abraham came to an end.
Whom the Bible called God's friend.
Then Isaac with Ishmael did bury him
In the cave Machpelah, Abraham laid Sarah in. Amen.

Endnote:

A life full of events, believing the words of God and
promises,
It was accounted him for righteousness,
Received great riches, wealth through faithfulness.
Lived devoted to God's law and covenant {though
also made mistakes}.
Even so as to obey that strange, divine command,
To offer up his child, though not understanding why –
to slay.
But in that agonizing act, raising up his hand, God did
interfere,
Provided then a ram instead of Isaac there.
By this God was making Abraham and Isaac
understand,
That He will give His own, beloved Son,
As a sacrifice for the sins of man.
By his surrender so complete, the faith of Abraham
was perfected,
God called him the father of all the faithful,
And that through his line in time,
The precious Saviour – the Messiah then will come.
Amen.
.....
All who are faithful like Abraham, are the true
children of God, making up the true church of Jesus
Christ – His Bride. Amen.



The Diet of Paradise

By Antonino Di Franca

Adapted from “L'osservatore del sabato, Vol. 41, No. 3”

Where did the Lord place man in the beginning? Was it man who expressed his preferences according to his own tastes, or was it the Lord who assigned him the proper diet? What was man's original diet? What did he eat when he had just come into existence? How long was that dietary system in effect? Is there any indication that the antediluvian patriarchs suffered from weaknesses or nutritional deficiencies? How can we explain their diet and their longevity? After millennia, does that experience have anything to teach us who live in the time of the end?

The Diet of Eden

In the beginning, the Lord conceived the plan to create man—a being who, in His design, was to have such noble dignity as to be made in His very image and likeness. Unlike other forms of life created in the preceding days, He determined that

man was to reign and govern over the earth and over the animals. He was to reproduce, grow, and multiply until the earth was populated. And so it was. He created them male and female with such faculties, and immediately blessed them and gave them the prerogatives of multiplying, exploring the earth, understanding its productivity, and using it for their benefit. Nature was friendly to him, and even the animals were to cooperate and remain subject to him.

The Creation of Plants

What about the plant world? It was the result of a precise divine plan that came to fruition on the third day of creation. Then God said:

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth

grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good." Genesis 1:11-12

Today, plants are not very appreciated or widely used by humans, but God's evaluation was positive. Right after creating them, we read that everything "was good" (Genesis 1:12). Are we convinced of this? When we choose food each day, do we keep this divine evaluation in mind? Do we frequently use fruits, grains, legumes, and vegetables? Let us not forget that Scripture views these foods positively.

Furthermore, in Eden it was not just a matter of a few trees or some seeds. Man had access to "every tree that is pleasant to the sight," and not only were they beautiful, "pleasant to the sight," but also trees "good for food," meaning nourishing and healthful:

"And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden..." Genesis 2:9

Man Placed in the Garden

After making this beautiful garden with fine plants and delicious fruits grow from the soil, as if that were not enough, God placed man there:

"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." Genesis 2:8

Abundant Choice

The environment into which man was placed was green and thriving, full of beautiful colors and fragrances, dotted with trees laden with fruit. Could one desire more? In the midst of such abundance, the Lord said to man:

"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Genesis 2:16

So, man was not limited in his choices. He was not forced to always eat the same kind of fruit; the variety and quantity were so abundant that it was difficult to choose. Everything good that God could offer was there, and he lacked nothing. He truly had everything he needed both in quantity and variety to meet his daily nutritional needs.

Instructions Regarding Human Food

Not only was man placed in a vast orchard where he could choose freely, but the Lord also specified that his nourishment was to come from "seeds" and "fruit":

"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Genesis 1:29

From the beginning, then, the diet was not man's choice—so, one cannot claim he chose poorly. It was not man who chose, but God. God created the plants and prescribed what man's food should be. And if, as in all other things, it was He who created, chose, and prescribed, then there could be no doubt about the goodness of such nourishment. Can anyone reasonably doubt this? Hardly—because everything the Lord assigned to man and woman was a product of His creation: trees, plants, sprouts, herbs—everything was His work.

"In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God's original plan for man's diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. 'Behold,' He said, 'I have given you every herb yielding seed, ... and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food.' Genesis 1:29, A.R.V. Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also 'the herb of the field.' Genesis 3:18." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 295

The Food of Animals

The Lord created life and created man to live; everything He gave him and surrounded him with served this purpose. In Eden, death was not foreseen—not even for animals. Thus, in paradise there were no animals tearing apart other living beings for food. Even for them, the designated food was the herbs He had created:

"And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so." Genesis 1:30

What can be said about such a plan? About the realization of a project in which everything is in perfect harmony and directed toward life—among humans and animals alike? There could be nothing better or more beautiful! That is why at the end of the creation account it is written:

“And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Genesis 1:31

Who doesn’t feel joy upon reading that when God created the world, mankind, nature, animals—everything—that it was in perfect harmony with each other and with Him? Who doesn’t feel a sense of joy and hope knowing that man was originally “very good,” that the environment was “very good,” healthful and free from pollution, and that his food was nourishing and wholesome—“very good” and suitable for both physical and spiritual needs?

There is an urgent need to better understand and embrace this message. The Lord created so many wonders, each one better than the next—for our good! Are we wise to reject or minimize that which was and is “good” for our health? Are we right to prioritize our tastes over divine instructions? Are we sure our personal habits are best?

“Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 296

In Eden, there was no death—neither for man nor for animals. By assigning plant-based foods to man and animals, no creature needed to devour another. And as long as man remained faithful, this was how it was on earth. So, when everything was pure and good, the Lord did not consider it appropriate to assign meat as food to man. At that time, animals were neither sick, nor unclean, nor contaminated—yet God’s choice was fruits, legumes, and grains. If back then, when everything was pure and healthful, God did not assign meat to man, is it fitting to use it now, when meat is not as healthy as it once was?

Amen.

Canadian Field

Newsletter

Virtual Seminars



Two spiritually impactful online programs were recently held in the IMS Canadian Field via Zoom, addressing vital needs for today’s believers.

On Sunday, July 13, 2025, the Family Department hosted a morning session with Pastor Joseph Suganob on the topic “Strengthening Family Bonds.” Participants were encouraged to nurture Christ-centered relationships through prayer, communication, and love. The message served as a timely reminder of the spiritual role families play in the Christian journey.

A week later, on Sunday, July 20, 2025, a special seminar titled “Hidden in Plain Sight” tackled the subtle influence of Eastern mysticism within Christian thought. The presentation exposed the deceptive philosophies behind modern relaxation and self-help trends and equipped attendees to stand firm in biblical truth.

Both events were well attended and deeply appreciated, leaving participants encouraged, alert, and spiritually strengthened. We thank God for these opportunities to grow together in truth and unity.

Walkathon



The IMS Canadian Field recently concluded its nationwide 5KM Walkathon, an inspiring event that brought together the youth and church members in a united effort to serve others. With the theme “Step forward with a purpose! Every step denotes love in action,” this walkathon was more than just a physical activity—it was a movement of compassion and unity.

Organized by the Youth Department in collaboration with the Good Samaritan Department of the IMS Canadian Field, the event saw enthusiastic participation of those who gathered in parks, trails, and neighborhoods dressed in white T-shirts as a symbol of peace and purity of purpose. The youth and members walked side by side, showing dedication to service. For those unable to walk in a group, the pledge form offered a meaningful way to support the mission through donations.

The walkathon was not only about reaching the finish line, but about fellowship, faith, and impact.

After the walk, participants enjoyed light refreshments and a joyful time of connection, laughter, and shared stories. The youth had the chance to build friendships, eat together, and grow closer as a spiritual family.

Brother Morris Lowe, Leader of the General Conference Good Samaritan Department, was present to share the message and he reminded everyone of our calling to serve “the least of these” (Matthew 25:40).

Thanks to the generous support of participants and sponsors, the walkathon successfully met its goal and reaffirmed the power of united Christian service. Truly, each step taken was a step of love—and a step towards making a difference.

The highlight video of this event with the message from brother Morris will be shared through the IMS Canada official YouTube channel soon.

Simple, Delicious



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup light vegan mayonnaise (250 mL) your choice
- 4 Tbsp. lemon juice (60 mL)
- 1 tsp. Himalayan salt, your choice (5 mL)
- 4 cups yellow potatoes, cooked, peeled and sliced (1 liter)
- 1 cup sliced celery (250 ml)
- ½ cup chopped onion, your choice (125 mL)
- 1 cup grated carrot (250 mL)
- 1 cup grated extra firm tofu (250 mL)

By Franziska S. Pedersen (ON)

Potato Salad



Yellow potatoes contain a powerhouse of nutrients, including vitamin C, and potassium and are low in fat content. They are a delicious choice for meals.

Celery is a low-calorie vegetable with anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and blood pressure-lowering properties.

Onions help boost our immune system being rich in vitamin C, which also helps in iron absorption.

Onions are low in calories, but are rich in nutrients including Vitamin B6. It has antioxidants which may reduce bone loss and osteoporosis.

Carrots have many health benefits. Carrots improve eye health by improving our vision. They help with weight loss. They also improve skin health, support the digestive system and reduces the risk of heart disease and much more.

Extra Firm Tofu is a good source of protein which is essential for bone health. It also contains potassium, calcium, and iron.

INSTRUCTIONS:

To make the dressing: Combine the first three ingredients in a small bowl and mix well.

In a large bowl combine the remaining ingredients. Add the dressing and toss to coat well.

Cover and refrigerate at least two hours to blend flavours well.

For those who like home-made dill pickles, you may want to add to the above ingredients, 2 medium-sized dill pickles, cut into small pieces.

On a hot summer day, this salad will be delicious, served with a green lettuce salad and perhaps a slice of good bread, if you so desire.



Argentina



Germany



Nicaragua



Mozambique



Dominican Republic



USA



“Religion is a personal matter.

We are not to be saved as churches, but as individuals who have appropriated the merits of Christ.

The question each one should ask is: ‘Is it well with my soul? Has the transforming grace of Christ renewed my heart?

Have I a kind, tender, compassionate spirit? Am I like Him who, though He was rich, yet for my sake became poor, that I through His poverty might be made rich? What sacrifice have I made for Him who died for me?’”

–*The Signs of The Times*,
July 25, 1892



**International
Missionary Society**

Seventh-day Adventist Church
Reform Movement