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THE ORIGIN OF MYTHS

by Idol Suarcz, Jr., Ph.D.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers...” Hebrews 1:1.

We live in a culture of disbelief. It is fashionable to doubt. Scepticism is considered a quality of intellectualism. Faith has been placed on the endangered species list. The Bible is regarded as a relic of the past and outdated. Anything Biblical, which does not fit the evolutionist or humanist agenda, is labelled as a myth or a legend.

What is a myth? A myth is a collective term used in accounts or traditional narratives of gods, superhuman beings, or other living beings, and events with a religious and cultural significance, but generally regarded as imaginary or unreal (1,2). Yet as we shall see, many myths with Biblical parallels actually are a degradation or deterioration of relevant truths of human or supernatural beings and experiences of the past.

Myths are common to all aborigines from every corner of our planet. Surprisingly, many of the myths have a significant number of details in common. Although some may be totally false, some have an element of truth, which runs parallel to the teachings of the Bible.

The Oral Bible

The oral Bible antedates all myths and legends. Before the first books of the Bible were written by Moses in the XV century B.C., there was an oral law, which had been communicated from father to son through the generations since creation. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Hebrews states this fact, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers...” Hebrews 1:1.

Studies in the fields of anthropology and linguistics have shown that the native inhabitants of the different continents did not know how to write nor read. But they taught their posterity their version of history through song and poetry. By telling the events of the past in rhyme, it was easier to be transmitted from one generation to another. Each group had their own oral tradition or oral history. Likewise, the Bible existed as an oral tradition or an oral history before it was put in written form.

The Jews till this day refer to the oral law and state that the oral law is as binding as the written law found in the Pentateuch or Torah—the first five books of Moses in the Bible. They also speak of the Babylonian Talmud which existed orally for several generations before it was finally written down by Rabbis and scribes after the time of Jesus Christ. The Talmud is the Jewish interpretation of *the* law.

Like the Jews, the British still speak of English common law. It is an unwritten or oral law, upheld traditionally in England.

Adam, our first forefather, heard the story of creation from God Himself. Adam later transmitted the summary of the events of creation to his posterity for nearly 1000 years. Noah, the first forefather after the flood, knew the stories of Genesis from chapters 1 through 11, which he later communicated to his posterity. Noah lived right through the time of the tower of Babel, which occurred about 800 years (2247 B.C.) before Moses wrote the first books of the Bible.

The generation of the tower of Babel knew the oral Bible right through chapter 11 of Genesis. But that generation became exceedingly sinful and was dispersed by God with the confusion of tongues. As those families later separated and travelled to the different corners of the earth, the stories and events from the oral Bible were perverted with time. New elements were mixed into the biblical truths. Thus, myths were born into the human families.

Mythological Parallels

The Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Native Americans, Mayan, Incas, et cetera, all have common elements in their myths. They all believed in the truths or elements of Genesis: God, the creation of man and earth, paradise, the sacred tree of life, cherubs, animal sacrifices, altars, the great flood, good and bad spirits (angels), and in life after death. Thus, there exists a more than coincidental probability that the parallels between the pagan myths and the book of Genesis have a common origin,

Babylonian Theory of Genesis

In university circles today, the false concept is propagated that the Jews invented their Genesis stories after their Babylonian captivity in the VII century B.C. Infidels, wishing to ignore the superiority of the Biblical account of Genesis, consider it as a post-Babylonian plagiarism. Listen to what H.G. Wells wrote in his book: “The outline of History”, regarding the origin of the book of Genesis. “Excavations have revealed Babylonian versions of both the Creation story and the Flood story of a date prior to the restoration of the Jews, and it is therefore argued by Biblical critics that these opening chapters (of Genesis) were acquired by the Jews during their (Babylonian) captivity. They constitute the first ten chapters of Genesis.” (1).

The Babylonian Babel Refuted

H.G. Wells, like many other historians and Bible critics have it all wrong. The stories of Genesis were not copied by the Jews from the Babylonians during their 70-year captivity in Babylon. Rather the Babylonian myths of creation and the great flood are the result of a perversion of the oral Bible known by the generation of the tower of Babel. With the passage of time, the oral Bible stories were perverted and altered by the Babylonian ancestors. Thus, the Babylonian written accounts may be a few centuries older than the Biblical written accounts, but both have their origin in the oral Bible.

Let's consider two arguments, which refute a Babylonian origin of Genesis. First, how can these historians and Bible critics account for the Egyptian or Mayan stories similar to Genesis chapters 1 through 11? The Egyptian records are as old as the Babylonians. Their records and accounts, legends and myths, have common elements. Did the Egyptians also copy their stories from the Babylonians? Of course not,

The Egyptians were the descendants of Mizraim, the first Pharaoh and the uncle of Nimrod. When the Canaanites saw the Egyptians crying and lamenting for the death of Jacob in Canaan, the Canaanites called the place "Abel-Mizraim." Genesis 50:11. Both Mizraim and Nimrod knew the oral Bible. They heard it from Noah, who faithfully taught his descendants the oral Bible—Genesis 1-11.

The second argument deals with comparing and contrasting the amount of detail in both the Babylonian and Jewish accounts. The Babylonian account of creation is generally referred to as the "Creation Epic" or "Enuma Elish" and the great flood is called the "Epic of Gilgamesh" (4). When the Biblical account is compared to these Babylonian epics, there is a drastic difference. The Biblical account has more majesty and beauty to it. It has more detail. It tells a longer and fuller story than any of the Babylonian pagan accounts of Genesis. Therefore, the Biblical account must antedate the Babylonian myths, because the Biblical account has more details in the story. As the axiom dictates, the lesser is derived from the greater.

The Cherubs of Antiquity

Another element in the book of Genesis, which has its parallels in the archaeological reconstructions of the ancient world empire palaces and temples, are the cherubs. The Bible says that God placed cherubs at the entrance of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life. "So He (God) drove out the men; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Genesis 3:24.

The Hebrew word for cherub is (Strong's number 3742) "keruwb", whose meaning is uncertain. However, some maintain that "keruwb" is similar to "kirubu" or "sedu" which was the Assyrian name for the winged bulls in the Assyrian empire palaces and temples (5).

"In their function as guardians of Paradise the cherubims bear an analogy to the winged bulls and lions of Babylonia and Assyria, colossal figures with human faces standing guard at the entrances of temples (and palaces), just as in Egypt the approaches to the sanctuaries are guarded by sphinxes." Often these "winged figures, half human and half animal... are found on both sides of the 'sacred tree'" in Babylonian and Persian art murals (6).

I have visited the great museums of London, Paris, and Berlin, and have seen the Assyrian and Babylonian collections. Both the British and Louvre museums have the colossal winged bulls with human faces and winged humans or spirits on exhibit. They are gigantic three dimensional solid stone sculptures measuring 20 feet high by 20 feet long. In the permanent collections of the museums, the winged bulls with human faces can be seen to guard the entrances of the ancient Assyrian and Babylonian palaces and temples, just like the cherubs of Genesis guarded the entrance to the tree of life.

The Pergamon museum in Berlin has the original Ishtar gate of Babylon. Its walls are made of glazed blue bricks with figures of bulls, serpents with legs called dragons, and winged lions guarding the entrance to the city.

To complete the picture on cherub parallels, also consider "the fabulous griffens" of the Greeks, which were "usually represented as having the heads and wings of an eagle and the body and hindquarters of a lion" (6). The griffens "were believed by the Greeks to inhabit Scythia, and to keep jealous watch over the gold of that country" (6).

Now think for a moment the striking parallel between these winged animals and the descriptions of the cherubs in Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4. Ezekiel calls them "living creatures" and John in Revelation refers to them as "beasts". The Bible cherubs or living creatures were described as being supernatural, having wings, and being part human and part animal. Four cherubs or beasts are mentioned in the Bible: the winged lion, the winged ox or calf, the winged man or angel, and the winged eagle as forming part of God's living throne.

"As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. And everyone had four faces, and every one had four wings." Ezekiel 1:10, 6. "And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." Revelation 4:7.

The only other cherub is Lucifer who is later depicted in Scripture as being the old serpent with legs and wings also known as the

great dragon. “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan...” Revelation 12:9.

Thus, the cherubs described in Ezekiel and Revelation, and mentioned in Genesis, also appear in the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Greek mythology and art. This serves as another example of a common origin of pagan myths and the book of Genesis. Both are derived from one original source: the oral Bible. The Hebrews like the ancient Babylonians believed in cherubs. But there is strikingly more detail, beauty, and majesty in the Biblical version than what is depicted in the Babylonian art, because Genesis is closer to the original source: the oral Bible,

It seems that many pagan myths are extractions, dilutions, and cross-contaminations of the oral Genesis history. Like the tree of good and evil in Eden, the pagan myths are a blend of truths and falsehoods.

Multiple Towers of Babel

To further substantiate the evidence of the oral tradition of elements of the oral Bible passed from generation to generation, consider the pyramids. The pyramids of the Egyptians, like the pyramids of the Mayans, and the ziggurats of the Assyrians and Babylonians are nothing less than little towers of Babel. The generation dispersed while building the tower of Babel and carried in their minds the ideas of that prototype pyramid. They later constructed little towers of Babel in every corner of the earth—Egypt, Iraq, India, Mexico, and Peru. Around their pyramids they worshipped the sun, offered animal sacrifices on altars, brought food offerings, prayed to the gods, communed with evil spirits, and held idolatrous feasts; all of which was a perversion or a degradation of the great oral Bible truths later registered in the book of Genesis.

The Logos

The last book of the Bible to have been written is believed to be the book of the gospel of John. John probably wrote his gospel after being liberated from Patmos around 96-97 A.D., during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nerva (7). John starts out his account of the life of Jesus by calling Him the “Logos”. The King James Version translated the Greek work “Logos” as the “Word”. What “Word”? The Word which was present at creation and Who pronounced the words of Genesis to Adam. The Word, which was passed on from generation to generation from Adam to Noah. The Word, which was later passed on from Noah to Abraham, and finally put on a scroll by Moses. That Word later became incarnate in the son of Mary, Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus upheld the teachings of Genesis as reliable history. He was the son of Adam, and of Noah. He spoke of the “beginning” and made many references to the book of Genesis in His ministry. “Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female.” Matthew 19:4.

Archaeologists continue to heap evidence establishing the Bible’s reliability and external validity. The stones are crying out. Are you listening?

Many will nevertheless choose to adopt the tenets of the culture of disbelief, but God has provided enough facts to build a solid faith, which will endure time and eternity. And as Daniel recorded, the faithful will understand, but the ungodly will not. “...None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” Daniel 12:10. AMEN.

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VICTORIOUS LIFE

I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me.

Phil 4:13

A victorious life is possible! We don't need to fall into sin anymore. If we have faith as a grain of mustard seed, we can move mountains and nothing shall be impossible unto us. This Jesus has promised. But why is it that there are weak Christians who struggle to overcome sin in their lives and fail time and time again? What they want to do, they do not: What they don't want to do, that they do.

Satan made a claim that the law of God cannot be kept and Christ made a claim that with His help it can be kept. Who then is right, Christ or Satan?

The Bible bears a record that the parents of John the Baptist were victorious in their lives. "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Luke 1:6.

The Lord Himself said of Job that he is "a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." Job 1:8.

When the disciples asked Jesus, "who then can be saved?" He answered, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible," Matt. 19: 25-26.

Is the power of God freely available to us? "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12.

Now the question comes clear. Some come to Jesus and believe on His name and therefore they do receive the power of God to live a victorious life. Others do not come to Christ and they do not believe on His name, therefore they are lacking the power of God.

The apostle Paul gives a testimony of this promised power, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. 2:14.

We have witnessed many times that when a person is converted and becomes a member of the church he has the great power of God to overcome sin and bad habits. In a short time he gives up smoking, drinking, meat eating and worldly entertainment. He makes great progress in a few weeks. But after this progress stops, he even seems to start backsliding. The power he had in his first love seems to be lacking.

Every sickness has a cause for it. It may be a wrong diet, lack of exercise, or contact with one who has this sickness. Even worry and anxiety can bring sickness upon us. So it is also with spiritual sickness. There is something we must have done wrong or neglected and therefore we lose the power of God and fall into sin.

By looking at the forbidden tree Eve lost her power to resist temptation. Satan has learned that just by looking at sin and evil will weaken our power. Therefore by television and videos he is causing many Christians to lose their divine power and the result is falling into sin.

Many professed Christians are concerned about their weakness and inability to resist sin, without realizing what has caused this weakness. Indulging an appetite will cause weakness. Neglecting constant prayer will weaken us. Lack of daily Bible study will take our power away. Also, neglecting missionary work will do the same. Unfaithfulness in tithing will certainly take God's power away from us. Many do not think that wasting time in idleness is also a sin that will weaken us.

On the other hand, a victorious life is a continuous growth. It is walking with God on life's pathway. It is looking

to Jesus all through the day.

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The steps of a Christian may at times appear feeble and faltering, yet in his conscious weakness he leans upon the Mighty One for support. He is sustained, and makes sure progress onward and upward toward perfection. He gains new victories daily, and comes nearer and nearer to the standard of perfect holiness. His eye is not downward to the earth, but upward, ever keeping in view the heavenly Pattern.” Test. Vol. 2, p. 228.

No one of us has an excuse to fall because of human weakness. The mighty power of God is available to each one of us. But we must fulfill the conditions. We must do our part. All the conditions for receiving the power of God can be done humanly and then the part which we cannot do alone will become possible with God’s help.

Jesus said, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is also unjust in much.” Luke 16:10.

May the Lord help each one of us to live a victorious life and grow daily in sanctification and reach the perfection of Christ. AMEN.

Timo Martin

INTO *ALL* THE WORLD

‘Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters,’ Isaiah 32:20

“The church of Christ is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. Its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. And the obligation rests upon all Christians. Every one, to the extent of his talent and opportunity, is to fulfill the Savior’s commission. The love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know Him not. God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them.” *Steps to Christ*, p. 81.

In this paragraph we see the duty of the church. When Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, He gave the gospel commission of “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15. Unfortunately sometimes peoples’ religion does not proceed further than their front door. Once they leave home, they have left Christ at home. They dress like the world, they act like the world, and they go to places that worldly people go. No one takes any notice of them, that they are different. This is not the purpose of Christ. Christ’s righteousness is compared to white raiment that is to be worn all of the time, wherever we go.

While we are to be exemplary Christians wherever we may be, we are also to make special efforts to reach our friends and neighbours with the gospel message. We are to actually go to them and bring them the message of salvation. The Jewish nation lost their way when they decided to become exclusive. They lost their missionary zeal and kept their religion within the borders of Jerusalem.

Ancient Israel eventually came to a point where they would peacefully co-exist (although sometimes not so peacefully) with their neighbours but would not bring them the message of salvation. Often it went the other way and Israel went into idolatry. It would never have happened if they had not lost their missionary zeal. When Jesus came to this earth this false idea of exclusiveness had degenerated to the point where the Gentiles were considered dogs, unworthy of salvation — without any hope. So, of course, they put forth no effort to reach this class of people. Jesus came to bring the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, hope.

There is also a real danger that we will fail as did Ancient Israel by neglecting other cities and villages in our country while we all congregate in one area. The blood of souls will be on our garments if we fail to reach out and bring the message of salvation far and wide. We have been put on this earth to serve our fellow man. Jesus is our perfect example and He went about doing good for others. This earth is only a temporary home while we are waiting for the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare.

In the time of the Apostles, there were two churches. There was the Christian church and the Jewish church. Both claimed to worship God. Why could they not peacefully co-exist? One was a false religion and it was the duty of the members of the true church to preach the message to the false church. When we see Paul travelling to different localities, he often went to the Synagogue and brought the message to the Jewish believers and then he went to the Gentiles. He went first to the "Lost sheep of the house of Israel." If they rejected the message he went on to others who would listen, but he gave an opportunity to the former chosen people of God to receive the message of salvation. Unfortunately many of them were lost in their traditions and rituals and made the organization their salvation.

Paul said, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." Rom. 1:14. Paul recognized that, "There is no respect of persons with God." Rom. 2:11. Therefore the obvious conclusion is that everyone is entitled to know the truth. It doesn't matter if they are in the world, or what church they currently belong to, if they are not a part of God's church they need to be told the truth in a spirit of meekness and humility, with genuine love and concern for the person's salvation.

We have the example of the Waldenses. They were persecuted for their faith and fled to the mountains for safety. Here they could practice true religion without violating their consciences. Yet did they remain hidden away? Many of them ended their lives as martyrs as they went into the cities below with the precious words of the Bible, bringing hope to people who had been enslaved by false religion. They went at the peril of their lives, but they loved the truth. It was more precious than life itself and they loved their fellow man as Jesus did. They did not question as to who was worthy to receive the message. They went to sow beside all waters.

The Protestant movement began with the blood of many martyrs. They boldly stood firm for the truths they had learned through the study of the Bible. They stood against the powerful force of the Papacy, which was creating fear in the minds of the masses of people through their false religion. There was a great contrast between the two forces. What do we see today though? There is now a joining of these two religious bodies. They have signed an agreement called, "ECT-Evangelicals and Catholics together, bringing Christianity into the 21st Century." This is a 1994 agreement pledging mutual support between Protestants and Catholics. In this document both Protestants and Catholics have joined forces to fight against the evils of society. Also Protestants agreed to no longer lead Catholics to salvation through Jesus Christ. I don't know what else is written in that document and what other concessions the Protestants made, however it is not God's will that they peacefully co-exist. Protestantism began with the protest of errors taught in the Papal system and now they want to join forces and co-exist peacefully.

What would the great reformers think if they read that document today? Men like Martin Luther, who had a very different document to post on the doors of the church in Wittenberg. Why did he not keep his new found faith to himself? He was so excited about the truth he wanted everyone to know of the hope he had found in Christ. Did these reformers keep their religion quietly to themselves and peacefully co-exist with false religion? No they did not. They loved their fellow man enough to show them the way of salvation through Christ and not through a priest and a false religious movement. They did this often at the peril of their lives.

Coming to William Miller, he studied his Bible for ten years until he was convinced of the truths he found that Jesus was coming soon. At first he did not want to openly preach the message as he was not a minister or preacher. He was only a farmer. He only revealed his studies to a few close friends. However the Lord had a different commission for him. The Lord told him he was to go and preach, which is what he finally did. It was not enough to study the good news and keep it to oneself.

After the Great Disappointment, did the Adventist people keep the message to themselves? As hard as it was in their human nature, they went out and preached again according to the command of the Lord. (>, "prophecy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Rev. 10:11. They humbled themselves, admitted their error in the reckoning of the time and they went out to preach the message of salvation to everyone. They sacrificed their time, their energy and their means for the cause they loved - the love of a crucified and risen Saviour.

In the year 1914, the Seventh-day Adventist church fell off the line of truth when they joined the military and encouraged

all their young men to do so, disfellowshipping those who would not. What were these disfellowshipped ones to do? The Lord did not expect them to wander spiritually, independently on their own. He brought them together and had them form a new organization. In 1925 they organized their church. What was 'their duty now? Were they to peacefully co-exist with the members of their former organization? Or did the Lord expect them to warn those in the Seventh-day Adventist church of the apostasy that their church had fallen into and how God had rejected the organization as His church? We see they followed the Lord's commission and first attempted to reconcile with the leaders of the organization. When this did not work, they went to the individual members. This is the commission the Lord has given to us. Just as the Apostles were to go to the "Lost sheep of the house of Israel," we too are to warn those in churches, that once were God's church, of the fact that their organization has apostatized. We will be held accountable if we do not go. Are we to peacefully coexist? We are to be "wise as serpents, but harmless as doves," in bringing the truth to these people. At one time the Lutherans were God's people, at another time the Baptist church was God's church, and the list goes on. The truth goes forward but the organization may change if she is unwilling to continue in the newly unfolding truths that God is revealing to His people. It is the duty of those who have accepted the new truth to first bring the message to those who belong to the previous organization that was rejected. Those churches who have a lot of light and only a little error are in the greatest danger since they feel that they are better than most other churches and therefore are fine where they are.

What about churches that never were God's church? Those that perhaps have branched off from God's church through slight errors or grievances? In this day and age there is much confusion amongst Adventism due to the numerous independent groups in existence.

Each claims to have the full light. Some are loosely connected with the main Seventh-day Adventist Church - some have severed all connection and are standing independent of any organization. Some have created a new organization as the off-shoot in 1951 has. Yes, some of these independents and off-shoots may have almost the full light, BUT are they God's church? Almost is not enough for God. How many churches does God have? In the Bible we read that there is only one bride of Christ. Therefore what is our duty to those who are without the borders of God's church? Are we to peacefully coexist since they are practicing the truth almost fully? Or perhaps there are a few isolated members who are living up to the full light in a false organization. Does this make the organization correct? Not really, what is important is what the church teaches.

Some have believed that we should leave these people alone and not "trouble" them. They have even worshipped with these people occasionally, thinking what wonderful people they are. Yes, they may be nice and kind people, but this is all the more reason for us to fulfill our duty. If we really love them as we say we do, we will not let them perish in a church that is not God's church without warning them. No, it is against the Bible teaching for us to simply peacefully co-exist with false religious organizations. We are to sound the warning and call them out of their false churches in the Spirit of Christ. Although the 1951 group seems to have all the light, they are not God's church today and we must let them know the truth. If they will not listen, we will leave them to the Lord and go on to warn the world. We have done our duty. We still love them and pray for them.

Often we will find more receptivity to the gospel message from the world than we would from false churches, as often these false churches are "rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing;" Rev. 3:17. "Many apparently good things will need to be carefully considered with much prayer, for they are specious devices of the enemy to lead souls in a path which lies so close to the path of truth that it will be scarcely distinguishable from it. But the eye of faith may discern that it is diverging, though almost imperceptibly, from the right path." EV, p. 590.

When we are commissioned to go into ALL the world, and preach the gospel, that includes the Seventh-day Adventists, the 1951 group and all the independent Seventh-day Adventists in existence today. They need to see the way of salvation also and join God's visible church today.

Often we meet with independent Christians in our work who refuse to have anything to do with any church organization. They believe that they can sit at home and read their Bible on their own and God will reveal His will to them. When they come in contact with God's people, they turn away and choose to remain alone.

This was not God's will. When Cornelius was praying, the Lord sent an angel to speak with him. This angel could have preached the gospel to him better than any man on earth could, but the angel did not. He told Cornelius to "send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon." "Thus God gave evidence of His regard for the gospel ministry and for His organized church. The angel was not commissioned to tell Cornelius the story of the cross. A man subject, even as the centurion himself, to human frailties and temptations, was to be the one to tell him of the crucified and risen Saviour." AA, p. 134.

And yes, Peter had to humble himself to accept the commission from the Lord to go and preach to this Gentile. Yes the Lord meant the Gentiles also when He told his disciples to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel.”

Again when Saul was converted on the Damascus road, Jesus spoke directly to him, but did not give him the gospel message personally, “In the record of the conversion of Saul important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. Saul was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be a ‘chosen vessel’ unto Him; yet the Lord did not at once tell him of the work that had been assigned him. He arrested him in his course and convicted him of sin; but when Saul asked, ‘What wilt Thou have me to do?’ the Saviour placed the inquiring Jew in connection with His church, there to obtain a knowledge of God’s will.” AA, p. 120. “Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.

“Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of his recognized followers on earth. Jesus is a friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world.” AA, p. 122.

Here we see that a mighty leader in the Jewish Sanhedrin was not beyond the reach of the gospel message. No one is unreachable and we must bring the message to all, whether it be the poorer classes or the wealthy classes of people. Whether they be infidels, world-loving people, or ministers and leaders in false churches. They all need to see that God has a church on earth and where that church is.

GOD HAS A CHURCH

God does indeed have a church on earth and it is to this church that He bestows His blessings. “But near the close of the harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of Man.” AA, p. 55.

“To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.” AA. P. 54

“God has a church upon the earth, who are his chosen people, who keep his commandments. He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people. The truth is a sanctifying power.” RH, 09-12-93.

“The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body;” AA, p. 95.

“God has a church on earth who are lifting up the downtrodden law, and presenting to the world the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. The church is the depository of the wealth of the riches of the grace of Christ, and through the church eventually will be made manifest the final and full display of the love of God to the world that is to be lightened with its glory. The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father, will be finally answered.” INL, p. 49.

“God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God. God has divinely appointed agencies, - men whom he is leading, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who are co-operating with heavenly instrumentalities to advance the kingdom of Christ in our world. Let all unite with these chosen agents, and be found at last among those who have the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments, and have the faith of Jesus.” RH, 09-12-93.

“We should all feel our individual responsibility as members of the visible church and workers in the vineyard of the Lord.” 4T, 16.

“Christ, after His resurrection, delegated power unto His church,” 4T, p. 17.

And there are many more statements regarding the fact that God has a church on earth and He works through His church to accomplish His will. If we truly believe that we belong to this body of believers that is the church of Christ, what

will we be doing? We will be proclaiming the present truth for today which is the Loud Cry of the Third Angel. What is a part of its message? “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:4. Yes, we will be calling them out of their false churches.

So it is my wish and prayer that we would have the love of Christ take root in our hearts for our fellow men that we can warn them of their danger in attending false churches. They are really playing with fire literally. If we love them as Christ does we will not leave them be, to peacefully co-exist in false churches and movements. It doesn't matter what church it is, if it is not God's church it is a false church. Who wants to face people in the judgment day and be asked, “Why did you not tell me the truth when you knew what it was?” It may mean our salvation also. I pray that we can all invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts and ask Him to lead and guide us in the way we are to go and to give us the right words to speak at the right time to be a help to our fellow man.

AMEN. Wendy Eaton

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Of all the studies in the Bible, the subject that is the cornerstone of salvation is the subject called Imputed Righteousness. Failing to understand this subject brings upon us a death sentence; comprehending it imparts fullness of joy, plus eternal life.

This is one of my favourite studies and I wish to share it with you. In this study, I will enable you to travel with me retrospectively to the time of Christ. One night Christ was relaxing like usual by the brook Cedron, in the garden of Gethsemane. He was the poorest of earth with no place to lay his head. He strived to meditate and called upon His Father.

But that day as Christ is seated upon a stone in the late evening, there arrives one of the highest men in Israel. This man has been bestowed many honours and is beloved by the religious circle, as one of the leading priests, and a prominent layman. This man belongs to the Sanhedrin council, composed of a semi-circle with 35 members on the right and 35 members on the left and the high priest, having absolute power. This council had the right to sentence any person found guilty to life imprisonment. Now stands in front of Christ one of the 71, dressed in the rich display of his power, curious to meet the poorest man on earth but timid and afraid to seek Him publicly. He follows Him where nobody could see him and report him to his colleagues.

Nicodemus approaches Christ and starts a conversation. Seeing this man to be no ordinary man because of the power He displays in every miracle He performs, with honour and due respect, he addresses Him. “Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest; except God be with Him.” Even though highly educated and having a degree as a Doctor of Theology he didn't comprehend that he was in the very presence of his Creator. But Jesus loved this poor soul and being honest in his correction, He opened to him the very essence of truth. “Truly, truly I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Confused, Nicodemus replies, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time unto his mother's womb and be born again?”

Christ opened to Nicodemus his lost condition. He didn't admire his riches or his politeness but warns him of his spiritual state—he must be born again. Shaken by this statement he leaves the presence of Christ, not as one who has rejected His counsel but rather perplexed about how he can be born again. What does this mean, to be born again?

The apostles who were so near to Christ also didn't comprehend what it takes to be born again. Just 21 hours before His death His disciples were seeking to be self-exalted, like Satan. “And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.” Luke 22:23,24.

Today, many, which are not born again are making the same fatal error, When the disciples repented of their sinful nature, they wrote about this born-again experience, recorded in 1 John. It states in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Our part is to confess and His part is to cleanse us and impart His grace. It is a two-way road. We do our part, and the Lord will do His part.

It continues in chapter 1 John 3:4-9. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

When Christ spoke about this new birth the disciples didn't understand, but when the Spirit of God illuminated the chambers of their minds they perfectly understood this experience. "He that is born of God, he cannot sin." He comes to a sinless state. Of all the miracles Christ performed, to make us sinless is the greatest miracle He performs in the human soul. This is one of the mysteries of God. But this is also a reality. For this reason He descended from heaven, to make us sinless.

If we say to the Christians in this world that they must be sinless, they will laugh. They will say that it is impossible; they will call us dreamers. In Matthew this truth is confirmed. "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:12, 13,29.

When the Adventist message gained momentum, when it started to become popular in America, then the Lord sent them the only message which could save them from the guilt of sin. When this message was presented in 1888, Sister White wrote about this experience of the church. In Review & Herald, Sept. 3, 1889, "There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject (justification by faith) that is so necessary to present and eternal welfare." When the message was presented the church membership was 25,841. According to her divine inspiration less than 258 people understood the message of justification by faith.

Up until 1888, the General Conference in session was the voice of God on earth, but not any more. The lamentation of the Spirit of God, quotes Sis. White, was the same as the lamentation of Jeremiah. "The Spirit of God is departing from many among His people. Many have entered into dark secret paths, and some will never return. They will continue to stumble to their ruin. They have tempted God, they have rejected light." TM, p. 90 (1895).

The same thing is happening still today. The Spirit of God is departing from many. Then Sis. White writes about the church's dark course, because many have sinned against the Holy Spirit. "And thou, Capernaum (Seventh-Day Adventists who have had great light), which art exalted unto heaven (in the point of privilege), shall be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." Matt 11:23,24. R & H, Aug. 1, 1893. It was five years after that she wrote this terrible rebuke. With this statement we know that the majority rejected the message.

Then Sis. White continued, showing the work of ministers and the General Conference. "They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them. They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could. TM p. 80.

We need to clarify some important points in the above testimony. First who are they who began this satanic work? Isn't it the ministers and the leaders of the General Conference? When the Reformation came, none of them joined with the remnant. This again the Spirit of Prophecy confirms. Spirit of Prophecy research, p. 3, quoted by Will Ross, Boulder, CO, 1908. "Sis. White told us that a terrible storm of persecution was coming, like a windstorm, that would blow down every standing object Not a Seventh-Day Adventist was to be seen. They like the disciples all forsook Christ and fled. All who had sought positions were never seen any more.

After the storm there was a calm. Then Seventh-Day Adventists arose like a flock of sheep, but without shepherds. They united in earnest prayer to God, who answered by helping them choose leaders of their number who had never sought positions." Christ let go the 70, but when Peter confirmed their alliance to Christ, even among the twelve He said, one is a devil. Sis. White wrote that these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after

their own similitude. God had chosen these men to be His precious servants. From 1888 onward they were organizing the church and holding high positions, but they were like the old Israel. The High Priest and his Sanhedrin were all ministers of demons. What a startling statement. History is repeating itself.

Sister White writes, why did God send the message of justification by faith, Christ's righteousness message? "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to his people... This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ. Which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. They had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His mind and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto man, importing the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world." TM, p. 91, 92. According to this statement, this is the gospel of Christ, which can transform us to perfection.

The world and the church are in enmity. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9. Why only few understand this truth? "Jesus answered and said, * I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth because thou hadst hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father it seems good in thine sight." God has only revealed it to those who are humble. In the Bible, who are wise and prudent? "And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 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 this publican. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Luke 18:9-14.

And Christ says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon me and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Christ said, for I am meek and lowly. When you look at the Pharisee, he was very proud. He didn't have a humble spirit; he was exalting himself. The Spirit of Christ is completely different, meek and lowly in heart. The difference was as night and day. The Pharisee became very wise and prudent in himself and thought he was perfect and ready for translation like Elijah. But he was so spiritually blind that there was no cure for him. But if you look at the Pharisee he is a perfect Christian, he had every credential to be a member in the church of God. He gave tithes, he was going every Sabbath to church, and he was saying long prayers and he was fasting. He seemed to be the perfect Christian that the world admires. But in the sight of God he was miserable, wretched, naked and blind. The Publican was a very unjust person. He was a terrible person according to the church's standard. But what did the publican do? He saw his terrible condition and he sought help from God and the power was provided for him. Paul was like this Pharisee one time. "For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Rom. 7:9. "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:21, 24. The letter of the law made him satisfied but when the spirit of the law was revealed, he saw his sinfulness and he cried, "Who can deliver me?"

The same was with the great reformer Martin Luther. When he was a Catholic priest he had a problem with sin. To eliminate this sin he went down to the basement and beat himself, but his sin always remained in him. Until he found the answer in the Bible, "The just shall live by faith." If we are like the Pharisee, who felt no need and therefore he received not God's mercy, which is freely given. The flesh must die that the spirit may live. When we are lowest He will reach down and raise us through His grace. Not by payments of alms or performing good works like the Pharisee but through faith alone. We must become like the Publican confessing our sins. Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation.

There must be decided changes in the life. Everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. Many accept an intellectual religion, a form of godliness, while the heart is not cleansed. What you need to understand is the true force of His will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision or choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to man, and is theirs to exercise. Recent studies in genetic research say that every time we make a decision and follow it, that decision is registered in the DNA, and is transmitted to our next generation. "You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections, but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will. He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure." SC, p. 47.

I will relate to you a story, which took place when I was only five years old. My father decided to go on a long journey. He was packing his suitcase and was ready to leave. I was the only one with him. My brothers and sisters all had gone to school. Since I was the baby, I stayed at home. I was his favourite, like Jacob and his son, Joseph. I loved my father very much and before he left, he asked me a question. He asked me, "Do you love me?" I said, "Yes, Daddy," and gave him many kisses. But he turned and looked at me and said, "Son if you love me, carry this suitcase for me." I tried but I couldn't. It was too heavy. I smiled at him, thinking everything was OK. But he insisted again. Now I became very sad and I told him that I loved him, but I could not fulfill his request. Feeling so small and saddened, I tried again but I failed. I couldn't even move it because it was too heavy. But suddenly something flashed in my mind. I was always smart when I was a child. So I pulled my father's hand and I put my other hand on the handle and we pulled the suitcase together. I brought the suitcase to the destination he required. I jumped for joy and I said, "I did it, I did it". He gave me a kiss and said, "sure, you did it". I was so happy. I couldn't sleep that night. The same thing applies in our lives when our heavenly Father asks us to keep the law, it is impossible. Even in his holy state Adam failed. God knows our weakness. That is why he is asking us to "come unto Me for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."¹ Like Paul or in the story of myself, when we try in our own strength we can only proclaim, "who can deliver me?" Then when he found help, Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me."

If we try to keep the law in our own strength, we would become self-righteous like the Pharisee. That is why it is stated, "it is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself." *The Faith I Live By*, p. 111. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are like a merchantman seeking the goodly pearls. For one pearl, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. It is the same when we find Christ's righteousness. We give up everything; we only seek for the priceless pearl, which is a free gift of God.

Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, which a man finds he hideth it again and for joy goeth and selleth all he has and buys the field. What did the disciples do? Didn't they give up everything that they possessed? What did Peter say? "We have given up everything and followed thee." All these parables point to the one subject—Christ's righteousness. Now how can this righteousness be given to us? We cannot buy it, neither can we earn it, "even the righteousness of God which is by faith is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." Rom. 3:22. "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness even the righteousness which is of faith." Rom. 9:30. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy confirm that in the miracles that Christ performed, all of His recipients were healed because they believed in His power to heal. "In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You will serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, "I believe it, it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised." SC, p. 51. Jesus says, "What things soever ye desire, when you pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die." SC, p. 53.

To end, I would like to tell you a story. One day the famous minister, Moody was preaching to a packed audience. There may have been a thousand people gathered. In the congregation were doctors, professors, laymen, farmers, all kinds of people including the poor and the wretched. When he started his sermon, he was wearing a very expensive watch, given to him by one of his friends. The watch was a gold Rolex, costing more than \$40,000. Since he was very meek he didn't want to keep it to himself so he showed his watch to the thousand, which were gathered there, and he said, "anybody who wants this watch, they can come and pick it up." He said this a 2nd, and a 3rd time, but nobody came. So he paused and continued his sermon. One child who was 10 years old went to the pulpit and he gave it to him. Everybody was amazed. When the sermon was over, when he was greeting the public, the people said that they didn't believe that he was going to give this watch away for free.

It is the same thing when God is offering salvation free. Very few believe. "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt 19:14. Of those 1,000 people only one child believed. Likewise if we don't become like this little child and believe in God we will never make it. When you read this article don't wait—believe, and receive the heavenly gift. This is my wish and prayer. AMEN.

Augustus Ratneiya Montreal

MY STEP OUT BY FAITH

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark

16:15.

Recently there was a Youth Conference up in Brisbane, Australia. All of the youth that were there were given an opportunity to canvass after morning classes. Christopher Cosen and I went together in the little town of Lowood. Christopher, who is fifteen years old, was a great help to me. Over the few times we went canvassing we made some good experiences, including some funny ones. First I will tell you some of the funny experiences.

On the first day we went, we were nervous so that's when we really had some funny experiences. At one of the first doors we knocked, a lady came to the door. Chris and I suddenly burst out laughing before we said a single word. Somehow we survived through it without totally falling apart. At the end of the conversation the lady said, "I hope you have better luck next time." We hoped so, too.

Not too many doors along we came to another door where this young man was. He was smoking a cigarette and we offered him a "Stop Smoking" pamphlet. He said, "Well this is not a very good thing to be giving to me while I am smoking." We didn't say much. When we asked for a contribution, he said, jokingly, "No! But I will give you some marijuana." We, of course, said "No thanks," and we left.

The funniest experience was when we were half way through our time of canvassing. We knocked on this one door and a young lady came to the door. She asked us what we wanted and Chris said we were giving out pamphlets and then he told me to give her a pamphlet. I totally froze and without thinking stood there with the pamphlets in my hand behind my back. Chris said again, "Give her a pamphlet," but I was still so nervous it didn't register what he was saying. Finally Chris had had enough and said in a very loud voice, "GIVE HER A PAMPHLET!!" Finally I realized what I had been doing and gave her the pamphlet. The young lady was not near so happy any more because I didn't give her the pamphlet soon enough.

On the first day of our canvassing we were quite discouraged because nobody was kind and we were nervous. The Lord blessed our efforts though and things got better as we went on. I will always be thankful for the Lord's help. On the second day we made some better experiences.

We met this one elderly lady who was visiting a friend. Once we told her that we were in the neighborhood telling people about Jesus, she brightened up. She said that she was a Christian and was happy that we were doing what we were doing. She accepted a magazine and gave a contribution.

At another door we again met a man who was smoking and we gave him a "Drugs and Alcohol" pamphlet. At this point, he really opened up to us about his life and how he used to go to church. We encouraged him in his attempt to stop smoking. He obviously was very happy that we cared enough about him to come by his door. We ended up giving him several pamphlets and a magazine and he gave us a contribution.

The Lord blessed our efforts greatly in our time canvassing and who knows who will be saved from the seeds of truth planted there.

In conclusion to all young people around the world, my message to you is that you don't have to be an adult to go canvassing. The Lord can use anyone to do His work and it is very encouraging to see God's work going forward.

Richard Eaton

Current Scene

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND THE U.S. COURTS: ROAD SIGNS ALONG THE ROUTE OF A DENOMINATIONALIZING SECT

Synoptic history of Adventism

“This new religious group was marked by considerable tension with its surrounding culture. It rejected the American Dream, for it continued to predict the imminent return of Christ and the end of the world. It fostered a markedly different lifestyle, which included the observance of Saturday as the Sabbath in a society where a six-day work week was almost universal, diet and entertainment prohibitions, and a commitment to “dress reform” and abstinence from jewelry and makeup. This set Adventists apart and made it difficult for them to associate with others. These barriers were reinforced by the close ties that developed among members, whose lives typically centered around their church, the subculture it created, and its mission; who attended church schools; and who were consequently drawn to settle in “Adventist Ghettos” where many of them were employed in church institutions.

“Not only were Adventists different and separated from the surrounding society, but their beliefs fostered antagonisms between them and others. Adventists viewed themselves as “God’s Remnant People,” the true church charged with bearing God’s final warning message in the last days. Other Protestant groups were “apostate” and had become “the whore of Babylon”; the Roman Catholic Church was identified with the persecuting “beast” of the book of Revelation. Adventist preaching focused closely on the apocalyptic visions of the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation, where governments were portrayed as wild beasts which hurt God’s people. A unique interpretation identified the American Republic with the second beast of Revelation 13, which, although it had “two horns like a lamb,” would now speak “like a dragon.” In this dragon phase, it would breach the constitutional separation of church and state, joining together with the apostate Roman Catholic and Protestant churches to persecute the Remnant immediately before Christ’s return. This persecution would be facilitated by Adventists’ refusal to take “the Mark of the Beast,” thus preventing them from “buying or selling.” Adventists seized on the fact that their members, usually farmers, were facing arrest under the “blue laws” of several states for working on Sunday as proof that the expected persecution was already starting. In short, Adventist eschatology enshrined tension with the state.

“This tension increased during the Civil War, when Adventists, in the face of conscription, took a position against involvement in military service. Ellen White, the Adventist prophet, as was her wont, forcefully made the case for abstinence: ‘I was shown that God’s people... cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith.’ This position was then enforced: members who participated in the war were disfellowshipped. While this position placed Adventists among a small deviant minority and subjected them to scorn and questions concerning their loyalty, it did not result in legal punishments. Taking advantage of loopholes in the military draft designed for Quakers, they secured official recognition as conscientious objectors.

“Adventism began to change significantly after the Civil War. It became international, zealously sending out missionaries, so that its membership, which had stood at 5,440 in 1870, increased to 75,000 by 1901. At the same time Adventists set about building institutions: by 1901 they had built 16 colleges and high schools, a medical school, 75 “sanitariums” or hospitals, 13 publishing houses, and 31 miscellaneous institutions. Adventism was putting down a stake in the societies where it operated.

“These changes were accompanied by a reshaping of Adventist eschatology. While America continued to be identified with the two-homed beast, it was no longer portrayed as already in the dragon phase, but as still lamb-like, and its demise was thus seen as less imminent. That is, the time believed to be remaining before the second coming of Christ was lengthening, and the tension with the state was beginning to relax. Ellen White counseled rapprochement with civil authorities in order to facilitate missionary work; indeed, she urged Adventists to help prolong the future of America “so the Adventist message could go forth and flourish.” Adventists found themselves in the anomalous situation where they wished to delay the end of the world in order to have greater opportunity to preach that it was at hand: they were postponing the apocalypse.

“In the midst of these changes, Adventists were confronted with a crisis that seemed to be a direct fulfillment of what they had predicted: the National Reform Association launched a campaign to extend the Sunday “blue laws” in effect in some states to all others through federal legislation. Despite the fact that their eschatology saw the passage of a “national Sunday law” as the culmination of the prophecy concerning the two-horned beast, and thus a sure signal that the Second Coming of Christ was at hand, Adventists felt obliged by Ellen White’s counsel to “extend the time” to respond boldly to this threat. They established a magazine, *The American Sentinel*, devoted to religious liberty, in 1883; in 1888 and 1889 they participated in the lobby that helped defeat Senator H.W. Blair’s Sunday-Rest bill; and in 1889 the General Conference [church leadership] founded the National Religious Liberty Association. By 1892, when Adventists entered the debate over the Sunday closing of the Chicago World Exposition, their involvement included petitions to both Houses, the reading of papers before congressional committees, and the presentation of legal briefs in court.

CONCLUSION

“The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United States provides an excellent example of a religious group moving from sect towards denomination over time or, as Stark and Bainbridge have defined this process, from a state of high tension with its surrounding

environment to one of much lower tension. Over the past 150 years, Adventism has become far less separated from the broader society, much less different from it, and antagonism between the two has decreased markedly.

“Adventist involvement in the courts has passed through phases which mark the movement of Adventism along the route from sect to denomination. The first cases, when individual Adventists were arrested for working their farms on Sundays during the second half of the nineteenth century, were much more than an economic imposition on members who had scrupulously observed their Sabbath on the previous day: they confirmed the urgency of Adventist apocalyptic expectations. These distressing events reflected how separated Adventists were in their expectation of the imminent “end of the world,” how different they were in their selection of a day of worship and the cosmic significance which they attached to its observance, and, in the ways in which neighbors reported them to the police as they were forced to endure arrest and imprisonment, and how antagonistically they were viewed by their communities. That is, these arrests and trials revealed the extent of their sectarianism, of their tension with society. This confirmation of their apocalyptic expectations, together with the absence at that time of legal remedies for their plight, resulted in a fairly passive response to these problems posed them by the legal system.

“Then followed a period of some decades when the tension between Adventism and its social and political environment began to lessen, as Adventists built institutions and sought accreditation for them, fought politically to delay what they believed to be the fulfillment of the last sign heralding the return of Christ, **changed their position on military service from conscientious objection to noncombatancy**, and began to experience upward mobility. This time of transition was marked by the almost complete absence of Adventists as such from the courts.

“Beginning in the late 1930s, mere began a long period during which tension between Adventism and society was sharply reduced. It began most dramatically with the establishment of a close relationship between the Adventist church and the American military via the Medical Cadet Training Program, but was also pushed forward by changes exterior to Adventism such as the creation of a noncombatant service classification in the Selective Service Act, and by the Supreme Court’s decision upholding religious liberty for Jehovah’s Witnesses in the Barnette case and Roosevelt’s inclusion of “freedom of religion” among his four basic freedoms during World War II. These changes were marked by the creation of what was to become the legal department within the General Conference and by the reappearance of court cases in which Adventists were involved. In these cases, that focused initially on naturalization and military service classification issues, they were, more often than not, successful. One of these cases took Adventism to the U.S. Supreme Court for the first time.

“The years from the Korean War through the Vietnam War continued the sharp relaxation in tension, with dramatic symbols such as the appointment of Adventist military chaplains, the establishment of a special military camp where noncombatants received their basic training and Adventists formed the majority, involvement in a biological warfare research program designed by the military especially for Adventists, the acceptance of government grants by Adventist hospitals and educational institutions, **and, ultimately, a retreat from Adventism’s commitment to noncombatancy in military service**. In the courts, this trend was symbolized by a major Supreme Court free exercise case which granted Sabbatarians fired for reasons of conscience the right to unemployment benefits.

“The denominationalizing of Adventism was reflected in, and in turn influenced by, its involvement in the courts. As it moved from sect towards denomination, it became more compatible with formal methods of dispute resolution. As part of this process, it developed an institutional legal capacity and familiarity, and then a growing ease, with the legal system, which it then used with rapidly increasing frequency.

“Perhaps the most striking symbol of the Adventist Church’s accommodation to its environment was its decision in 1981 to trademark its name. The specter of this church, whose apocalyptic vision had led it to expect persecution at the hands of the United States government, making use of the legal system to attack both schismatic Adventist groups and disapproved organizations of church members, represents a dramatic shift in its position. The cases charging such groups with breach of trademark, deceptive trade practices, unfair competition, and false advertising demonstrate that the church leadership sees itself as entrenched within the capitalist economy; indeed, it has adopted a corporate model for the church itself. This shift is further confirmed by the General Conference’s move a decade ago to a corporate park in Silver Spring, Maryland, and by a recommendation brought to its Annual Council in 1994 that the General Conference president be recognized as the ‘chief executive officer’ of the church.

“The changing participation patterns of Seventh-day Adventists in the U.S. courts are therefore excellent indicators of shifts over time in the level of tension between Adventism and the surrounding society. They thus represent road signs along its route from sect towards denomination.”

The increasing involvement of SDAs in the ways and things of this world is known and understood by many in Adventism. But since the commandments of God were left behind many years ago, nobody seems to care. The power of God is increasingly forgotten so that the power of man has to be sought.

This frank, well-documented history should be enough for anyone to understand that prophecy has indeed been fulfilled and God’s true remnant church is no longer the SDA church.

“The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be disregarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure. *Selected Messages*, Book 1pp. 204-205

Truly, these words have reached their complete fulfillment in this our day - if the world could only see it. But we are promised the latter rain, that the sincere among the fallen churches can see it.

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CHURCH IN ENGLAND 'WILL BE DEAD IN 40 YEARS TIME'¹

By Hazel Southam, *The Independent*, London, 16 April 2000

“With attendances falling faster than ever, a new report sees the future for Christianity in Britain as bleak,

“Holy Week has begun with an expert prediction that the Christian church in this country will be dead and buried within 40 years. It will vanish from the mainstream of British life, with only 0.5 per cent of the population attending the Sunday services of any denomination, according to the country’s leading church analyst. Historic buildings will be left to crumble in neglect, as congregations vanish and the church infrastructures collapse without money from the parishes. All claims that Britain is a Christian nation will finally have to be given up, says the church attendance specialist. Peter Brierley.

“The basic doctrines of Christianity will be believed much less and there will be many who actively do not believe them/ he says in a new book to be published this week.

“The dwindling band of worshippers has grown used to gloomy predictions, but these are the worst yet. Church attendance will be “at an all-time low’ in 40 years’ time, says *Steps to the Future*, published by the Scripture Union. Around 40 per cent of the population will have some kind of belief, though a third of them will practice non-Christian religions. Inner-city churches will face the worst decline, closing or running midweek services to keep anyone coming in at all, ‘This is very sober stuff/ says Dr Brierley, best known for compiling the annual Church Attendance Survey. ‘Numbers of Christians will decrease, and the ones who remain won’t express their Christianity by going to church/

“The statistics could spell disaster for England’s 10,000 listed Anglican churches. The last thing we want to see is listed buildings being knocked down, but at some stage, because of dwindling congregations, the Church of England won’t be able to maintain them.’ To date, cathedrals have shown more ability to survive, drawing bigger congregations in recent years thanks to prestigious one-off services and commemorations. Often, however, this is at the expense of parish churches nearby.”

As the fallen denominations become more and more Catholic, they lose any power that they had originally, as they lose the truths that gave them a right to exist. And so, naturally the Catholic Church, always given to political power, rather than godly power, just gets that much more influence over an increasingly apostate and dead Protestantism. Clearly, the world is now wondering after the beast, because there is nothing else to provide spiritual direction, if they reject the truth. Rev. 13 “I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Revelation 3:1

By Jerry Eaton

EARTHWATCH MALARIA

Parti

Matthew 24:7 “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences...”

PESTILENCE

Malaria is still the single most important disease hazard facing mankind, particularly travelers and affecting our missionary workers in most tropical countries. It is a serious, debilitating and is usually neglected public health problem. Malaria is a parasitic disease spread by the bite of mosquitoes. Worldwide, at least 1600 million people and upwards are constantly at risk from malaria. Between 200 and 300 million people are affected by the disease each year and the numbers are rising at an alarming pace. Each year, around one million infants and children die from malaria in just Africa alone.

Malaria affects at least 105 countries, but many of these countries under-report their cases of malaria, maybe so as not to harm their image or trade.

BZZZZZ.....

There are 3,000 species of mosquitoes in the world: no matter where you go, mountain or valley, Keokuk, Iowa, Timbuktu or Long Branch, New Jersey—some of them are sure to find you. Last year, scientists isolated a mosquito that lives only in the London Underground; the subterranean version of a species that lives solely on birds, it has evolved into a voracious biter of subway riders. Although some species live as long as eight months, the life of the average mosquito is two to three weeks. If it's any consolation, mosquitos will meet a violent end long before they have a chance to bite—death by drought, death by barn swallow, death by windshield.

BLOOD BROTHER

You have what mosquitos need to breed: the protein in your blood is essential for their egg production. Accordingly, it's the female mosquito that bites you. Only she has the proboscis to plumb your veins; only she will inject a tiny amount of saliva (which later makes you itch) to keep your blood from clotting in her tube or straw.

With every bite, she drinks five microliters of blood. At that rate, it would take roughly a million mosquito bites to suck your body dry. A mosquito takes at least one blood meal a week; she needs several days to digest, then another one to lay her eggs. Given her short time on earth, Dr. Jonathan Day, a mosquito expert at the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory, that is usually the end of her output. “If she can lay another batch, that's gravy.”

THICKER SKIN

Mosquitos find the thinnest skin on your body, a knack aided by tiny sensors on their feet. And different species have different predilections. Some, the *Psorophora ferox*, a species common in New Jersey, attack the shoulders or above. Others, such as the ubiquitous *Aedes aegypti*, favor the back and around your ankles - making it harder for you to swat them; ever notice? (Indeed a study found that *Aegypti*'s (decendedent of the plagues in Egypt?), preferred hanging on the underside of sofas. Another study, involving dirty socks and Limburger cheese, suggests that ankle-biting mosquitos may actually be drawn to the smell of your feet - the more rancid the better.) So, (2 Cor. 7:1 “let us cleanse ourselves”), and (Is. 1:16, “wash you, make you clean.) And then there is *Wyeomyia mitchellii*, which prefers the tip of your nose. It's very quiet and makes no sound, and its bite is initially painless.

WHY ME?

Many might ask, why can't she bite someone else? Why me? Well, it all starts with your breath. As you exhale, a trail of carbon dioxide wafts away from you like a trail of ribbon; the lucky mosquito stumbles across it, then zigzags back and forth and zeroes in. As the mosquito gets closer, she picks up on other clues: warm, sweaty body, dark clothes, and high concentrations of lactic acid (secreted in perspiration). In short, what makes you appealing are mostly things you have virtually no control over. Some people, yes, some people are just more attractive than others; it's a function

of body chemistry and body temperature. Indeed, experiments have shown that in a group of ten people exposed to mosquitos, three will be bitten many times, three won't be bothered, and the rest will receive only a bite or two.

HOME - BODY

After she has had her way with you, a mosquito looks for a cool, dark place to lay her eggs -puddles, swamps, salt marshes, tree holes, etc. Some species are container breeders, preferring man-made receptacles such as flowerpots and old tires. American epidemiologists are currently monitoring the movements of *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito, which carries dengue fever on the native continent. It reached the United States for the first time in 1985 arriving in a shipment of used truck tires. While the virus responsible for dengue fever has only just arrived, the mosquito has spread to more than a dozen states. It's a postmodern Gulliver, migrating on the wheels of yesterday's transport, coming to a backyard near you.

In many countries over the centuries, malaria has been controlled or eradicated by reducing the amount of stagnant water, which mosquitoes need in order to breed. Drainage of the Pontine Marshes around Rome and the more recent problem of stagnant water in Singapore were effective. Rice is the staple diet in most tropical countries, but mosquitoes often breed in rice fields. It's a cruel situation. Spraying is another measure by residual insecticide in houses and around buildings.

Unfortunately, however, mosquito resistance to the effects of insecticide remains a problem and is only one of many reasons why malaria eradication has been largely unsuccessful.

SHOO, FLY

What, then, is the most important way to reduce the number of mosquito bites? There are many ways depending on the location, economy and means. The cheapest way and perhaps the most practical way is to "cover-up". That means wearing shoes with socks, if possible, long sleeves, and pants when indoors and outdoors, especially in twilight. That's not much fun or so easy for some. The next best measure of defense, therefore, is the application of insect repellent (containing diethyltoluamide or "deet" or other repellents such as "Off"). This can be applied to the skin, especially in the evening and, when out of doors, at night. We because of our health reform position prefer "natural" repellents; extracts of citronella, prickly pear, or some other carbon-based life forms work fine if you're game to reapply them every 10 minutes. Otherwise, I'm afraid, stick to products containing deet. Check the label for the concentration: repellents with 10% deet are safe for children and will last two hours or so; you need the higher strength solution only if you'll be in the woods or jungle all day. As for those high-tech contraptions advertised in expensive catalogues, save your money. Ultrasonic repellents do not work. If anything these devices merely kill the insects that prey on those pesky mosquitos. Chemical pellets, wafers, and insecticide solutions, placed in electrical devices emit vapors, which are not totally effective, and can be harmful to your health as they waft into closed quarters. Chemically impregnated spiral coils circle about a base, which is lighted leave a streaming trail of incense which can discourage mosquitoes from attacking, but some persistently drive on despite this innovation.

Some of these chemical insecticides may produce allergic manifestations in the unwary; headaches, dizziness, running nose, nausea etc. Then, again, one has to weigh the benefits of such measures in order to protect oneself from the deadly consequences of malaria. Spiral coils are said to be "safe" so I believe it is a good compromise.

HERBS

We then, however, return again to our search for natural health-reform means of fighting the war against the mosquito and malaria risks. A popular herbal preparation is oil of cajepuit. This, too, has to be applied frequently, and is reasonably effective as a repellent against mosquitos. It can also be used for fleas, ticks, wounds, cuts and insect bites. Another herb of value is astragalus in fortifying the immune system. Yerba santa combination is recommended for the lungs and respiratory system. Wild cherry bark is helpful for sore throat and coughs. An old standby and essential herb is golden-seal, which has antibiotic properties.

FOOD WARRIORS

Turning now further to natural means of combating the mosquito tide, we come to a popular food, garlic, which has been around for thousands of years. Although many might shun garlic, because of its pungency and odor, it has a strong tendency, I have found, to repel mosquitos. So don't shun it. While traveling in Tanzania and Kenya with a missionary team, I ate it regularly (3-4 cloves daily) and at night applied it by rubbing a cut clove over my face, arms, and legs before bedtime. Furthermore I cut 2-3 cloves (fresh) and placed them on a dish by my nightstand or tent. Garlic is a natural

broad-spectrum antibiotic, and anti-parasitic. Thereby, it can be effective as malaria is caused by parasites which develop in the blood and then find their way into the liver. Garlic, too, builds resistance to infections by boosting the immune system. Don't take garlic extracts such as Kyolic, or other "odorless" garlic capsules, as they are not effective since the active ingredient, allicin, is eliminated. Incidentally, garlic in a study of garlic eaters had more natural killer cells (NK) than in the non-garlic eaters.

Red cayenne, also, is a powerful antibiotic, and anti-parasitical food, dilating blood vessels and improving blood flow, and contrary to many beliefs protects the tissue of the stomach lining. Ginger, too, is another important food, used for centuries in Asia to treat nausea, vomiting, headache, chest congestions, cholera, colds, diarrhea, stomach ache, rheumatism, and nervous diseases, relieves symptoms of arthritis (rheumatoid), is an antibiotic and anti-inflammatory agent. Therefore, garlic, cayenne, and ginger, are three important fighting foods that are helpful in protecting one, especially living in the tropics, but I include these almost daily in my diet living in Greece and are a part of my Travel Kit, along with the herbs mentioned above, wherever I travel; a little tip for our missionaries.

We have an advantage as vegetarians by eating all kinds of fruits and vegetables and vegetarians also have a more vigorous immune defense. The white blood cells, in one study of vegetarians were twice as deadly against tumor cells as those of carnivores. (Vegans have more ferocious NK killer cells). Adding to the immune armada, not only of fruits and vegetables in general but especially carrots, spinach, kale, sweet potatoes and pumpkins are immune stimulating. For the immune system to function at top form and thus offer protection from diseases and infections, be sure to eat foods high in zinc. Sources are: legumes, whole grains, brewer's yeast, lima beans, mushrooms, pecans, pumpkin, seeds, soy lecithin, soybeans and sunflower seeds.

HOME - SWEET - HOME

Now, after all of this we come to the "good-news" or the "bad-news"! You have experienced it at one time or another. Mom and Dad take the kids out to the park or beach. Mom immediately attacks the air, sand and greenery with some insecticide spray, trying to attack against the insect world while recalling their last excursion. But, mother has forgotten, if she ever knew, that just as spilled sugar in our kitchens attracts ants and insects, so does sugar in our bloodstreams attract mosquitos, microbes and parasites.

One of the great joys of being sugarfree is to be able to lie on the beach or loll in the mountains or trek through the jungles or bush country without being bothered by mosquitos or other creatures. Once off sugar for a year or so, (The late Dr. Melvin Page says 3 weeks to break the habit), try it and see if it isn't true for you too. If you take along a guest who's still addicted to sugar, lie side by side. See whom the mosquitos go for and who is left alone.

After all, it's no accident that the first cases of mosquito-borne yellow fever - in the Western Hemisphere - occurred in the sugar island of Barbados in 1647. In the beginning it was called "nova pestis". Yellow fever spread from one sugar center to another; Guadeloupe, St. Kitts, Jamaica, Brazil, British New Guinea, Spain, Portugal, New Orleans, and finally Cuba, where the U.S. mounted a massive campaign at the turn of the twentieth century to make our sugar colony of Cuba safe from the mosquito.

Sugar addiction is a worldwide phenomenon today. Sugar pushers have invaded Asia and Africa, hooking millions on soda pop, and soft drinks. The sun never sets on the Coca-Cola sign today. I was surprised to see such a sign in the dense jungle in Kenya, driving through in our Land Rover, passing some native villages. Sugar is a pure chemical; no vitamins, no minerals. There are some Adventists who say that honey is not the same as sugar. Such a statement is quite far from the truth. I've also seen Adventists divulging, with gluttony over frosted cakes, cookies, pies and soft drinks at birthday parties. We are told that "Far too much sugar is ordinarily used in food (CC 113). Furthermore, that sugar clogs the system causing all kinds of diseases. (CD 197)

Whether it is fructose, sucrose, glucose, dextrose, honey, raw sugar, sugar cane, maple syrup, molasses, brown sugar, sorghum, or any syrups, such as corn syrup, sugar is sugar, is sugar, and is sugar! The stomach does not know the difference...nor the mosquito! Synthetic sweeteners such as saccharine, and aspartame are synthetics and potentially hazardous and dangerous to our health. The longer we depend on them, the more difficult it becomes to appreciate the natural sweetness of natural food.

Almost all preserved foods contain sugar or a sugar product. Get into the habit of reading the labels. Common foods, such as baby foods, peanut butter, ketchup, mayonnaise, bread, jams, marmalade, breakfast cereals, jello, pudding etc. are loaded with sugar to enhance flavor and act as a preservative.

Many Adventists and vegetarians overeat dried fruits, which are highly concentrated with sugar. Fresh is better, but do not, again, over-indulge and no fruit juices, fresh or bottled; they are too highly concentrated in sugar. Also, leave tropical fruits to the tropics and concentrate on native fruits in season. What's natural for the Eskimo is different from what's natural for the Islander, right? If you insist on munching on dried fruits, soak them overnight, they will be as fresh fruit again, almost. You will discover new tastes. Remember the mosquitoes!

Although simple carbohydrates (Bad sugars mentioned above) should be eliminated completely from the diet, complex carbohydrates (good sugars) are beneficial and should be included.

These are found in fresh fruits and vegetables, beans, and natural whole grains. Include whole foods such as nuts, seeds, brown rice, soy etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations in Part 2.

Dr. John S. Theodorou Greece

FUNCTION OF THE BRAIN

PART 6 REMEDIES

Remedies for the **church** from God:

In Isaiah 8:20 it says, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to His word, it is because there is no light in them."

Now we have to find out about the testimony. In Revelation 19:10 it says in the last part that "... they have the testimony of Jesus, worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy."¹

For our age the Spirit of Prophecy is given through Sister Ellen White. She said, on the 6th of June 1863, "that the great subject of health reform was opened before me in vision." Also she said, "I was shown that intemperance would prevail in the world to an alarming extent, and that every one of the people of God must take an elevated stand in regard to reformation in habits and practices... The Lord presented a general plan before me. I was shown that God would give to His commandment keeping people a reform diet, and that as they received this, their disease and suffering would be greatly lessened. I was shown that this work would progress." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 481, 482.

Again Sister White said on December 1, 1871, "I was again shown that the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to tit a people for the coming of the Lord," CDF, p. 69.

"The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message, and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advanced move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work to do for themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them. He has left this work for them to do. It is an individual work; one cannot do it for another." CDF, p. 74.

"Our sanitariums and our churches may reach a higher, holier standard. Health reform is to be taught and practiced by our people. The Lord is calling for a revival of the principles of health reform. Seventh-day Adventists have a special work to do as messengers to labor for the souls and bodies of men.

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

"God has spoken to His people, and He designs that they shall hear and obey His voice." CDF, p. 77.
"The work of health reform is the Lord's means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church, Teach the people that they can act as God's helping hand, by cooperating with the Master Worker in restoring physical and spiritual health. This work bears the signature of heaven, and will open doors for the entrance of other precious truths. There is room for all to labor who will take hold of this work intelligently." CDF, p. 77.

Duty of the Church of God:

"Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath school classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to

work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health, cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. There should not only be teaching but actual work under experienced instructors.” CDF, p. 470.

“From the beginning of the health reform work, we have found it necessary to educate, educate, educate. God desires us to continue this work of educating the people.” CDF, p. 460.

“Hold up the principles of health reform, and let the Lord lead the honest in heart. Present the principles of temperance in their most attractive form. Circulate the books that give instruction in regard to healthful living.” CDF, p. 461.

“Wherever medical missionary work is carried on in our large cities, cooking schools should be held; and wherever a strong educational missionary work is in progress, a hygienic restaurant of some sort should be established, which shall give a practical illustration of the proper selection and the healthful preparation of foods.” CDF, p. 469.

“There is a message regarding health reform to be borne in every church. There is a work to be done in every school. Neither principal nor teachers should be entrusted with the education of the youth until they have a practical knowledge of this subject. Some have felt at liberty to criticize and question and find fault with health reform principles of which they know little by experience. They should stand shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, with those who are working in right lines.

“The subject of health reform has been presented in the churches; but the light has not been heartily received. The selfish, health-destroying indulgences of men and women have counteracted the influence of the message that is to prepare a people for the great day of God. If the churches expect strength, they must live the truth which God has given them. If the members of our churches disregard the light on this subject, they will reap the sure result in both spiritual and physical degeneracy. And the influence of these older church members will leaven those newly come to the faith. The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been converted, and those who were once converted, but who have backslidden. What influence would these unconsecrated members have on new converts? Would they not make of no effect the God-given message which His people are to bear?

“We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work. The world is a lazaretto filled with victims of both physical and spiritual disease. Everywhere people are perishing for lack of a knowledge of the truths that have been committed to us. The members of the church are in need of an awakening, that they may realize their responsibility to impart these truths. Those who have been enlightened by the truth are to be light bearers to the world. To hide our light at this time is to make a terrible mistake. The message to God’s people today is, ‘Arise shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.’

“On every hand we see those who have had much light and knowledge deliberately choosing evil in the place of good. Making no attempt to reform, they are growing worse and worse. But the people of God are not to walk in darkness. They are to walk in the light, for they are reformers.” CDF, p. 455, 456

“As a people we have been given the work of making known the principles of health reform. There are some who think that the question of diet is not of sufficient importance to be included in their evangelistic work. But such make a great mistake. God’s word declares, ‘Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.’ 1 Cor. 10:32. The subject of temperance in all its bearings, has an important place in the work of salvation.” CDF, p. 450.

“As we near the close of time, we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance, presenting it in a more positive and decided manner. We must strive continually to educate the people, not only by our words, but by our practice. Precept and practice combined have a telling influence.” CDF, p. 443.

“Education in health principles was never more needed than now. Notwithstanding the wonderful progress in so many lives relating to the comforts and conveniences of life, even to sanitary matters and to the treatment of disease, the decline in physical vigor and power of endurance is alarming. It demands the attention of all who have at heart the well-being of their fellow men. “Our artificial civilization is encouraging evils destructive of sound principles. Custom and fashion are at war with nature. The practices they enjoin, and the indulgences they foster are steadily lessening both physical and mental strength, and bringing upon the race an intolerable burden. Intemperance and crime, disease and wretchedness, are everywhere.

“Many transgress the laws of health through ignorance, and they need instruction. But the greater number know better than they do. They need to be impressed with the importance of making their knowledge a guide of life.” CDF, p. 441.

“The people whom God is leading will be peculiar. They will not be like the world. But if they follow the leadings of God, they will accomplish His purposes, and will yield their will to His will. Christ will dwell in the heart. The temple of God will be holy. Your body, says the apostle, is the temple of the Holy Ghost.” CDF, p. 72.

Conclusion:

We see that God has a people who keep the commandments of God and they have the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the Spirit of Prophecy. We, as the people of God, have to arise and proclaim the Health Reform always, because God has given us this

message to spread around the whole world. We must be a light bearer, carrying the fight of health reform together with the Third Angel's message. I pray that our General Conference, and our churches in every country take the responsibility to spread the message of health reform. Only by accepting the message of health reform can we be prepared for the Loud Cry, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for Jesus' coming.

God bless you and give you strength to raise the truth up high.

Your Sister, Nada Stefanovic,
Australia.

DRESS

The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deut. 22:5

This is Bible teaching. Let our sisters consider themselves well-dressed only when the demands of modesty are met. The material and design of the dress should not be sexually suggestive. Short sleeves, low necklines and skirts that do not reach well below the knees do not agree with the Christian standard of modesty and refinement. In these things beauty and virtue require adherence to good conservative ways.

The head of a person is the seat of intelligence and should give evidence of it. The soul is expressed in the countenance. The elements of beauty do not lie so much in the features of the face as in the expression of intelligence and benevolence. Let the mind and the soul be cultivated, and the face will be beautiful.

Also in all matters of physical appearance and dress, there should be a wide distinction between men and women.

Some time ago I read a book of psychology that spoke about women who dress themselves in a showy manner, using pants, miniskirts or low cut necklines. These women suffer from an inferiority complex and for this reason they try to draw attention with false and sensual fashions.

The prophet of the Lord says, "Dress is an index of the mind and heart. That which is hung upon the outside is the sign of what is within." M.C. P. 289

"Fashion is a mistress that rules with an iron hand. IN very many homes the strength and time and attention of parents and children are absorbed in meeting her demands." Education 246.

"The love of display produces extravagance, and in many young people kills the aspiration for a nobler life. Instead of seeking an education, they early engage in some occupation to earn money for indulging the passion for dress. And through this passion many a young girl is beguiled to ruin." Education 247

Sharteriz Garcia

JAMAICAN FIELD CONFERENCE

December 24 - 27,1999

With great expectation we looked forward the spiritual and physical feast that awaited us at the Conference. This wonderful retreat is located in the hills of the parish of St. Mary, at Enfield, Camp Curtis' camp site, and is surrounded by forests, including fruit trees.

“Arise and Trim our Lamp” was the spiritual eye-opening theme, and the theme song was “A Little More Oil In My Lamp.” We had four (4) wonderful days of fellowship. Registration and the preparation of Sabbath proceeded the official opening of the Conference by Br. Branko Cholich.

Sis. Elham Gordon, in welcoming the Sabbath reminded us that it was on the Sabbath that John received special revelations concerning the Church. He was at one with God, and so also must we be, in order to receive full blessings. Bro. Cholich then gave an in-depth presentation of the history of the Advent Movement and the 51 movement.

The Sabbath was wonderful, sharing with brethren and friends from our sister churches throughout the day, especially in our Sabbath School. In the divine hour, Br. Cholich presented the message of the parable of the ten virgins found in Matthew 25. He said that all were waiting, but when the test came, five failed. He said the commandments are not forced upon us but they are to make us wise and allow us to make the right decision in a crisis. The oil enables us to shine for Jesus and brighten the way for others to see the way to Him.

In the different youth hours there were lovely renditions of songs, recitals of scripture passages and poems.

In a workshop on health, Br. Michael McNiesh reminded us that ancient Israel was given a specific diet, so also is spiritual Israel given a vegetarian diet. It can sufficiently sustain us. We also learned a lot about the very versatile and nutritious soybean and nutrients that are found in it and other plant foods.

Br. Gowie, in a presentation on stewardship, stated that we are only servants and are here to perform our faithful duty. The proper way of calculation our tithe was illustrated: one-tenth of our gross income (not net income), and must include allowances such as uniform, travelling, rent etc. Another wonderful Sabbath came to a close with Br. Gowie giving thanks to God for His benefits.

On Sunday, we gathered at the nearby river and witnessed, with joy twelve souls, the majority being youth, as they made their covenant with God in water baptism. The ceremony was performed by Br. Gowie. They were given the right hand of fellowship by Br. Cholich. After this they were all personally welcomed into the Church by the members who greeted them with hugs and even tears of joy.

In a workshop on marriage Br. Gowie stated that there is a pattern that should be followed: attraction, friendship, courting, marriage, sex and then children. Couples should be spiritually and physically bound together. Sis. Evadney Dockery then gave thanks to God for a wonderful day.

Monday morning, while we were saddened because it was the final day, Sis. Audrey Wallace encouraged us to be patient. She stated that patience enables us to get along with others, and it is our connection with Christ, which enables us to develop patience.

To close a wonderful conference, Br. George Moodie-Henry asked the question, Who is God? Psalm 19 answers this: He is the Creator, heavenly Father, owner of heaven and earth. We however, cannot by searching find out God. But we know that God is love.

It is my wish and prayer that we will hold steadfast in the unity of the faith, until we all go home and live with Christ forever. AMEN

Elham Gordon Secretary, Jamaican Field

ABIDE UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. “

Ps. 91:1

A child, six years of age, who lived in the Venezuelan jungle, entered through his usual opening in the woods that was full of large ferns on sandy soil. When he was looking around, he was surprised to see a large bird, like a condor or an eagle. The bird attacked him and pushed him to the ground. His back was bleeding from the bird's claws. Because of the child's weight, the bird could not fly up in the air.

The child was crying and the bird attacked him again. This time it was more painful. The bird dug his claws deeper into his back and tried to fly. The child cried out and desperately tried to free himself from the claws of the bird. They both fell to the ground and as best he could the child tried to push the bird to the ground. While the bird recuperated from the fall, the child ran under the large ferns that were nearby.

The bird flew to a tree from which it again launched its attack on the child, but could not reach him because of the strong branches of the ferns. The child wanted to run away but the bird was watching him from a tree. Finally the bird flew to another tree and the child could run quickly to another tree, where then he could run quickly from the open area to the jungle where the bird could not fly because of its large wings.

We also in this world have a powerful enemy with cutting claws. His power is greater than ours. The place where we are, he claims as his territory. He is ready to attack us with a purpose to destroy us human beings.

Peter describes him as, “a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Pet.5:8.

John describes him as a dragon, full of anger “and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 12:17.

We are in the savanna of the world; our enemy is here also. What can we do against a being so dangerous? Do we have to give ourselves to satisfy the appetite of this eagle?

No, we have a promise of which we can take a hold of—the promise of the eternal God, whose word will not fail. The same God who saved the Israelites from the Egyptian army tells us, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Ps. 91:1.

Christ is this large fern, the place of refuge in the savanna of this world. If we dwell in His shadow, we are secure from the attacks of the eagle. He cannot pass through the strong branches of the ferns. That is how Satan, our enemy cannot pass through the power of the omnipotent God, and our refuge is secure.

The promise of Christ is, “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shall thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Ps. 91:4.

“He shall call upon Me and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him My salvation.” Ps. 91:15-16.

When we are in danger, let us run to the place of safe refuge, who is Christ. In Him we will find peace, and be saved and have eternal life.

We will see His salvation! AMEN.

Raquel Acevedo

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Brown Towel

“And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.” Luke 21:1-4. This poor widow gave all that she had. We may wonder how she managed after that, however I am sure the Lord blessed her immensely. We may have to wait until we get to heaven to hear her story of how the Lord provided for her after she made the supreme sacrifice. I am sure it is an amazing and wonderful story. Here is another story where we do know what happened after someone who was very poor gave sacrificially to the Lord.

One Sunday the ladies from the church Dorcas Society were busily packing a large box that would be sent to some poor foreign missionaries. They were packing the box from donations made by the members of the church.

“One who has nothing can give nothing,” stated Sister Sayers. She had come to help the ladies pack the box but her family was going through a very difficult time at the moment. Her husband was ill and had not been able to work for several months so she had nothing to spare for the missionary box this time. Clothing, linens, and blankets were getting worn out and threadbare, and whatever still was in somewhat a good condition was needed now to replace the worn-out ones.

“A person who has nothing to give must be poor, indeed,” said Sister Bell, shaking her head sadly as she deposited a pair of warm blankets into the box.

Sister Sayers looked at Sister Bell and replied, “You are living a very comfortable life and have everything you need and more. You, who have never known self-denial cannot feel for me, and understand what I am going through.” She continued, “Do you really think a person can be too poor to give?” Sister Sayers was interested to see that someone agreed with her that it is possible to be too poor to give.

“I once thought so as you do right now, but have learned from experience that no better investment can be made, even from the depths of poverty, than lending to the Lord.”

Now Sister Bell had the attention of all the ladies in the room, as they were all aware of the situation that Sister Sayers was in right now. She continued by saying, “Perhaps, when our work is finished I will relate to you my experiences on the subject. It may be the means of showing you that God will always reward the cheerful giver.”

The ladies eagerly finished their work in order to listen to what Sister Bell had to say. None of them knew of her past life.

They had always thought of her as wealthy, however, she had always been extremely generous when calls were made to donate. When they were finished their work they sat around quietly listening.

“During the first twenty-eight years of my life, I was surrounded by wealth; and not until I had been married nine years did I know what it was like not to have enough money. We were very poor and had difficulty in supplying our daily needs for the family. We had to work very hard. We were barely managing to feed our children a scanty supply of food, when we met with some unfortunate circumstances that came with fearful suddenness, and before I had recovered from the blow, I found myself the wife of an extremely poor man, with five children dependent on our hard labour for their food and clothing.

“From that hour I lost all thought of anything but the care of my family. All my energies were spent in that direction - I had time for little else. Late hours and hard work were my portion, and to my unskilled hands it seemed at first a bitter lot. My husband also worked very hard to earn a living, and barely succeeded. We changed our place of residence several times, hoping to do better, but without improvement.

“Everything seemed against us. Our well-stocked wardrobe had become almost empty and I stopped going to church any more as I was ashamed that my children and I did not have any decent clothing to wear. While in this low condition, I decided to go to church one evening. I felt a need to go and hear the words of the Lord and since I was too ashamed to go in the daylight, I went when it was dark hoping nobody would notice my old worn-out dress. I took a seat near the door so I could leave as soon as the service was over.

“After the service an earnest appeal was made to send a few boxes for a donation to some poor foreign missionaries.

The appeal of the pastor brought tears to my eyes, and painfully reminded me of my past days of prosperity, when I could give of my abundance to all who called upon me. It never entered my mind that the appeal for help in any way concerned me, with my poor children banished (only by my shame) from church because of our poverty, while I would only dare to venture to church under the friendly protection of darkness.

“I left church in deep thought. I was thinking of my situation and I was praying in my heart that those others who had been at the service would have their hearts touched to donate to this worthy cause. I tried to sleep that night, but my thoughts troubled me. The words of this Bible text kept repeating in my mind, ‘Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.’ The eloquent entreaty of the speaker that evening was addressed to all, however poor, to give a mite to the Lord, and receive the promised blessing, but it seemed directly addressed to me. I rose early the next morning, and decided to act on the promise of the Lord in order to bring peace to my troubled mind. I looked over all my worldly goods in search of something worth giving, but in vain; the promised blessing seemed beyond my reach.

“Hearing that the ladies of the church were filling a box for the missionary’s family that day, I decided to make one more effort to look around the house for something that I could spare. All was poor and threadbare. What should I do? At last I thought of my towels. I had six, they were brown and a little worn., but still looked in fairly good condition. This did not always seem like enough towels for our family of seven; yet I decided to make the sacrifice. I took one from the closet, and putting it in a bag, hastened to the church where they were filling the box. I quietly slipped it in when no one was looking and returned home with a light heart, feeling that my Saviour’s eye had seen my sacrifice, and would bless my effort.

“From that very day success attended all my husband’s efforts in business. In a few months our means increased so that we were able to buy some nice clothing to attend church and send our children to their Sabbath School class. Before ten years had gone by, our former prosperity had returned fourfold. ‘Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over,’ had been given to us.

“It may seem a coincidence to you, my dear friends, that this happened at that specific time, but we date all our success in life to God’s blessing, following that humble gift out of deep poverty. He may not always think best to reward so signally those who give to Him, but He is never unmindful of the humblest gift or giver. So now you see what I mean when I say that no one is too poor to give. I am a firm believer in God’s promise that He will repay with interest, even in this life, all we lend to Him.”

This story made the other ladies think deeply, as they watched Mrs. Bell leaving for home, stepping into her carriage. Her consistent donations had proved to all that in her prosperity she remembered the promises of God and retained her Christian spirit which, in her days of poverty, had led her to give that brown towel.

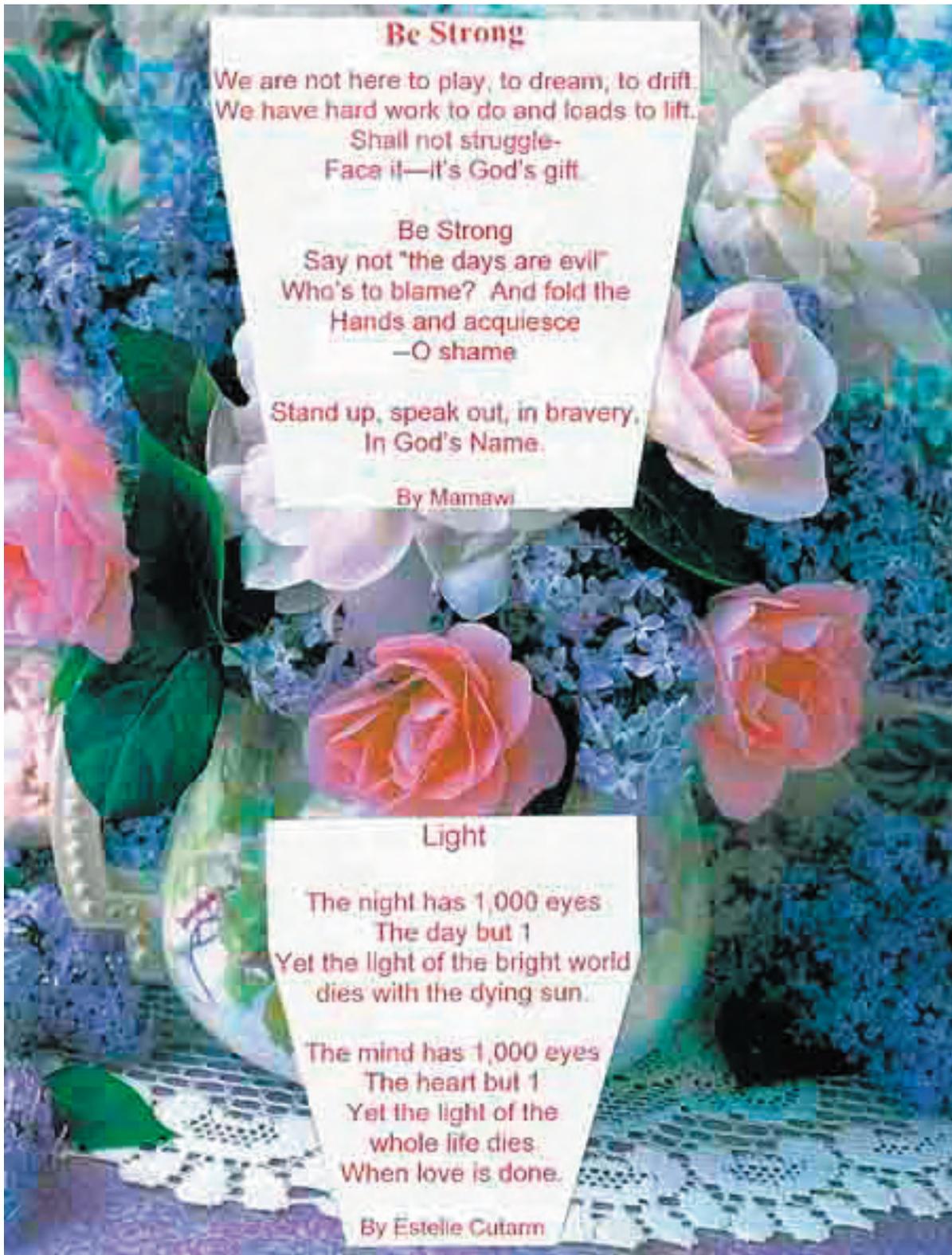
“Well,” exclaimed Sister Sayers, “if we all had such a self-denying spirit, we would be able to fill another box immediately. I will never again think that I am too poor to give.”

Perhaps the Lord will not make us wealthy if we give sacrificially, however there is the promised blessing that all our needs will be supplied.

“I have been young, and now am

*old; yet have I not seen the
righteous forsaken, nor his seed
begging for bread,” Ps. 27:25.*

*“Every man according as he
purposeth in his heart, so let him
give; not grudgingly, or of
necessity: for God loveth a
cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians
9:7.*



Be Strong

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift.
We have hard work to do and loads to lift.
Shall not struggle-
Face it—it's God's gift.

Be Strong

Say not "the days are evil"
Who's to blame? And fold the
Hands and acquiesce
—O shame

Stand up, speak out, in bravery,
In God's Name.

By Mamaw

Light

The night has 1,000 eyes
The day but 1
Yet the light of the bright world
dies with the dying sun.

The mind has 1,000 eyes
The heart but 1
Yet the light of the
whole life dies
When love is done.

By Estelle Cutarr