

The Reformation
Messenger
VOLUME 19, NUMBER 10, OCTOBER 2012

**“The harvest is past,
the summer is ended,
and we are not saved.”
Jeremiah 8:20**

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

ABOUT THE COVER

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Great Escape

Part 1

Some time ago I saw a sculpture in a store front. It was a fitting description of slavery. It strikingly depicted a man who was chained about his waist. This abject-looking character bore all the elements of enslavement. The artist captured a wretched, tired-looking creature showing deep pain, yet he had a seemingly resigned look of acceptance of his situation. There was one additional feature that nearly escaped my eyes. One link of the chain was opened which suggested that all he needed to do was to undo it and he would be a free man.

SERVANTS OF SIN

Human beings are generally like the portrayal above, enslaved by sin, taken captive, chained to habits, chained to the deeds of the flesh, with no natural way of escape—a miserable life of bondage—servants, resigned, working for sure wages—death. When one looks around he sees men, women and young people, consumed in sinful practices, bearing all the elements and characteristics of the human, fleshly nature. The gall of sin which knows no bounds compels them, thus adding sin to sin while the link of the life gate is open for sure escape—freedom.

No less slaves are many, many professed, baptized, communion-taking church members, who still have an alliance with the sin-master, who encourage the “little foxes” in their lives to go under the fence of conscience freely—individuals who palliate with sin while holding up the “grace card”—yet fettered. More still are ones, filled with spiritual pride, knowing not that they are wretched, naked, poor and blind.

Unfortunately through the annals of time it impacts on the church as it is only as strong as its weakest link. “Like ancient Israel,” says the Spirit of Prophecy, “Her members have violated their covenant to live for God and Him only. They have joined with the selfish and world-loving. Pride, the love of pleasure, and sin has been cherished, and CHRIST HAS DEPARTED. His Spirit

has been quenched in the church.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 441–442

The sum reality is that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” In short, sin abounds. Since sin, however, should not have dominion over God’s professed people, it is imperative that His people *come out of darkness into His marvellous light* as the real culprit is exposed; so where sin abounds grace will much more abound. This article now seeks to focus on those who have named the name of Christ, those who are seeking to flee the cold grasp of the law of sin and death.

THE SIN MASTER

Who is really behind it all? According to the Spirit of Prophecy, “Satan works side by side with professed Christians; yet they are so destitute of spiritual discernment that they do not detect Him.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 442

“Satan sees the Lord’s servants burdened because of spiritual darkness that enshrouds the people. He hears their earnest prayers for divine grace and power to break the spell of indifference, carelessness, and indolence. Then with renewed zeal he plies his arts. He tempts men to the indulgence of appetite or to some other form of self-gratification, and thus benumbs their sensibilities so that they fail to hear the very things which they most need to learn.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 456

A CONTROLLING POWER

This said, the sin-master governs under what is called “the law of sin and death”—a cunning device that he uses. This seems to be the case in every dispensation and it is therefore no different in the church today. By so doing many do not acknowledge that they have left the Saviour behind; many do not confess that they are living powerless lives and do not believe that they can, through the help of Christ, live lives that allow them to escape from the corruption in the world through lust, and become partakes of the divine nature. Most dis-

turbing, many are comfortable in their situation, lukewarm—held with the cords of sin.

COMING TO OURSELVES

Individuals must therefore come to themselves. Appreciate that there is another power operating in the life as discovered by Paul when he uttered these far reaching sentiments: “For that which I do I allow not, for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not; I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. . . . But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Romans 7:15–21, 23

A QUESTION OF IMPORTANCE

Is there a clear cut way to get away from this slave-master that has such controlling sway? Many say, “I want to obey God’s holy law; many in their hearts express Paul’s sentiments. So is there a way?”

Dear reader, If you have acknowledged that you truly are seeking deliverance, and in utter desperation and like Paul, cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of this death?” (Roman 7:24), there is, praise God there is, where sin abounds grace much more abounds. If we trace Paul’s life, we see that he was no different in his lifestyle, and only when he found the secret of overcoming he could say words like, “I have fought the good fight. . . and there is laid up for me.”

The first step is remorse, essentially sorrow: “Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations,” saith the Lord God. Ezekiel 36:31. These stirring words in the book *Steps to Christ* come to life, “As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you realize your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. You see that

your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him,—what can you do to obtain it?” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 49

Oh dear one, then you are ready, like the Prodigal Son, to seek deliverance. With this reality there is one way and one way only out of this bondage, and that provision can be found through the great power of the gospel. When diligently entered, it “takes one out of bondage into His marvelous light.” It is for this reason that Paul says, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation.” Romans 1:16. Truly, it promises victorious deliverance, liberty, and if carefully followed, you could be a free man, a free woman, boy or girl even today. More than that, through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:4).

With this great objective let us go to the word of God. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little (Isaiah 28:10). Like the paralytic, you must believe it. When this revelation is understood, do not wait to feel whole, but by faith believe that you have been liberated. The Psalmist declared: “What is man, that Thou are mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him?” Psalm 8:4. Truly, when we consider, when we contemplate the merciful kindness of God in not leaving us in bondage under the subtle craftiness of the enemy of our souls, how He made provision from the first sin to rescue us, it should humble us. It should cause us to respond to His leading, His drawing, His ultimate escape route.

THE KEY

Set in the book of Romans is a particularly marvellous, calculated escape route that is largely missed. It is the key that will unlock the chain and will open a clear pathway to all who will



receive it. If deeply understood and carefully followed with all the heart we will find the Liberator, where freedom is wont to be had. Turn with me to Romans 6:1–12:

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that

so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

A REMARKABLE STRATEGY

God has revealed this sure strategy, this practical method to Paul. What is the strategy? That the only way out of this situation is that the current nature—the old man of sin—must die and a new man, a man born from above—a new creature—is risen to serve the living God in true obedience; now prompted by the influence and the power of the Holy Spirit, as He convicts us of sin through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

When one continues to read Paul's account (Romans 7:1–3) they will see that the strategy went even further than that; the mechanism that the law of sin and death uses is strengthened. The legal written code of the law is also dealt with in that process and renders it no longer able to be used as a conveyor to strengthen sin's hold. To bring it home, therefore, Paul used an illustration namely: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by

the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. . . For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Romans 7:1–8, 11. It is necessary that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, "because the carnal mind is enmity against God: it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7

Renouncing sin from the life is not a human possibility. It is a power outside of us. God in His mercy has inspired men like Paul to open to view His master plan to bring back man to Himself. This is a death and life situation. This strategy as it were, this light that has been swept under the carpet, cannot stay there and begs to be brought back on the table of present truth. This is indeed a step in the direction that opens the door that leads to righteousness by faith. This wonderful, inspired strategy goes beyond church membership, beyond human devising, one that promises to bring us out of bondage—"out of darkness into His marvellous light through Christ Jesus our Lord." Read it again! This is the answer! Baptism and Resurrection! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" Romans 11:33. Let us examine it.

A SYNOPSIS

To go back to our point, Paul used baptism by immersion as a grave that buries the old nature and when he rises, he rises as a new creature, having the spirituality of the law established in him. He further uses Christ as a pattern that just as He died and was resurrected, we too can walk in newness of life through the Spirit. More than that, in this new life we are counted as having the righteousness of Christ. More than that, if believed by faith, we will have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust and have become a partaker of the divine nature.

In this study we will analyze and seek truly to find out how all of this is possible as we take a detailed look at the verses under study and the methodical strategy.

ITS DESIGN

First, who is it designed for? Who was Paul addressing in his letter? It was not to the world; it was not to new converts who were thinking of joining, but in all reality it was applicable to God's people, to those who were previously baptized, after having received and believed the truth. It was to the house of Israel who professed to believe present truth; unmistakably, it was to those who did not allow the sanctifying power of righteousness by faith to be felt in their lives, and were again palliating with sin, forming again a union with their previous master. This is applicable to God's professed people today, yes, Modern Israel. His words: "How shall we, that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" Romans 6:2-3. In other words, how shall we that have gone under the watery grave of baptism continue to live as if we had not died?

Truly, he was lamenting the fact that professed Christians had once again entered into an association with the sin master and become slaves. Hearing of their moral declension, he opens with the question, "Do we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" His answer: "God forbid." In other words, it was inconceivable! Paul's argument is confirmed by the reality of his addressees; he was seeking to condemn sin in the flesh. Having been given the mystery of godliness, it is for the said reason that in Hebrew these words of exhortation and rebuke came, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Hebrews 6:1-6

Yearning to see men and women living victorious lives, he recaps what really was once delivered to the saints. His message therefore was not merely revival and reformation, but restoration full and complete in Jesus Christ. Indeed, as a reminder of their death and resurrection in Christ, knowing that its benefactors will be a power in the hand of God, he reiterates this truth as it is in Jesus. Similarly, God in His mercy continues in these last days, seeking to perfect a people so that His name can be glo-

rified as He sets forth a people, who through His son Jesus Christ can truly "keep the commandment of God and have the faith of Jesus."

While this may seem odd to be bringing this to ones who are already baptized, it does not seem to fit their expectation. Maybe they will be tempted to file it in the drawer of "been there, done that," nevertheless it is a model that takes one on the "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner" repentance road, which enters into the gate of liberty in Christ. We can be reinstated to our true position in Christ only in this way. In summary, when looking at the remarks of Paul he is actually speaking to a baptized people. Certainly he knew that it was to be profitable for advancing them in their spiritual lives, essentially to redeem the time as well. Today it is a true model when preparing a candidate for baptism, with its deep meaning and far reaching effect; with its motive over and



above as it were, church membership.

With this said, let us analyze his wheel of truth. Opened to view are four main elements to successfully escape from the law of sin and death. Namely:

1. Baptized into Jesus

"Know ye not that so many as were baptized into Jesus were baptized into His death?" Romans 6:3. The stage is set with a question. What does this mean? Having found the key, we need to unlock this powerful revelation. Let us first look from a twofold view. One, baptised into Jesus and two, baptized into His death.

Notice Paul could have just said: As many as were baptized, were baptized into His death. But he clearly included the word "into". *Baptizing into Jesus* must therefore go beyond being immersed into the water, more than fulfilling a church membership criterion.

The word "into Jesus" speaks volumes. The core meaning according to the dictionary of "into" indicates that somebody or something moves inside somebody or something, either physically or figuratively as it were, a change from one entity to the next—a transformation. It is for this reason that Paul says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Galatians 3:27. Another of the dictionary definitions is "cover something with clothing;" in effect, we can say we are now covered with the righteousness of Christ, as it were, hid in Christ. The sum of it is that at baptism your life of sin ended in the life of Christ. In actual fact the moment

you entered the watery grave you became a part of the body of Christ. You assume all the experiences of Christ. In like manner you are now to prepare to suffer with Him. It is no wonder that we are told to take up our cross and follow Him, And as Paul points out, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Romans 8:18

This is very important to understand at this initial stage as it will form the foundation of the life and times of this new creature that has been raised, a life hid in Christ in all its facets, from death to resurrection to a walk of a purified life. Ephesians wraps it up nicely for us “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” Ephesians 5:30

2. Baptized into His death

Similarly, when he states: we must be “baptized into His death,” what does that mean? Romans 6:10 tells us: “for in that He died He died unto sin once” (that is, He died for our sins, as in Him was no sin). It follows that if we are also baptized into His death we also die to sin. As we follow his reasoning note the word “therefore” to mean consequently or for that reason—what reason? That as a result of being baptized into Jesus, having put on Jesus, you naturally go the next step, “baptized into His death,” that is, crucified with Him. This is what Paul means when he states “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Galatians 2:20. Note that it contains the notion of self—“I”. Categorically then, at this moment in your experience, as when Christ went to the cross He took it upon Himself to die for the sins of the whole world, in like manner, when you and I die, we individually die unto sin once. How many have been baptized but have not been crucified with Christ? Only eternity will tell. While “by their fruits ye shall know them,” a warning has been given; “judge not lest ye be judged.” In heaven, there will be lots of surprises as many who one may think that will be there may not be and many who others think will be there will not. Indeed, we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

Let me pause to say the following: that the mode of baptism that Paul is referring to is by total immersion in water, and one must ensure that after thorough study, and a decision made by them, they are, or were fully immersed in water and not “sprinkled” as a form of baptism.

3. Resurrection

Now that the redemptive truth of baptism into Jesus has been opened to us, and the pall of sin is being put to

dust—buried into the watery grave—it follows that “we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:5), “knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him for in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.” Romans 6:10. As says Paul, “If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” Romans 6:5. It is said that the same resurrection power that attended Christ is available to us. Now “there is opened to us a door of communication with heaven—a door that no human hand or satanic agency can close.” *The Review and Herald*, May 17, 1906. We have passed from death into life.

4. Newness of Life

There is one additional aspect of this chapter under consideration that often escapes us and it is little spoken of: “that we shall also live with Him.” “For in that He died He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.” Romans 6:10. Paul declares: “Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Romans 6:11*

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” Romans 6:8. Christ declared, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” John 11:25. In another place He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. We are now called to tap into the vast reservoir of newness of life in Christ. We must believe that we are raised. Christ said He would be resurrected on the third day. The disciples gave evidence that they saw Him ascending into heaven. It is a fact; it happened. When we ascend from the water, we believe that we are raised to newness of life in Christ Jesus

Dear reader, this is the key. This is the answer to the sin problem. It takes place at baptism. Many did not comprehend this fully—its scope, its height, its depth, its all encompassing range. God be thanked—Christ crushed the slave-master’s head—truly He has set the captives free. Clothed now in the righteousness of Christ, woven in the looms of heaven, you become “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4. Peter says, “His divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” 2 Peter 1:3. Amen.

End of part 1. Part 2 will be in the November 2012 issue.

Rose Powell

Jesus' Amazing Grace Towards Us



Life is very fragile. Our time here is limited and is precious—that is why we should ever ask and take into consideration the following questions: Where did I come from? Why am I here? What does the future hold for me? The Bible says we have been created in God's image (Genesis 1:27). We are sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus, the Mighty King (Galatians 3:26). We are so precious to God that when Adam and Eve sinned, He gave His Son to die and pay the penalty for our sins so we could be free. He wants to restore us to His image and then, shortly, take us back to Eden, the home Adam and Eve lost.

The most popular song of our time is "Amazing Grace," written by John Newton. Newton's life, as sinful as it was, clearly demonstrates that the grace of God is greater than our sins. The only child of John, Sr. and Elizabeth Newton was born on July 24, 1725 in London, England. Thirteen days before his seventh birthday, his devout mother died of tuberculosis. His father, a commander in the Mediterranean trade, remarried the following year. At the age of 11, the young boy was taken on his maiden sea voyage and over the next seven years, he made several more trips. At the age of 18, John, a confused adolescent was press-ganged on board the HMS Harwich, a man-of-war vessel. Unable to hold up under its rigid discipline and unwilling to handle its daily routine, the defiant sailor deserted ship. After he enjoyed six months of freedom on the open sea, John Newton endured a long year of captivity in West Africa. There his dream of work and wealth turned into a nightmare of sickness and starvation while he served a cold-hearted English master and

suffered at the cruel hands of his African mistress. Soon after his release, the man of the sea became a master of slaves. At the age of 22, John—a wretched sinner—was converted from a daring blasphemer of God into a devout believer in Christ. His great deliverance took place on March 21, 1748 while sailing back to England from Africa. He and the crew of the "Greyhound"—a cargo ship—were caught in a violent storm, battered by monstrous winds and beaten by mountainous waves; the tired sailors were helpless as they battled against the raging seas, trying desperately to save their lives. For the young seaman, however, the day of salvation came. The hour of decision had arrived, the moment of truth was at hand, and in the midst of the chaos, confusion and fear, John Newton called on the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, crying out in genuine repentance for the Redeemer's tender mercies, and God saved him.

Over the next years he searched the Scriptures daily and studied its truth diligently, and at the age of 29 he became a growing disciple, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News of Salvation. After reading the Biblical passage of 1 Chronicles 17:16–17 and reviewing his own life in the light of David's response, God inspired him with this beautiful song, "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see." Only a merciful and compassionate Father and Saviour could inspire him with such words. John Newton received Jesus as his personal Saviour and Redeemer at a young age, but deepened his faith and commitment to Christ later in his life. He closed his life with these words; "John Newton, once an infidel and

libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, **preserved, restored, pardoned,** and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy.”

The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” How many people throughout the centuries have been saved by the grace of Jesus? You and I, dear reader, have been found by Jesus. Do you remember your life before knowing Jesus? When you lived in this world without any hope? I remember it, and today I can say it was chaos, living without Jesus. Why am I here? Sin brought us here, but there is a possibility for us to be restored by the grace of Jesus. This restoration can take place if you and I accept the only way shown to us by Jesus in the Scriptures, namely: being taught, believing and repentance—making our covenant with God through baptism, living a life of self-denial and surrender to Jesus.

As I said, life here is short, fragile, and our time is limited. The Bible is clear on how sin entered into this world and how God in His infinite mercy found a plan to solve sin’s problem. Why hasn’t Jesus come yet? As we read in 1 Timothy 2:4, it is because He desires all men to be saved. I believe I can state the reason in these simple words: How can He save the sinner without saving sin? How can He destroy sin without destroying the sinner? Putting it very simply, how can God get rid of sin without getting rid of you and me? How can He take us to heaven without taking the infectious sin with us that would spread death throughout the universe? As God’s word plainly tells us, this will not happen a second time; sin and its results never will come into existence in the earth made new.

At the beginning of this month, on July 2, 2012, I lost someone whom I loved, a brother of mine named Dan Anca. He was a shepherd; he died at 46 years old. An unexpected death took him away from this life. The last time I talked to him was three months ago, but just the day before his death he wanted to talk to me by Skype and I wasn’t able to reach him. Just as I came into my room, he left. So, I don’t know what he wanted to ask me or to talk about, but I know he was self-sacrificing for others. We know that we need to give our hearts to Jesus while we are still living. Many times, I used to go with him while he was shepherding 700–800 sheep. I remember how he called them to follow him through the mountains and valleys, and how much I wanted to

do the same, but I could not, although he had shown me many times how to do it. The sheep came after my brother and followed him because he spent much time



with them; my problem was that I just visited him from time to time. But the Lord taught me something from this experience. Much later the Lord would call me to pasture His flock—His people—and this was a lesson for me which I have learned. Jesus is the Good Shepherd and He goes before us, calling each one of His sheep. We need to spend time and humble ourselves in order to feed the flock. Once again the Lord showed me how fragile life is and how seriously we should work for the salvation of our families that are not in the faith, neighbours, friends, and relatives.

Let me ask you a question: Do you love your family indeed? Do you love people? If you and I love them, as we answer these questions, then we will really work for their salvation, telling them that Jesus loves them and that this life is a test in order to enter into God’s kingdom. Without Jesus we don’t have life, because He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the door, just as in the earthly sanctuary where sinners had to come to offer their sacrifices; in order to enter into where the altar of sacrifice was located, they had to go through the door. Jesus said, “I am the door, if anyone enters through Me, he will find pasture.” Let us bring our families, relatives, neighbours and friends to that door to Jesus. If we truly love them we will work for their salvation and bring them to the One who never rejects a repentant sinner. I remember how the death of a dear one, my Grandmother, made me think over and over again regarding the most important questions of one’s life, namely: Where did I come from? Why am I here? What does the future hold for me?

Let us hold onto our faith, my beloved brothers and

sisters, because what is laid before us are the promises Jesus made us—how He will create everything new again, as it was in paradise. At the end of the millennium, God transfers the heavenly New Jerusalem to the earth, and the final judgment takes place. After the earth is purified by fire, God recreates it in its original splendour. The new earth becomes the eternal home of the saved. “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5. (Revelation 21:1–2)
 The New Jerusalem is 375 miles square. The city walls are made of solid jasper and are 216 feet high, or 20 stories. The city’s foundations are precious stones,



now. The Bible promises that God will not allow the curse of sin to rise again (Nahum 1:9).

What a wonderful privilege to be saved and for Jesus to take us to heaven. Though we can never do this by ourselves, we can cooperate with the Spirit’s work, which Je-

sus has promised to carry out within us. Surely there is nothing that can compare with this! Knowing how wonderful heaven will be, helps us endure the “light afflictions” we experience here. God gives His people a reward that far exceeds the trials of this life. God encourages us to set our sights on gaining heaven and to not let anything in this world get in our way.

In closing this message, let us ask ourselves this question: Will we allow God’s Spirit to lead us to heaven? May God richly bless us as we walk with Jesus on this earth and may we say with all our hearts, “Yes, Lord You are worthy to receive all my worship.” Amen!

*In Christ,
 Nicholas Anca*



forming every colour of the rainbow. There are twelve gates—each made from a single pearl. The streets are paved with pure gold and Jesus’ presence provides light for the eternal day. We will never fear crime because sin has been destroyed. A beautiful river flows from the throne of God. God’s people are permitted to eat the fruit from the Tree of Life. It produces different fruits every month that perpetuate eternal life. Every month we will eat of the tree’s new fruit as we worship God for providing the gift of eternal life (Isaiah 66:23). Throughout eternity, Sabbath worship will remind us that Jesus created us and then died to save us.

God invites everyone to go to heaven, but not everyone will fulfill the conditions. The Bible describes those who will be in the city and those who won’t. Revelation 22:14–15. We can be sure to be in the city if we accept Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. It is not enough to call Jesus Lord. We must also trust and love Him enough to actually allow Him to be the Lord of our lives.

Do you know why God will not allow those who haven’t made Jesus Lord of their lives into heaven? They would rebel against God’s government again. If He allowed people to enter who haven’t allowed Him to rule their lives here, they would certainly not allow Him to do so in the new earth. Then sin would rise again and we would be right back in the same situation we are in

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But He Was A Leper!

**“Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria; he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.”
2 Kings 5:1.**

LEPER, COMMANDER NAAMAN

There was a commander, captain of the host, from the land of Syria, by the name of Naaman. He was a great warrior, brave and strong against the country's foes. A great warrior was Naaman. He had only one problem, but a huge one— he was a leper! A leper was banished from the congregation of Israel, family, society, and a curse was pronounced upon a leper by the Pharisees and physicians; one was also pronounced unclean by ritual law and was called 'the stroke' by Jews; and as God's judgment sent on the leper on account of sin; a fearful plight—a living death—regarded as an incurable contagious disease; considered simply as a symbol of sin; and said to be contracted by eating swine's flesh in warm climates (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 262, 263, 566; *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 417).

Leprosy, also known today as Hansen's disease, is a chronic, contagious disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae*, affecting the peripheral nerves and mucosa, causing permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs, and eyes. Tissue loss causes fingers and toes to be shortened and deformed and permanently disabled. The mode of transmission remains uncertain. Leprosy has affected humanity for over 4,000 years. It is still prevalent today! The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 1995 that between 2 to 3 million people were permanently disabled. The *leprae* bacterium has become resistant to earlier treatment modes, but now is usually curable by Multiple Drug Therapy (MDT). Leper colonies, however, still remain around the world: mainly in India, China, Romania, Egypt, Nepal, Somalia, Liberia, Vietnam, and Japan. The age-old social-stigma still exists.

Naaman had contracted that terrible, obnoxious disease! Leper, Commander Naaman! A great affliction, and in the midst of all his honours. He was, indeed, a great man in a great place; not only rich and raised up, but particularly happy for two reasons:

1) That he had been very serviceable to his country—

God made him so. By him, the Lord had often given deliverance to Syria, success in their wars, even with Israel. In Syria, leprosy caused only physical incapacity to perform required duties. But Naaman, as a leper, won no further victories for Syria, and this caused genuine concern.

2) He apparently was very acceptable to his prince, his favorite, and prime-minister of state; so great was he, so high, so honourable, and a mighty man of valour, but he was a leper, and under that loathsome disease, which made him a burden to himself and others.

No man's greatness, or honour, or interest, or valour, or victory, can set him out of the reach of the sorest calamities of human life; many crazy bodies are under rich and resplendent clothing, and every man has some "sort" or "buts" in his character, something that blemishes him or diminishes him, some dampness to his joy. He may be very happy, very good, yet in something or other, not so good as he should be, nor as happy as he would be. Naaman was as great as the world could make him, and yet the basest slave in Syria would not change skins with him!

A LITTLE GIRL

Now there was in his household a young girl, a captive from the land of Israel. There in the place of her captivity, she served Naaman's wife. What makes the story happen is her attitude and her convictions. As a captive maid, providentially carried captive into Syria, she had every right to despise Naaman, to regard him as an oppressor to be resented and destroyed. This servant girl, as became a true-born Israelite, consulted the honour of her country, and could give an account, though but a little girl, of the famous prophet they had among them.

Children should acquaint themselves with the wondrous works of God, that, wherever they go, they may have them to talk of (see Psalm 8:2). So as became a good servant, she desired the health and welfare of her master, though she was a captive, a servant by force; much

more should servants of choice seek their master's good. Servants may be blessings to the families where they are by telling what they know of the glory of God and the honour of His prophets.

LIBERATION THEOLOGY

So she came up with a liberation theology, but it focused more on her captor than herself. Instead of judgment against Naaman, she spoke good news to him. "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria!" she says to her mistress, "he would recover him of his leprosy." 2 Kings 5:3

That word from the girl sets some mighty things into motion. The king of Syria writes a letter to be given to the king of Israel. It is promptly sent on ahead by diplomatic pouch. It was believed that he could gain anything he desired of Elisha, "His" prophet. Ah! The message was sent to the wrong person, for the Lord wished the healing to be a public matter. Apparently a truce existed between Syria and Israel.

But, the lord Naaman, nevertheless, told by the king, "Go to, go," sets off for Israel. Actually, he goes off in a procession with wagon after wagon of stuff, including ten talents of silver, six thousand gold shekels, and ten sets of festal garments, along with his staff and guards, leading this entourage in a lavish chariot.

PARANOIA

Ah! But an odd thing happens. When the king of Israel receives the letter about Naaman's arrival, he becomes paranoid. He rends his royal garments, tears them in shreds, muttering about trickery. Clearly this is a trick by Syria's king! "Am I God," he cries, "to give death or life? . . . Just look. . . how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me" (2 Kings 5:7). So look at the poor king of Israel, kneeling there in shreds, seeing plots and trickery everywhere. Sound familiar?

But events do not halt with paranoia. Elisha, the man of God, hears about the king's reaction and sends him a message by prophetic pouch. "Let him come now to me," Elisha announces, "and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel" (2 Kings 5:8); saying, that is, "do not fear that war shall erupt because of your inability to heal Naaman. The Almighty God will deliver Naaman." In the

face of fear we must remember, "Lo, I am with you always." Mathew 28:20

By the way, notice that in this welcome is the same insistence on hospitality that is always characteristic of God's people. Foreign commander? Smitten with leprosy? "Let him come!" In fact, what the king forgets is that he is, by God, the chief officer of Israel's hospitality! At least that was what he was supposed to be.

MYSTIC PRESCRIPTION

Well, all of these events now lead to this scene at Elisha's humble little house in Samaria. Around the bend in the road comes Naaman's entourage. At first, only a column of dust on the horizon; but now as it lumbers up the road, Naaman gives the signal to halt. There in the noon-time sun is the squeal of axles on the carts, the shouts of



the drivers pulling in the reins on those treasure wagons, the clinking of the armour and swords of the guards. Then all the noise dies down. The dust slowly blows away and an eerie and tense silence settles in on the somber column, broken only by the occasional snort of a horse or the cough of a soldier clearing his throat. Otherwise nothing happens. Nothing at Elisha's little house or in Naaman's long convoy. Nothing—out in the bright sun! Silence! No movement! A mysterious calm!

Where is the prophet Elisha? Naaman designed to do honour to Elisha when he came in his chariot, and with all his retinue, to Elisha's door. (Those that showed little respect to prophets at other times were very deferential to them when they needed them). He presented at Elisha's door as a beggar for an alm. (Those that would be cleaned from the spiritual leprosy must wait at "Wisdom's gate and watch at the posts of her doors").

Naaman expected to have his compliment returned, but Elisha gave him his answer without any formality: 1) He would not go to the door to him, lest he should seem too much pleased, perhaps, with the honour done him. 2) Elisha, it is conjectured also, may have retired, at this time for devotion, was intent upon his prayers for the cure, and would not be diverted, or; 3) Because he knew Naaman to be a very proud man, and he would let him know that before the great God, all men stand upon the same level.

Finally after a few agonizing moments, Elisha gave him his answer without any formality, would not go to the door to him, but—there is discernable movement—a messenger comes quietly out of Elisha’s house, comes over to commander Naaman, saying: “Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.” 2 Kings 5:10. The method prescribed was plain: “Go wash in the Jordan.” This was not intended as any means of the cure; for, though cold bathing is recommended by many as a very wholesome thing, yet some think that in the case of leprosy it was rather hurtful. But, it was intended as a sign of the cure, and a trial of his obedience. Those that will be helped of God must do as they are bidden. A simple but mystic prescription from Doctor Elisha; Rx: “Wash in the Jordan, times seven!”

GEOGRAPHY LESSON

What is Naaman’s response to this bizarre prescription? He “became angry!” He was, moreover, disgusted! He became self-righteously indignant and insufferably defensive! Naaman blurts out for all to hear. “I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.” 2 Kings 5:11. And, because the thing was not done just thus, he fell into a passion, forgetting that he was a leper, and the law of Moses, which Elisha would religiously observe, shut lepers out from society—a leper, and therefore he ought not to insist upon the punctilios, the exactness of honor. (Many have heart humbled under humbling providences). (see Numbers 12:4).

That he was a petitioner, suing for a favour which he could not demand; and beggars must not be choosers, patients must not prescribe to their physicians. We see in Naaman the folly of pride. A cure will not content him unless he be cured with ceremony, with a great deal of pomp and parade; he scorns to be healed, unless he be humoured—gratified!

What ensues is a geography lesson about the rivers of Damascus compared to all the waters of Israel. He took it hard that he be sent to wash in the Jordan, a river of Israel, when he thought Abana and Parpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel. “Yes, this great man considered it beneath his dignity to go to the humble river Jordan, and wash. The rivers he mentioned and desired were beautified by surrounding trees and groves, and idols were placed in these groves. Many flocked to these rivers to worship their idol gods; therefore it would have cost him no humility.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 309

Yet God had called the land of Israel “the glory of all

lands.” So common it is for God and man to differ in their judgments. How slightly does he speak of the prophet’s directions! “May I not wash in them and be clean?” Yes, he might wash in them and be clean from dirt, but not wash in them and be clean from leprosy. He was angry! He thought that the prophet must do all and was not pleased that he was bidden to do anything—or he thought this too cheap, too plain, too common a thing for so great a man to be cured by—or he did not believe it would at all effect the cure, or, if it would, what medicinal virtue was there in Jordan, more than in the rivers of Damascus?

MONEY’S WORTH

Ah! But he did not consider that the Jordan belonged to Israel’s God, from whom he was to expect the cure and not from the gods of Damascus; it watered the Lord’s land, the holy land, and in a miraculous cure, a relation to God was much more considerable than the depth of the channel or the beauty of the stream. Which may be translated, “I want my money’s worth! A fair exchange with God.” Naaman sounds like a kid arguing with his mother. “Unfair,” he shouts. Just listen to his argument: “On my side, I’ve brought all the wagons crammed with talents and shekels, not to mention the ten festal garments.”

Then comes Naaman’s demand of God: “In exchange for all this stuff. I want some bona fide and dramatic ceremony!” As to the prophet’s prescription, “Wash times seven,” Naaman sputters, “Unfair!” (Which of course, some might add, it is!). It is common for those that are wise in their own conceit to look with contempt on the dictates and prescriptions of divine wisdom and to prefer their own fancies before them; those that are for establishing their own righteousness will not submit to the righteousness of God (see Romans 10:3).

Naaman talked himself into such a heat (as passionate men usually do) that he turned away from the prophet’s door in a rage, ready to swear he would never have anything more to say to Elisha; and who then would be the loser? “They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.” Jonah 2:8. Proud men are the worst enemies to themselves, and forego their own redemption!

WAGON JOURNEYS

Ah! But, we too, come with all our wagons. Oh, not filled with Naaman’s loot. But filled nonetheless. What is in our wagons for our fair exchange with God? Maybe a wagonload of promises to serve God if we are healed. Or a cart full of gifts for ministry and service if God will only put us in the right place. Maybe just some funds of substance if a memorial plaque is properly installed when we die. Who knows—only we ourselves—what we have

brought to trade fair and square with God.

What is in our wagons? What makes us think we have a claim on God? Are we loading up our wagons to cut a deal with God? These sorts of deals go on all the time! Many people go into the ministry to deal with guilty pasts. Church members may not pay indulgences any longer, but they still make contributions in the misguided notion that they are accruing some sort of credit for themselves! God cannot be bought, sold, intimidated or controlled. If God is to love us, it will only be because God wants to love us. Grace cuts through our deals! How do we respond to grace? We can flee it. Or, we can receive it like a child. What proud claim must we relinquish if we are to enter the water of grace? What simple response must we make to say to God, "I believe, Lord." Read on!!

SERVANTS AT WORK

Naaman is enraged. No prophetic gestures or incantations. No drama at high noon in Samaria. Only that word about the Jordan. Naaman stomps off hurt and angry in full sight of his servants—which is a good thing, because they care for him as much as that little Hebrew girl back in Syria. Naaman is standing off on a little rise, his back to the bunch of them, hands on his hips, staring off into the distance. Though at other times they kept their distance, and now saw him in a passion, yet, knowing him to be a man that would hear reason at any time, and from anybody (a good character of great men, and a very rare one), they drew near, and made bold to argue the matter a little with him. They had conceived a great opinion of the prophet (having, perhaps, heard more of him from the common people, whom they had conversed with, than Naaman had heard from the king and courtiers, whom he had conversed with), and therefore begged of him to consider:

"Father," they begin, "if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing" (had ordered thee into a tedious course of physic, or to submit to some painful operation, blistering, or cupping), "wouldest thou not have done it?" Knowing the answer of this brave and proud commander, they add, "How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" 2 Kings 5:13. No doubt thou wouldst. And wilt thou not submit to so easy a method as this, "Wash and be clean?"

It is a great mercy to have those about us who will be free with us, and faithfully tell us of our faults and follies, though they be our inferiors. Masters must be willing to hear reason from their servants (Job 31:13–14). If we don't obey God in small things, how can we expect Him to bless us with great things?

ANYTHING!

As we should be deaf to the ungodly, though given by the greatest and most veritable names, so we should have our ear open to good advice, though brought us by those who are much below us—no matter who speaks, if the thing be well said. The reproof was very modest and respectful. They even called him "Father!" Reproof must come from love and true honour, and that we intend, not reproach, but reformation. His servants were made use of by providence. They reasoned with him from his earnest desire of a cure, "wouldest thou not do anything?" Ah! When diseased sinners come to this, that they are content to do anything, to submit to anything, to part with anything, for a cure, then, and not until then, there begins to be some hope of them.

Then they will take Christ on His own terms when they are made willing to have Christ upon any terms. "Wash and be clean." "It is but trying; the experiment is cheap and easy; it can do no hurt, but may do good." The methods prescribed for the healing of the leprosy of sin are so plain that we are utterly inexcusable if we do not observe them. It is but, "Believe, and be saved;" "Repent, and be pardoned;" "Wash and be clean."

HOW MUCH MORE?

How much more? Yes, Naaman, how much more? Especially when this puzzling God sweeps aside all our bargains and offers us a simple gift of grace—free of charge. This simple thing. How much more, indeed? Ask yourself this question!

Look at Naaman now, going down to the Jordan. Naaman, upon second thoughts, yielded to make the experiment, yet, it should seem, with no great faith and resolution; for, whereas the prophet bade him wash in the Jordan seven times, he did but dip himself so many times—lightly. This simple thing; seven times, however, immersed there, plunged beneath the water of healing. Healing was obtained through obedience, on the seventh dip! Cleansing fountain; living waters! Amazing grace! Look now, coming up out of the Jordan, his skin like that of a child, to his great surprise and joy. This, men get by yielding to the will of God, by attending to His institutions and commandments. His being cleansed by washing put an honour, too, on the law for cleansing lepers. How much more, friends and brethren??

HEALING, WHOLENESS, NEW LIFE

It is likely that every person reading or hearing this wants what Naaman wanted (and received!) – healing, wholeness, and a new life. It is also likely, however, that most of us will not like the price of that wholeness – that we surrender control and trust in One whom we know by

faith alone. The instruction to go and wash in the muddy Jordan is the great question each of us face. Will we put away our angry expectations, personal agendas, pride, passions, and position, in order to receive the treasure of the kingdom? Well, will we?

But yet, God will still magnify His word above all His name. Naaman—clean, whole and born again—really! Convinced of the power of the God of Israel, not only that He is God, but that He is God alone, and that indeed there is no God in all the earth but in Israel (v.15). It was a happy cure of his leprosy which cured him of his idolatry, a more dangerous disease; as” moral leprosy is—of sin, covetousness, dissension, selfishness, strife, and unbelief, which make man’s service weak and inefficient

(*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 568, 562; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 327; *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1149; *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 160; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 82).

The prophet, Elisha, took fair leave of Naaman and bade him “Go in peace.” 2 Kings 5:19. Young converts must be tenderly dealt with!

To God be the glory! Naaman. Yes, Naaman, to God be the glory! Amen <><

John Theodorou
USA

News from Myanmar

Dear Sister,

Greeting to you all!

Thank you for your email and the pictures you sent. I could not see my pictures because my computer is destroyed and I am not able to buy a new one yet, but I hope the Lord will provide me one again.

The work here in Myanmar is growing step by step but we have to be patient. We are planning to have a group Bible study every Sunday starting next week. Some people are willing to join the church but they are not ready yet without hearing the teachings of our principles of faith.

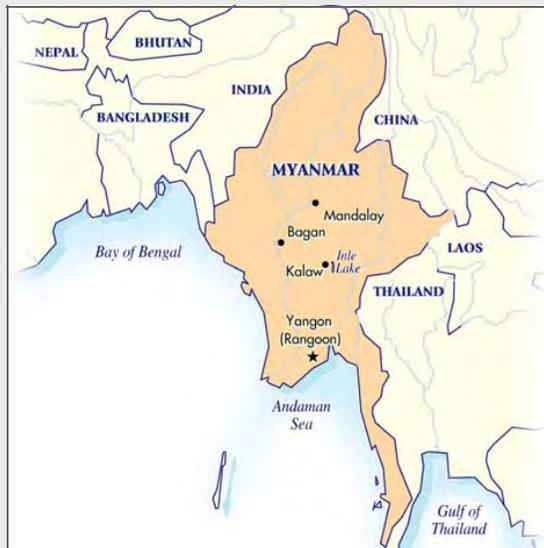
On the other hand, there are many sick people in Myanmar at this time. Even my family is getting sick one after another. Now my daughter, Grace, is suffering from dengue fever but I hope she will recover soon. I will be leaving to Matupi to give Bible studies and to conduct a baptism on Monday. I believe there will be more interesting news coming up soon. Please pray for this long journey. I have to be on a bus for 28 hours and there is no proper hotel. I have to sleep in a tent some of the time. I also have to cross a large river by boat.

Anyways, I am happy that the Lord is allowing me to visit our brethren who are hungry for the Word of God. I am sure this trip will be fruitful and blessed.

May the peace and the Joy of the Lord be with you all!

Your brother,
Suan, IMS Myanmar

Editors Note: Let us pray for our brethren in countries where the financial situation is difficult, and if possible, as the Lord provides, let us seek to assist them with the blessings the Lord has given to us.





Our Time

The time of mercy is running out—the precious time which was purchased for us by the precious blood of Jesus. Our time is a gift of God to us, which is given for one purpose only, and this one purpose is to secure eternal life for ourselves. The first chance we all have lost, and in His great love towards us, God, with supreme sacrifice, granted us a second chance. If we now take hold of this opportunity, we can be restored to the original condition and to eternal life.

“Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.

“The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 342

In the time of Noah, God gave time and opportunity for everyone to save themselves from the flood. For one hundred and twenty years, Noah invited the people to come into the ark of safety. He gave them warnings of the coming destruction, but sadly people were not interested; they did not even believe the message of Noah.

Today the same thing is happening. Jesus said, “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the

Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:37–39

In the time of Noah, no one could say that they had no chance; the door was open to everyone.

Also today, every person in the world can have salvation, but how few accept it. Jeremiah writes, “Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.” Jeremiah 3:14. In the Bible, the word “family” includes a larger number of people than a city. It means a tribe, all related to one another.

Isaiah writes, “Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uttermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel.” Isaiah 17:6

Many do not see the value of how we spend our time, even that our salvation depends on time only. When our time is over in this world, then also our chance for salvation is over forever.

Yet many do not see the value and purpose of the time that God has given them. There is a saying, that people want to **kill** time; and for that they use amusements, drugs, and alcohol.

Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes 3:1–8 that time is given for everything. He writes “time” in the singular form,

because there is only one time given to each person.

There is a time to be born and a time to die, and between these two things there is time to laugh, weep, and mourn; also a time to hate and a time to love. Also there is time for salvation, which billions of people are ignoring and neglecting.

If people would show love to each other, this would bring happiness to many lives. Children sadly look to their parent's graves, regretting that they showed so little love to them when they were still alive. Also we have time to love God and to love His truth. Paul writes, "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." 2 Thessalonians 2:10. Many professing Christians go to churches, expecting salvation and eternal life, but the truth that they try to obey for that purpose, they do not love; therefore they perish in the end.

Jesus said, "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." John 12:35. Jesus, "and when He was come over He beheld the city, and wept over it. Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19:41-44

The time of God's visitation is not the whole lifetime. The time of the Jewish people to be the church of God was over when they rejected Jesus. Any one among them who rejected Jesus committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is the unpardonable sin. One visit of a canvasser or missionary can seal the destiny of the people. Jesus said, "And whosoever shall not receive

you, nor hear your words when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." Matthew 10:14-15

To reject to hear God's messenger is a greater sin than the sin of Sodom and Gommorrha. Therefore Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14

Job said, "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." Job 33:14

Every person in the world will hear the invitation to salvation, they also have time for it, but very few will accept it and save themselves. Many children of Christian parents delay their commitment to the future, and ignore the invitation of God and often they never reach salvation.

Our time is short, the door of mercy is closing, and one day all will be too late. Then millions of professing Christians will give a bitter cry, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20

Our short time is worth more than millions of dollars in money—should we waste it, kill it, or use it foolishly?

"I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God." —*Early Writings*, p. 71

May the Lord help us to use this precious time wisely, and to fulfill the purpose of it. Not one of us needs to be lost; God's mercy is so great. Then let us all take hold of it. Amen.

Timo Martin



Health Matters:

Arthritis

Almost anyone can be affected by arthritis. Approximately 350 million people suffer from the condition worldwide. More than half of those with arthritis are under the age of 65 and nearly 60 percent are women.

Arthritis is the most common cause of disability in North America. More than 20 million individuals with arthritis have severe limitations in function on a daily basis. Absenteeism from work and school and frequent visits to the physician are common in individuals who have arthritis. Arthritis makes it very difficult for individuals to be physically active and many become home bound.

It is estimated that the total annual cost of arthritis cases is close to \$100 billion of which nearly 50% is from lost earnings. Each year, arthritis results in nearly 1 million hospitalizations and close to 45 million outpatient visits to health care centers.

Arthritis can make it very difficult for the individual to remain physically active, contributing to an increased risk of obesity, high cholesterol or vulnerability to heart disease. Individuals with arthritis are also at increased risk of depression, which may be related to fear of worsening symptoms.

Arthritis is a form of joint disorder that involves inflammation of one or more joints. A joint is a place at which bones meet. The muscles surrounding a joint make the bones move by contracting and relaxing. The muscle is joined to the bone by a fibrous cord known as a tendon.

The ends of most bones have a layer of cartilage cover-

ing them. The cartilage is smooth and slippery and forms a cushion that absorbs shock and also prevents bones from rubbing against each other.

The joint itself is surrounded by a membrane called the synovium or synovial membrane. This membrane produces a thick fluid called synovial fluid that protects and lubricates the joint. The synovium is enclosed by the capsule which holds the joint together with its fibrous bands called ligaments.

There are more than 100 forms of arthritis. The two most common are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis. It can affect both the larger and the smaller joints of the body, including the hands, feet, back, spine, hip or knee. The joints most affected are the weight-bearing joints. Risk factors for osteoarthritis include: prior joint trauma or injury, obesity, inadequate nutrition and a sedentary lifestyle.

A healthy joint has a lining of smooth cartilage and is lubricated by synovial fluid. Osteoarthritis occurs when there is a breakdown of the protective cushion of cartilage which surrounds the ends of the bones in a joint. The cartilage becomes flaky and rough, and small pieces break off to form loose bodies in the synovial fluid. This causes inflammation and irritation of the synovial membrane. The loss of cartilage also leaves bones unprotected and vulnerable to damage. The bone then becomes misshapen, and produces spurs that causes sharp points in the bone. The end result of the loss of

cartilage is that the two bones that form a joint begin to rub on each other. The capsule and ligaments also thicken slowly to try to stabilise the joint as it changes shape.

Overall, arthritis is a disease of inflammation. It can be caused by several different factors. These include: poor nutrition, heredity (it's in your genes), by injury, wear and tear to the joints during one's lifetime. Obesity puts excess pressure on the joints. However, in obesity, arthritis affects also non-weight-bearing joints, suggesting that fat-tissue produces chemicals and proteins that led to arthritis. A sedentary lifestyle also contributes to the development of arthritis. The synovial fluid that the joints produce to keep them lubricated is increased when we exercise.

What does not cause arthritis? Many people associate arthritis with aging. They assume that aches and pains occur when we get older, however, we do not develop arthritis as part of the natural aging process. It is actually a disease formed by what we do to our body through years of self-indulgence. It is formed gradually over our entire lifespan.

Rheumatoid arthritis is a disorder in which the body's own immune system starts to attack the tissues in a person's body. The attack is not only directed at the joint but to many other parts of the body. In rheumatoid arthritis, most damage occurs to the joint lining and cartilage which eventually results in erosion of the two opposing bones. Rheumatoid arthritis often affects joints in the fingers, wrists, knees and elbows. The disease is symmetrical (appears on both sides of the body) and can lead to severe deformity in a few years if not treated. Rheumatoid arthritis occurs mostly in people aged 20 and above. Often, it is not clear why the rheumatoid arthritis occurred, however, nutrition tends to play a role in its formation.

Regardless of the type of arthritis, the common symptoms for all arthritis disorders include varied levels of joint and muscle pain, swelling, enlarged bones in the joints, joint stiffness and loss of flexibility, and sometimes a constant ache around the joint(s), poor sleep, and fatigue. These symptoms are a result of the inflammation and the damage which has occurred in the joint. Initially, arthritis starts with minor pain while walking or using certain joints, but soon the pain can be continuous and even occur at night, affecting one's sleep. Secondary symptoms because of lack of physical activity due to pain result in muscle weakness and decreased physical fitness. These changes also impact one's ability

to enjoy life.

The medical community has determined that there is no cure for arthritis. The disease can only be managed by treatment, in order to prevent further damage, and to decrease pain and inflammation. Conventional treatments which people use are medications such as pain killers and anti-inflammatory drugs, many with side effects that cause other problems. Surgery to replace damaged joints is also common nowadays. These treatments only focus on managing the symptoms of arthritis. They do not address the actual causes of arthritis.

Because arthritis is a disease of inflammation, preventing inflammation will decrease the risk of arthritis, and can also treat arthritis once it occurs. There are several causes of inflammation in our body. Free radicals, which are a product of environmental toxins and also natural processes of the body, cause inflammation. Break-down of cartilage produces inflammation. Also, inflammation of the synovial fluid causes damage to joints.

Arthritis can be prevented with lifestyle changes that should occur at an early age and continue throughout one's lifetime. Even after arthritis develops, further damage can be prevented with lifestyle changes.

Joints become inflamed when they are stressed. To decrease the stress in your joints you need to have regular exercise to strengthen and improve the flexion of joints. Try to get at least 30 minutes of activity daily. Exercise also builds your muscles and your muscles support your joints. Weak muscles don't offer the support your joints need but strong muscles will keep them healthy. A sedentary lifestyle makes for weak muscles and increases the odds of developing arthritis. People with arthritis benefit from physical therapy to strengthen muscles and joints. Stretching exercises and swimming are two of the best ways to keep your joints happy and stress-free and your muscles in top working condition.

Stress is also caused by abusing your joints by overusing them. When home, at work, or at play, pay closer attention to what you put your joints through. Find ways to lessen lifting and carrying activities. Avoid things that put excess stress on your hips and knees. If your job calls for you to make repetitive motions on a consistent basis, make it a point to find ways to take some of the pressure off of your joints.

We need to maintain an ideal weight and avoid becoming overweight, or even obese. Weight loss will also

reduce stress on joints. Drink plenty of water to hydrate your joints and to flush toxins from your body. Certain herbs and supplements can also prevent arthritis.

And finally, we need to ensure proper nutrition. The foods that we eat can increase inflammation in our body. Therefore, to prevent inflammation, we need to avoid foods that cause inflammation, and eat foods that decrease inflammation.

Despite agencies such as the Arthritis Society, which claim that nutrition does not play a role in arthritis, hundreds of scientific studies prove otherwise. Another agency, the Arthritis Foundation boldly declares in their literature that there is no special diet for arthritis and that food has nothing to do with

causing it. However, studies prove that changes in diet have been proven to improve symptoms, and minimize and even prevent flare-ups of arthritis. Complete recoveries from arthritis have even been reported.

Certain foods increase our risk for arthritis. This includes foods high in saturated fats, uric acid and trans fats, (found mostly in meat and animal products) which cause plaque build-up in our arteries. Plaque decreases the blood flow in our vessels, which decreases the oxygen in our body. This results in decreased oxygen to our joints. Our joints have a sensitive blood supply, easily susceptible to blood vessel disease and impaired circulation. Reduced oxygenation of the joints interferes with the normal repair of bone that is ongoing throughout life. When the bone tissue is unable to repair itself properly (in an environment of inadequate nutrition) it develops tiny structural imperfections, which set the stage for joint degeneration and pain as we get older. The joint cartilage and articulating bone receive their nourishment and oxygen from both joint capsule fluid and small blood vessels. This delicate supply of blood can be easily impaired by smoking or a diet rich in saturated fat and deficient in micronutrients. Avoiding these foods can also prevent weight gain and obesity.

Foods from animal products including meat and dairy, which are high in saturated fats can cause inflammation. Because animal proteins closely resemble proteins

in the human body, our body's immune system response to these proteins can also attack our own tissues. These animal proteins create an inflammatory environment and, hence, immune dysfunction. Plant proteins are less likely to cause this reaction because they bear little resemblance to human proteins.

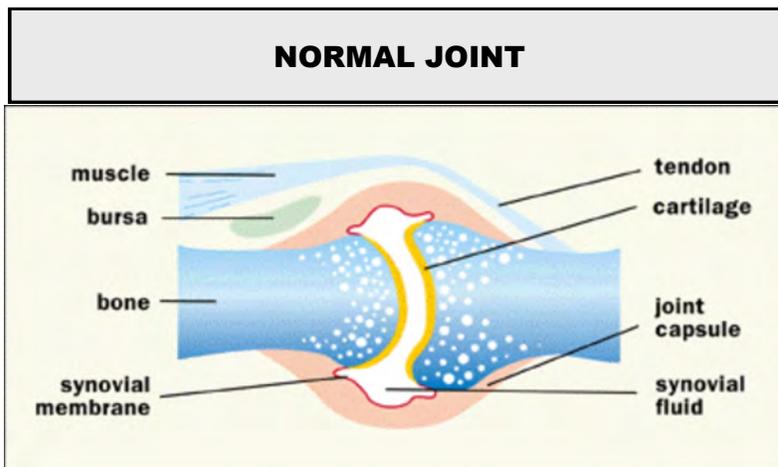
Trans fats—found in some baked goods, fast-food items, processed snack foods, and most stick margar-

ines—are thought to be at least as damaging (and maybe even worse) as saturated fats in terms of inflammation.

Refined carbohydrates are found in anything baked with white flour, such as white bread, rolls, crackers, and most baked goods—as well as white rice and processed cereals. They are all made by milling whole grains and removing the bran and germ—the two parts of the grain that contain the most nutrients. Refined carbohydrates produce a state of inflammation in the body, which makes arthritis worse. Switch to much healthier whole-grain options.

Simple sugars—found in foods like cookies, fruit juice, soft drinks, and **candy**—are also refined carbohydrates; they send your blood-sugar levels soaring and set off an inflammatory response in the body, making arthritis and its symptoms worse.

Certain foods decrease our risk of developing arthritis. Micronutrients such as Vitamin C, D, and E. Olive oil is a healthy fat; it also is high in the anti-oxidants known as polyphenols. Anti-oxidants prevent the build-up of free radicals in our body, which cause inflammation. Omega -3 fatty acids, in foods such as flaxseeds, actually work to decrease inflammation by suppressing the production of enzymes that erode cartilage. Foods high in beta carotene (vitamin A) have an antioxidant effect on cells, also neutralizing free radicals. Foods high in carotene include orange fruits and vegetables. Vitamin C is responsible for the health of collagen, which is a building-block for cartilage. Calcium is the main component of bone. Many people are calcium deficient, which leads to bones that break down more readily. This is a clear link to our diet as a cause of arthritis. Vitamin D is vital



because it assists our body to absorb calcium. Vitamin E protects against muscle-wasting and helps the body to remove toxins that cause inflammation. Vitamin E, like the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs used for arthritis, inhibits the chemicals that play a role in pain. Arthritis sufferers report less pain when consuming foods high in Vitamin E.

Many of the phytochemicals contained in fruits and vegetables are also powerful antioxidants. Phytochemicals are linked to the colour of the food. To ensure a good variety of phytochemicals, ensure a variety of different colours of fruits and vegetables in your diet.

Low levels of the mineral selenium are related to osteoarthritis severity. People who ate very few selenium-rich foods were

nearly twice as likely to have severe arthritis compared with those who ate a selenium-rich diet. One Brazil nut a day will provide you with an adequate amount of selenium.

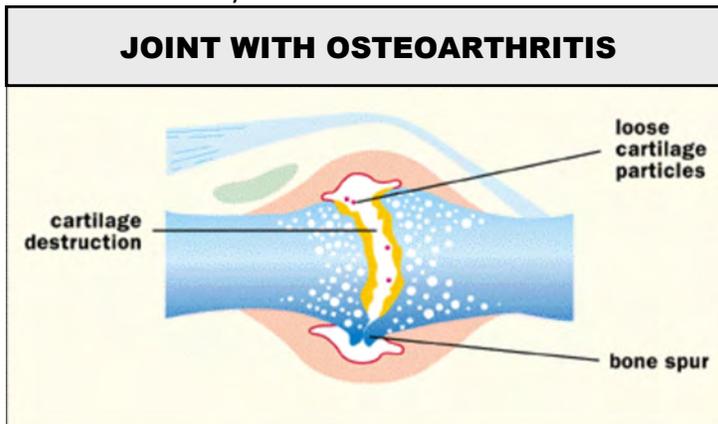
There are studies that show that a vegan diet may reduce arthritis symptoms. Vegans have diets that contain less saturated fats, and have more of a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

Osteoarthritis is a disease that can be prevented and helped via nutritional excellence. It is never too early to protect yourself with nutritional excellence. The same dietary indiscretions that allow both our brain and heart to age prematurely and that allow our blood pressure to rise with age, lead to the deterioration of

our joints.

However, even though we may take care of our joints throughout our lifetime, it is still possible to develop arthritis. Natural, non-drug treatments are available for pain control, to decrease inflammation and to rid the body of toxins.

If you suffer from arthritis, natural treatments can assist in pain control. These include: heat therapy and



Epsom salts. Heat therapy soothes and relaxes over-worked muscles and joints.

Herbal teas such as mint, wild yam, yarrow, yucca are also effective. Poultices of cayenne pepper, rosemary, chamomile, thyme, horseradish, fenugreek and mustard, placed on the arthritic joints will decrease pain.

Arnica cream externally, and turmeric internally, are also beneficial. Supplements such as glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM improve the health of joints.

Inflammation can be treated in several ways. Herbs such as ginger, chamomile, elderberry, feverfew, golden seal, nettle, yarrow, alfalfa, and black cohosh are good anti-inflammatory treatments. Certain herbs can flush toxins from the body. These include dandelion, parsley, horsetail, goldenrod, and burdock. Juices from lemon and pineapple also decrease inflammation.

We do not need to suffer from arthritis; prevention is possible. Good health habits and proper nutrition will ensure that our joints will remain healthy, well into our old age.

On That Day

On that day! Yes on that day when I shall have put on immortality.
 On that day! Yes on that day when I shall have entered into glory.
 Why it will be at long last when my wait seems it was but a moment,
 As rapt in awe and beauty my mind will not remember.
 I wait, I wait! Yes I wait for that day when my heart will sing that new, new song.
 Today though, I see through the eyes of faith though garbed in this mortality.
 Today, yes today I stand afar yet so near as I glimpse that day of glory.
 What a beauty, what a beauty, Oh that it was not for a moment,
 As rapt in awe I am arrested in His glory, Oh that I must remember.
 So till that day, till that day, my heart will sing, until it burst into that new, new song!

Rose Powell



Youth Conference: Italy

August 6-16, 2012

Approximately 70 young people from 18 different countries gathered together in the town of Giulianova, the headquarters of the Italian Field, for a youth conference. The church building in Giulianova is quite a large and spacious building and the dormitory style sleeping accommodations easily lodged the young people who attended. On Sabbath there were over one hundred people who attended, as there were quite a number of believers from different parts of Italy who chose to only come to the conference for Sabbath.

Giulianova is located 3 km from the beautiful beaches of the Adriatic coast, a short distance from the mountains of Gran Sasso and 2-3 hours from the capital city of Rome. The theme of the conference was, "Remember the former things of old." Isaiah 46:9

This was a wonderful opportunity for the youth to get to know each other as they spent time in spiritual pursuits as well as in social activities. At this conference there was time to work as each person was assigned to kitchen duty for an entire day. Usually there were four to five people on kitchen duty at the same time and this helped to foster a spirit of teamwork and unity.

There was also a time to study because there was at least one, hour-long spiritual meeting each day on the theme of "Remembering the former things of old." Lessons were drawn from the lives of prominent Bible characters and these lessons were seen as being very valuable and relevant to our spiritual lives because we

can learn from their mistakes and from the things they did right. This will assist us in our own spiritual walk.

On one day we also had several workshops running at the same time, with several different topics to choose from such as marriage and dating and a topic on music. Not surprisingly the vast majority of young people chose to attend the topic on marriage and dating, as this is a topic of interest to most young people.

Every day the morning and evening worship was presented by one of the young people. They were free to research and present any spiritual topic of interest to them.

On a daily basis also, there was time for recreational activities out in the parks and mountains. Mental and spiritual activity needs to be balanced with physical activity.

There was plenty of time to prepare special songs that were presented mostly on Sabbath. On Sabbath there was a beautiful rendition of the song entitled, "Who is this king?" performed by an international youth choir. In addition, Brother Richard and Brother Eric from Canada, two young people from Germany, and one from Holland performed, "Great is thy Faithfulness."

At this conference there was also a time to eat and the Italian Field showed their hospitality wonderfully by providing excellent meals with plentiful food.

Several excursions were taken, the first being a trip to

Gran Sasso National Park. It was wonderful to see the majestic mountains and valleys. It is refreshing to see that there is still some beauty in nature that exists in this world corrupted by sin.

The second excursion was to the city of Rome, the seat of the beast. In





DI FRANCA FAMILY

Rome, we travelled to view some historical sites such as the Coliseum, where many faithful Christians lost their lives, and the Catacombs, where many Christians hid from the wrath of the beast. The Vatican was seen in all its earthly wealth and glory—quite a contrast from the simple life that Jesus lived. Truly, it was seen how this city has been a battle ground for good and evil, between Christ and Satan. And, in the not too distant future, the beast will once again attempt to rule the world.



There was also time for missionary work. Two public meetings were held outdoors in the city of Giulianova, right in the city centre, on Tuesday and Thursday (August 7 and 9). The subjects of these public meetings were from the book of Daniel. On Tuesday as well as Thursday we

went out into the city of Giulianova a few hours before the meetings began, to do some missionary work in the form of handing out pamphlets, which gave details on the public meetings. The young people presented special songs during the public meetings and the song, “Shout to the Lord” was presented at both meetings as the theme song. Several visitors came to listen to the Word of God being spoken. Brother Franco Caputo and Brother Stefano Salemi were the ones responsible for bringing the message from God.

Sabbath is always a special day; a day when we can come apart and rest from our daily activities and focus on our spiritual connection with the Lord. On Sabbath, after the morning services, we had a spiritual youth program in the afternoon which was dedicated solely to special songs and powerful testimonies from the young people themselves.

All too soon it was the time that we came to depart. At this conference we can truly say that it was an all-round educational and spiritual experience. A true spirit of unity was seen amongst the young people and we are grateful to the Italian Field for making it happen. The youth are the future of the church—the ones who will carry the work of the Lord to its completion. Let us continue to pray that the youth will be strong and prepared for the spiritual battles they will face in the future.



SPECIAL MUSIC



CHILDREN'S CORNER



The Stolen Orange

“Mother will never know,” thought Flora to herself, as she took the large orange from the fruit bowl on the table, and, putting it in her pocket, went hastily up stairs.

She was expecting two or three of her little friends to spend the day with her, and had been busily arranging the doll her kind mother had given her; but while lingering about, waiting for them to come, she was tempted to take one of the oranges which had been placed on the table ready for dinner. She hurried from the room, but had not reached the top of the stairs before her brother’s voice stopped her, calling, “Flora, your visitors are here,” and directly there was a knock at the door, and she could hear the voices of Kate and Effie.

Flora ran quickly down stairs, but her face was flushed, and she felt miserable and ashamed as she met her young friends, and took them to the living room to speak with her mother.

Flora tried to laugh and talk happily along with her friends, but she could not forget how wrong she had been; and the dish of oranges sitting right before her on the table kept her sin ever in her mind. Besides this, not having been able to eat the orange she had taken, she was in constant fear lest she would pull it out of her pocket accidentally with her handkerchief, and thus be covered with shame in the sight of her young friends.

Poor Flora! She had sinned against God, and against her kind mother, and had spoiled all her afternoon’s pleasure for the sake of an orange. At dinner time she could not raise her head to meet her mother’s glance, who saw that something was wrong with her, and who said very kindly, “Flora, dear, you are scarcely eating anything—are you not well?” This made Flora ready to cry with shame and repentance. Her conscience was too tender to allow her to be happy while her sin remained unconfessed.



All afternoon they played happy games, in which everybody joined. After this the little girls went home, and Flora was left alone with her mother and father while the younger children were getting ready for bed.

Several times she had thought she had dropped the orange in some of the rough movements of the games, and had gone more than once quietly into a corner of the room to feel in her pocket if it was still there. Yes, it was quite safe enough. “How could I be so wicked and greedy?” thought Flora; “Mother always gives me as

much fruit as is best for me, and yet I have made myself a thief, and after all have not eaten the orange, or been able to put it back, and it has spoiled all my fun this afternoon.” She sat still, miserable and unhappy for a little longer, and then her resolution was made—she would tell her mother before she went to sleep

that night.

Slowly she walked towards the window where her mother was sitting, her heart beating rapidly. “Well, Flora,” said Mrs. Marshall kindly, “you seem tired and out of spirits tonight; have you come to wish me good-night?”

“Oh Mother!” sobbed Flora, “I have come to tell you how wicked I have been, and how very sorry and miserable I am;” and hiding her face in the folds of her mother’s dress, she told the whole story.

“Here it is, mother,” she said, pulling the orange out of her pocket, “and I don’t think I will ever see another orange again without remembering this bad afternoon.”

Very seriously, but gently, her mother spoke to her about her sin, and the consequences it had brought upon her. “I shall not punish you, Flora,” she said; “your conscience has been a sufficient punishment. I have watched your pale, troubled face all afternoon and would have wondered what was wrong with you if I had not seen you steal the orange when I passed the door, which was slightly open. Knowing what you had done, I was not surprised that you seemed unhappy all afternoon.”

“But can you forgive me mother, and believe that I will never do such a thing again?”

“I will forgive you, Flora, because you have confessed your sin to me; but remember there is God in heaven whose forgiveness you must ask as well as mine, whose eye is always upon you, and who is grieved when you do wrong. Go now, and before you sleep tonight, ask God to pardon you, and cleanse you from this and every other sin for the sake of His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

With a sorrowful, repentant heart Flora went to her room, and kneeling there asked God to forgive all her sins, and to help her for the future to resist temptation; but it was a long time before she forgot the stolen orange and how miserable she had been that afternoon.

Although we may think that stealing something like an

orange is just a small sin, remember Adam and Eve also stole a fruit and in God’s eyes it was not small. In the Bible we read, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10

“It is transgression in the little things that first leads the soul away from God. By their one sin in partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. Some may regard that transgression as a very little thing; but we see that its consequences were anything but small.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 573

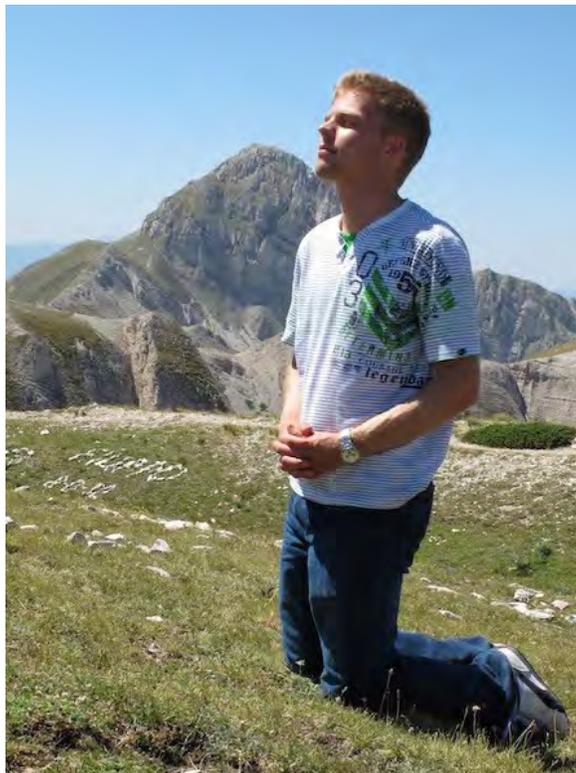
If you try to hide your sin, God sees it and will work on your conscience to try to help you see your sin and how terrible it is. If you ignore your conscience, then the next time you do the sin, it will not appear so grievous to you. Remember Jesus said, “For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.” Luke 8:17

“There is no excuse for sin or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and He wishes us to follow in His steps. He has suffered; He has sacrificed as none of us can, that He might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through His grace, we might be transformed into His likeness.” –*Faith and Works*, p. 49–50

The only way for true happiness to return is, as Flora found out, when the sin is confessed. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.” Psalm 32:1. Flora also decided to ask God to help her resist temptation in the future.

We need to pray the same prayer also—with the help of Jesus we can overcome every temptation that is brought to us

by Satan in the future. When Flora sinned, she was miserable. If she had not sinned, she would have had a happy time with her friends, but the happiness returned when she confessed. Sin never leads to happiness and peace until the sin is confessed and in our heart, put away.



Missionary News

Madang, Papua New Guinea

Dear Brethren,

Greetings from Papua New Guinea (PNG) with this quote from the pen of inspiration, "The world is the instrument that sifts the church and tests the genuineness of its members. The world holds out inducements that, when accepted, place the believer where his life is not in harmony with his profession. If you go forward toward heaven, the world will rub hard against you. At every step you will have to urge your way against Satan and his evil angels, and against all who transgress God's law. Earthly authorities will interpose. You will meet tribulations, bruising of the spirit, hard speeches, ridicule, persecutions. Men will require your conformity to laws and customs that would render you disloyal to God. Here is where God's people find the cross in the way to life." *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1102

On January 2012, we received an unexpected text message from our dear brother, Jerry Eaton in Canada, that, during his vacation, he would like to visit us here in PNG after a long absence. With joy we met together in March for a seminar; our theme was "Preparation for the Final Crisis."

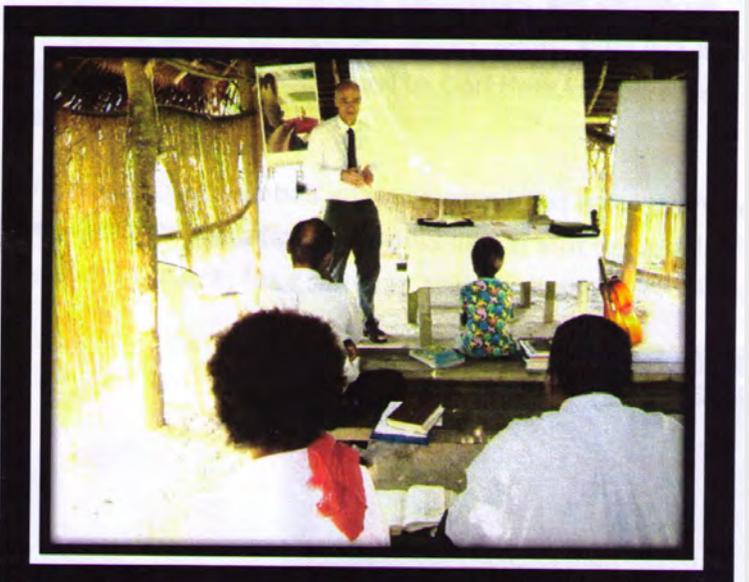
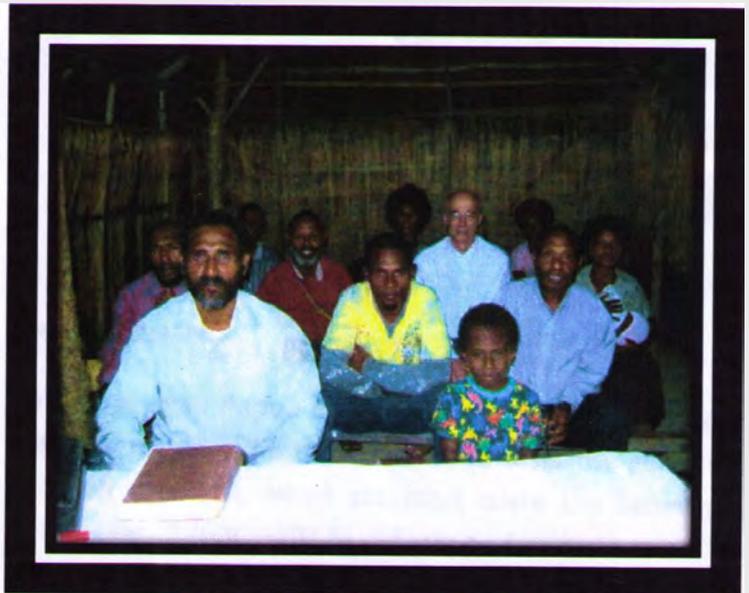
Here in Bogia (PNG), our home church faced many difficulties. Because of these difficulties, it is very sad to see that some of our members are no longer worshipping with us. In reality, brothers and sisters, we are heading towards the final crisis, but before this crisis reaches its climax, we saw seriously, that there is need for a preparation. We lift the name of our Lord for touching Brother Jerry's heart to come to strengthen us. Praise the Lord.

During Brother Jerry's flight to PNG, his briefcase containing much prepared material to present went missing. So we had seasons of prayer every day that the Holy Spirit would guide and help him remember what he had already prepared and present it without the notes. Praise the true God of heaven, He heard our poor, simple prayers. Brother Peter Dakire presented, "Our identity before and after the final crisis." Knowing that the closer we come to Christ, the more we learn to lean on Him. There will be no evil surmising, no fault finding, but more loving and forgiving of one another.

Brother Jerry presented 12 Characteristics of God's church. His topics included "The Sealing Message of the 144,000," "The Health Message," "What is Christian Strength?," "Where do the Muslims come from?" "Discipleship," "Confederacy and Unity."

We were blessed because the Holy Spirit brought conviction to many of our hearts. Amen. Our prayers are that the Lord will continue to use humble shepherds to feed us at this very time of need. God bless.

Bogia Group, Madang PNG



**BAPTISMS IN INDONESIA
BROTHER HY KARINDA (PRESIDENT OF THE FIELD)**



**BROTHER ONCE BANO FROM PAPUA.
AUGUST 26, 2012**

**SISTER FIN LAHONOMAN AND MISS
NONA KANALUNG. AUGUST 12, 2012**

**RIGHT: BELIEVERS IN
CHICAGO, USA**

**BELOW: COOKING
CLASS, LONDON,
ONTARIO
CANADA**





“Lay your burden of guilt on Jesus, and by faith claim His merits. Come now, while mercy lingers; come with confession, come with contrition of soul, and God will abundantly pardon. Do not dare to slight another opportunity. Listen to the voice of mercy that now pleads with you to arise from the dead that Christ may give you light. . . .

. . . Every moment now seems to connect itself directly with the destinies of the unseen world. Then let not your pride and unbelief lead you to still further reject offered mercy. If you do you will be left to lament at the last: ‘The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.’” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 353