



The Reformation
Messenger
VOLUME 23, NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2016

Our Value

Page 6

Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb

Page 18

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.

IN THIS ISSUE:

3 Old and New Covenant

6 Our Value

8 What is Sin?

12 Sinlessness and Salvation

14 Go, But on Four Conditions

18 Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb

20 Does it Pay to Keep the Law of God?

22 Health Matters: Sleep, Part 1

24 Children's Corner: Mountains

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

- Telephone: 905-876-2518
- E-mail: imsessenger@yahoo.com
- Internet: www.imsessenger.org
- Mail: RR #3, 7899 15 Side Road
Milton, ON L9T 2X7, Canada

PHOTO CREDITS **F r o n t**

Cover Photo:

Helen Marttinen, Zion National Park, USA

Back Cover Photo:

Helen Marttinen, Zion National Park, USA

Inside Front Cover:

Helen Marttinen The Arches National Park, USA

Pages 7, 12, 18, 19, 24, 25

Helen Marttinen

COST:

Black & White x \$25.00 per year.

Colour x \$45.00 per year.

(Add \$10.00 North America and \$20.00 overseas shipping & handling)

Purchase all 22 years of the Messenger for \$200.00 (shipping included in price). Bound in books by year.

Catalogue is available upon request for all articles for 22 years.



Old and New Covenant

—the same as the Old and New Testament?

Many Christians assume that the old covenant corresponds to the Old Testament, and the new covenant, to the New Testament. This, however, is not a Biblical truth—and is, moreover, a dangerous belief, for it makes one lose sight of the true meaning and significance of these terms. God does not change, and there has always been only one way to salvation—faith in the crucified Savior and all that His sacrifice implies.

After God led His people out of Egypt, He brought them to the area of Mount Sinai. The Almighty spoke to Moses and said, “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: And Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:4–6

After hearing the Lord’s words, Moses related to the people the requirements of God and the blessings and promises attached to obedience. Of course, the people did not understand the deep significance of this covenant. God’s holiness, grace, and their ability to obey were far removed from them. They were merely theoretical concepts, and in practice they fell far short of God’s will for them.

“And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses re-

turned the words of the people unto the Lord.” Exodus 19:8

It was perfect obedience under the old covenant that would have entitled them to all of God’s promises. The law of God was the underlying basis of the old covenant. God was ready to fulfill His part of the covenant *if* the Israelites would faithfully perform their part of the agreement. The feeling of self-confidence that they could obey by themselves led to their terrible downfall. God certainly provided them with every possible means to take advantage of the plan of salvation. What the Jews neglected was their faith in Christ. Knowing that the contract was valid, Christ foresaw its worthlessness if entered upon with self-sufficiency. “Without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5

From Mount Sinai, with His own voice, God spoke His law to Israel. “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” Exodus 20:18–19

After God spoke His law to impress it upon their minds and hearts, He wrote it down on tables of stone. The Decalogue was not written on parchment or cloth but on a substance that would last permanently. He did not entrust any human hands with the sacred task of engraving the stone. This covenant was then ratified by the blood of an animal, offered as a sacrifice. Many

years before the solemn proclamation at Sinai, the law given first to Adam was communicated by word of mouth from generation to generation.

Besides giving the law of the Ten Commandments, God also instructed Moses to build a sanctuary according to the heavenly pattern shown him. In connection with this sanctuary, Moses was to establish a system of sacrifices, offerings, and ceremonial laws, which pointed to Christ. These various ordinances, feasts, and statutes were observed in Israel throughout the year. All of them pointed forward to Christ's first advent.

The Israelites were to look by faith beyond the symbols (types) to the reality. Unfortunately, the Jewish nation lost sight of the true meaning of the ceremonies and worship they were performing. All of the animals—bulls, goats, lambs, doves—that were sacrificed symbolically represented Christ. The blood of animals did not take away sins (Hebrews 10:4). By faith the worshipers were to see the slain Lamb of God and claim His sacrifice in their stead. It was not possible for them to obtain forgiveness and righteousness on their own.

At the death of Christ, the type met antitype, the shadow met reality, and the sacrificial laws were abolished (Ephesians 2:15). Never should one confuse the sacrificial or ceremonial laws and ordinances with the moral law; the Ten Commandments were not nailed to the cross.

THE NEW COVENANT

"This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; . . . I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:33–34

These words are found in the Old Testament, and they refer to the new covenant that the Lord will make with those who are willing to be molded and polished after the likeness of Christ. The law which the Lord wrote on tables of stone on Mount Sinai is the same law that Christ writes in the heart of the believer. Only those who are born again by God's Spirit can have salvation. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts man of his sin and leads the sinner to Christ.

Christ's purpose on earth, in addition to giving His life as the sacrifice for men, was to magnify the law and

make it honorable. For instance, the commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" goes farther than many think. Even looking at a woman with lust is breaking the divine principle. Not only is correct outward behavior essential; inward purity of thought is needed as well. ". . . The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2 Corinthians 3:6. Many believe today that strictly keeping the law will produce a righteousness acceptable to God. However, if one neglects the Holy Spirit's working in the heart, he degenerates and takes on the characteristics of Satan. Our righteousness is nothing but old, filthy, tattered garments unless Christ dwells in our hearts through faith. When we have this faith, we manifest the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23).

If the old covenant originated at Sinai, when did the new covenant begin? Strange as it may seem, the new covenant is much older than the old covenant! Let us not be misled by the terms "old covenant" and "new covenant." The moral law of the Ten Commandments was binding on Adam and Eve, otherwise they would not have sinned. As a consequence of their iniquity, they were punished severely. "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. God then made a covenant with the first human pair, promising them that the seed of the woman (Christ) would bruise the serpent's (Satan's) head (Genesis 3:15). Everyone who claimed this promise was granted pardon from sin—and grace and strength to overcome.

As in the Old Testament, so in the New Testament, God's way of salvation is through faith in Christ—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Hebrews 13:8. It is extremely important that we understand that man has always been saved by grace. Noah is a good example of this, for he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Genesis 6:8. He was saved in the same manner as you and I can be. God's condition for salvation was the same in the old covenant as in the new covenant. Otherwise, God would be unjust and inequitable in His dealings with men. There is only one standard which God uses to judge—perfect obedience to His law through Christ dwelling in the heart by faith.

The covenant made with Adam was renewed to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and many others. All of them understood the terms of salvation—by faith accepting the sacrifice of Christ, who redeems man from sin, since He took our place and died for us.



In Genesis 17:7, God made an agreement with Abraham, calling that agreement an everlasting covenant. It was made centuries before God proclaimed His law on Mount Sinai. Man walked by faith and waited patiently for the expected Messiah to come. When Christ came at the appointed time, He ratified that new covenant with His own blood on Calvary.

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the *everlasting covenant*.” Hebrews 13:20. “. . . Without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22

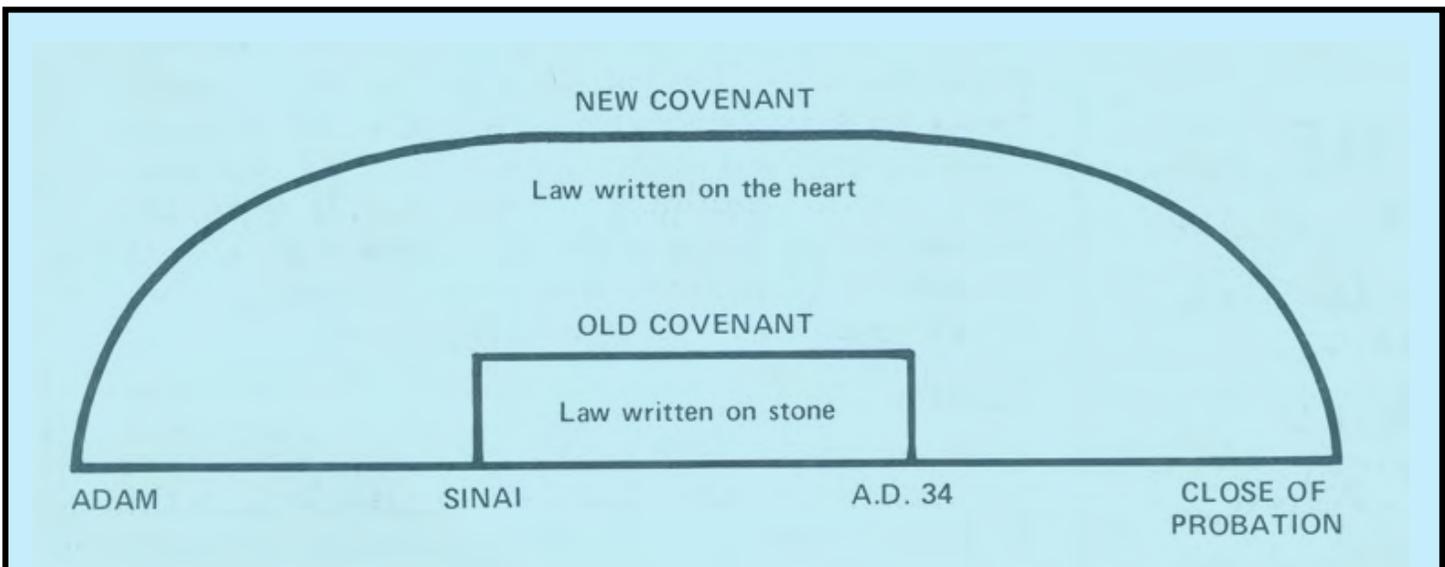
“God’s work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time,



there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enveloped His divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, stands revealed. He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the Sermon on the Mount. . . . The teacher is the same in both dispensations. God’s claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. For all proceed from Him ‘with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning.’ James 1:17.” –*Patriarchs and*

Prophets, p. 373

Henry Dering



The first covenant which the Lord made with men reached from Adam to our time. God has always dealt equally with all His children. However, when He brought the people of Israel out of Egypt and made them His nation, He formed a special covenant with them at Mount Sinai, which we call the “old covenant.” This old covenant, with all of its ceremonies and special laws, was “added because of transgressions.” Galatians 3:19. They had forgotten God and His plan and did not deal directly with God as the patriarchs had. This old covenant was limited to the Jewish nation from its inception until their rejection of Christ. The time of grace for the Jewish people, according to prophecy in Daniel 9:27, was to end in A.D. 34, and religious history confirms that it did. Thus today we are under the new covenant, characterized by a personal relationship between an individual and God, whereas the old covenant was marked by an intermediary priesthood and service.



Our Value

We are like containers, made of the dust of the earth, and our value depends on what is placed inside us. When you buy an item from the store, your purchase is normally put into a box or a bag, and you handle it carefully, depending on how valuable your purchase is. After you take out the item you bought, often the container is thrown out as a worthless thing.

We value things differently, what is precious to one person can be worthless to another person. Some value a work of art very highly, others value education, and many value entertainment and parties. Most people value money, and, wanting to get more of it, they are willing to work very hard. There are people who value themselves the most. They want to give themselves all the good things in life, and they always think about themselves. What people value most is their treasure, and we can know what their treasure is by their conversation, because everyone wants to talk about their treasure, what they value the most.

Paul had a treasure which was most precious to him. "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:5-7

This heavenly treasure in us makes us very valuable. Without this treasure, what is our value? "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, He taketh up the

isles as a very little thing. All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity." Isaiah 40:15, 17

But when the heavenly treasure is placed in us, then what is our value?

"And they shall be Mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth Him." Malachi 3:17

"In comparison to the number that reject the truth, those that receive it will be very small, but one soul is of more value than worlds beside." –*Evangelism*, p. 329

"One soul is of more value than the entire world." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 541

"One soul is of more value to heaven than a whole world of property, houses, lands, money." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 21

What is the value of the Holy Spirit, when He comes to dwell in us?

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" 1 Corinthians 6:19

This is the treasure that puts up our value from nothing to more than the whole world.

But there is a great deception. Satan puts in his unclean spirit and is pretending that it is the Holy Spirit of God. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Luke 11:24-26

Millions of Christians are deceived into thinking that they have the Holy Spirit while it is Satan's spirit that they have. They even do miracles with Satan's spirit.

"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22-23

We offer to people a mansion made of gold and of precious stones, in a city where the streets are pure gold, and also eternal life. But very few are interested in our offer to them, because the price is too high. People love sin so much that heaven and eternal life are sacrificed for it. Also, Satan has invented a religion that allows sin and yet offers salvation to its members, which is a great deception.

The few who are willing to put away sin from their lives are valued very highly by God, His promise to them is, "Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Isaiah 43:4

But if we, by carelessness, lose the Holy Spirit, then suddenly our value goes down to nothing. Time to time, God brings a shaking upon His church, and only the worthless members will be shaken out, who have lost the Holy Spirit.

The Bible gives many examples of people who committed sin against the Holy Spirit. In the time of Noah the whole world had committed the unpardonable sin, except one family. The Pharisees in the time of Jesus could not be saved. The Pharaoh of Egypt sinned against the Holy Spirit.

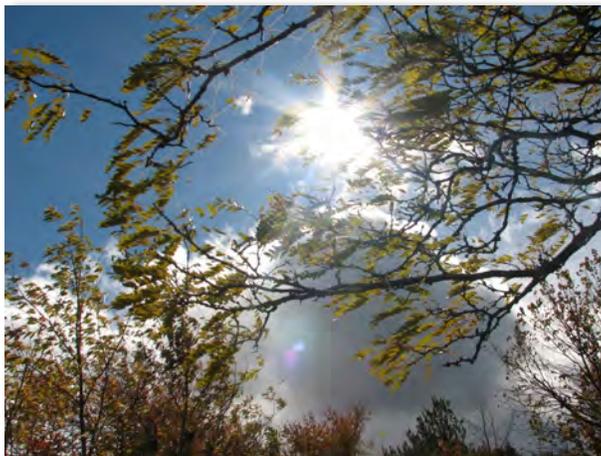
"God Gave Pharaoh Into Hands of Self. Every additional evidence of the power of God that the Egyptian monarch resisted, carried him on to a stronger and more persistent defiance of God. Thus the work went on, finite man warring against the expressed will of an infinite God. This case is a clear illustration of the sin against the Holy Ghost. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' Gradually the Lord withdrew His Spirit. Removing His restraining power, He gave the king into the hands of the worst of all tyrants—self." — *The Review and Herald*, July 27, 1897

Instead of losing the Holy Spirit, pray to God like Elisha did, for a double portion. Then your value will remain. "And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me." 2 Kings 2:9

God wants us all to have His Holy Spirit, which will strengthen us, comfort us, and secure us heaven and eternal life.

"The Comforter is called 'the Spirit of truth.' His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.

"In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and



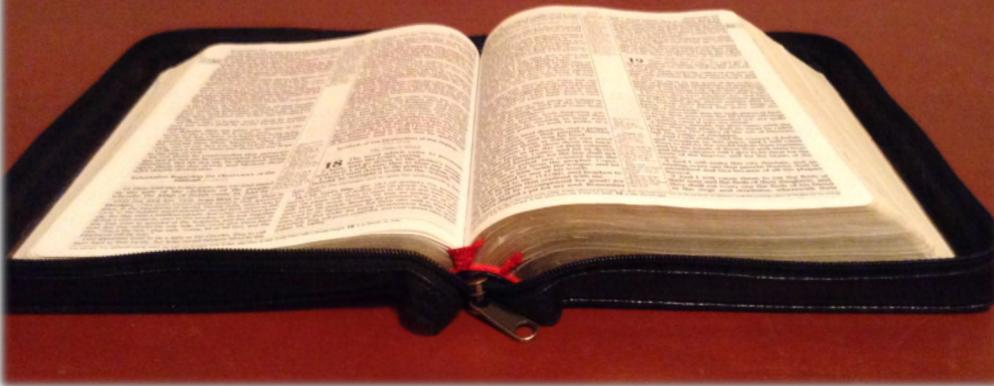
without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes

effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church." — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671

If you have nothing else except the Holy Spirit, you are one of the richest people in the world. Amen.

Timo Martin

What is Sin?



The clearest definition of sin is found in 1 John 3:4, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Literally translated from the Greek it is "the sin is the lawlessness;" in other words, a disregard for the Law of God.

There is clearly no salvation in sin. We have heard many times that our character is not changed when Christ comes; it must be changed today. The thought of being without sin, sinless, is overwhelming to many Christians. It is a goal that seems unattainable. It is a fearful thought to know that this is what is expected of us and we fall so far short.

There are different theories and discussions in the religious world about "sin" and "sinlessness". Many evangelical preachers do preach against sin; however, what is their definition of sin? Do not kill, steal, commit adultery and so on. All the last six commandments define sin, but the keeping of the Sabbath is not necessary. They set up their own standard of moral living and disregard the complete law of God.

Amongst those who believe correctly regarding the Ten commandments, there are different beliefs regarding when a person becomes sinless. There are those who state we must live a sinless life right now and today if we are to be saved; they claim it is possible to never sin anymore. Simply stop sinning. Is this possible without Christ? There are others who believe it is a progression. Today you sin less than yesterday. Then there are others who believe that you cannot possibly overcome every sin until Jesus comes, so do not bother trying and do not worry about it at all. Just leave it to Jesus. Who is correct?

We read in 1 John 1:8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And two chapters later we read, "Whosoever abideth in Him sin-

neth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:6, 9

Does the Bible contradict itself? Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." John 3:7. In order to be saved, we must be born again and if we are born of God we will not sin; however, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

This can become quite confusing. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Matthew 5:48 (emphasis mine). This is talking in the present tense. Yet, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. And, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:10

Simply put, "Depart from evil and do good." Psalm 37:27. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17. Do not sin, in other words.

The thought of leading a sinless life does cause some stress to some Christians who see themselves constantly sinning and falling short of the glory of God. Is there any hope?

"The transgression of God's law in a single instance, in the smallest particular, is sin. And the nonexecution of the penalty of that sin would be a crime in the divine administration. God is a judge, the avenger of justice, which is the habitation and foundation of His throne. He cannot dispense with His law, He cannot do away with its smallest item in order to meet and pardon sin. The rectitude and justice and moral excellence of the law must be maintained and vindicated before the heavenly universe and the worlds unfallen." *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 951*

The question is, "Can we live a sinless life? Are we expected to?" Jesus gave us His example which we are to follow, but He was God, was He not? Divinity clothed in humanity, yet still divinity was there.

"The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity, and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome." *—The Faith I Live By, p. 23.* "Christ passed over the ground where Adam stumbled and fell, and by a sinless life placed the human race on vantage ground, that

every one might stand before the Father, accepted in the Beloved." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 13. "The Redeemer has chosen them out of the world, and has left them His sinless life as a standard." —*The Signs of the Times*, July 17, 1901. "By living a sinless life He testified that every son and daughter of Adam can resist the temptations of the one who first brought sin into the world." —*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 226. Jesus did not use His divine power in a manner that is not available to mankind for the overcoming of sin. We can overcome every single sin today.

The question is, "Can we be sinless now?"

"Christ has made every provision for the sanctification of His church. He has made abundant provision for every soul to have such grace and strength that he will be more than a conqueror in the warfare against sin. The Saviour is wounded afresh and put to open shame when His people pay no heed to His word. He came to this world and lived a sinless life, that in His power His people might also lead lives of sinlessness. He desires them by practicing the principles of truth to show to the world that God's grace has power to sanctify the heart." —*Atlantic Union Gleaner*, January 17, 1906. It seems to indicate that we can lead a sinless life now.

In order to understand the two verses in 1 John 1:8 and 3:9 we need to understand that in the Greek there are two different words that are translated into English as "sin". Reading in Matthew 12:31 these two words are explained clearer. "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." The two different words used describe sin as: sin that can be forgiven and sin that cannot.

All sins can be forgiven except for the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. "The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven's invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 215

Later in 1 John 5:16–17 we read, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death." Two types of sin are mentioned here. A sin unto death (Sin against the Holy Spirit) and a sin not unto death, which can be forgiven, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. It is preferable that we do not sin, but should we fall into sin we can still find forgiveness to-

day. Praise the Lord. The "sin not unto death" is described as follows: "If through manifold temptations we are surprised or deceived into sin unpremeditated, He does not turn from us and leave us to perish. No, no, that is not our Saviour. Christ prayed for us. He was tempted in all points like as we are; and having been tempted, He knows how to succor those who are tempted." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 948

In this verse (1 John 5:16), John does not state a specific sin as resulting in death. If there was one particular such sin, he would have identified it so man would be aware of what it was. The sin that is not forgiven (which we will not commit if we permit Christ to live in us) is the open lifestyle of sin that refuses to change when reproved and corrected. All sin if persisted in, will eventually lead to death (sin against the Holy Spirit) unless repented of before the voice of the Holy Spirit is completely quiet. Thankfully, God's mercy is very longsuffering. "The blood of Jesus is pleading with power and efficacy for those who are back-slidden, for those who are rebellious, for those who sin against great light and love. Satan stands at our right hand to accuse us, and our Advocate stands at God's right hand to plead for us. He has never lost a case that has been committed to Him. We may trust in our Advocate; for He pleads His own merits in our behalf. Hear His prayer before His betrayal and trial. Listen to His prayer for us; for He had us in remembrance." —*Ibid*, p. 948

There is a difference between those who are genuinely wanting to serve God, but suffer from a weak will and strong habits; and those who deliberately commit sin in willful defiance of God.

In 1 John 3:6 when John uses the words "sinneth not", the Greek word used implies "does not continue to sin" or "habitually sin" (which would eventually lead to the sin against the Holy Spirit). The apostle speaks of the person who habitually sins as opposed to the occasional mistake which every Christian is prone to make. The ideal state is sinlessness and it is attainable by one who habitually abides in the protecting presence of the sinless Saviour. The form of the verb in Greek implies continuity. The Greek, "Hamartia" is used for the occasional sin, while "Hamartano" is used for the open lifestyle of sin. When Jesus said, "sin no more" (John 5:14), He used "hamartano". The minor sin that is quickly repented of is the "sin not unto death."

And in verse 9 where John uses the phrase "cannot sin" it is implied that having been born of God with His live-giving power dwelling within he cannot continue in his old paths. He follows the sinless ideals that have been implanted in his soul by the new birth. They hate the sin they used to love and love the virtue they used to despise. Their characters have changed. Paul said, "But what things were gain

to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Philippians 3:7–8. They do not continue as slaves to their old habitual sins; Divine power has given them victory over those weaknesses, and is ready to aid them in overcoming faults they were previously unaware of.

We cannot sit back and relax now, thinking that we are ok if we do an occasional sin as long, as we repent. No, not at all. We must strive to overcome all sin. We must tax all our energy to resist every sin. "The strongest temptation is no excuse for sin. No matter how severe the pressure brought to bear upon you, sin is your own act. The seat of the difficulty is the unrenewed heart." –*The Adventist Home*, p. 331. "Besetting sins must be battled with and overcome. Objectionable traits of character, whether hereditary or cultivated, must be compared with the great rule of righteousness, and then conquered in the strength of Christ. Day by day, hour by hour, a vigorous work of self-denial and of sanctification must go on within; then the works will bear witness that Jesus is abiding in the heart by faith." –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 449

"Christ came to make us 'partakers of the divine nature,' and His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin." –*Temperance*, p. 107

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 214

While we are striving to overcome will we ever come to a place where we can finally say we are sinless?

"We may always be startled and indignant when we hear a poor, fallen mortal exclaiming, 'I am holy; I am sinless!' Not one soul to whom God has granted the wonderful view of His greatness and majesty, has ever uttered one word like this. On the contrary, they have felt like sinking down in the deepest humiliation of soul, as they have viewed the purity of God, and contrasted with it their own imperfections of life and character. One ray of the glory of God, one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character. How can any one who is brought before the holy standard of God's law, which makes apparent the evil motives, the unhallowed desires, the infidelity of the heart, the impurity of the lips, and that lays bare the life,—make any boast of holiness? His acts of disloyalty in making void the law of

God, are exposed to his sight, and his spirit is stricken and afflicted under the searching influences of the Spirit of God. He loathes himself, as he views the greatness, the majesty, the pure and spotless character of Jesus Christ." –*The Review and Herald*, October 16, 1888

"Those who see the far-reaching claims of the law of God, those who realize that it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, will not presume to make the boast of sinlessness, and venture to declare, 'I am perfect, I am holy.'" –*The Signs of the Times*, May 23, 1895

"Those who take pains to call attention to their good works, constantly talking of their sinless state, and endeavoring to make their religious attainments prominent, are only deceiving their own souls by so doing." –*The Sanctified Life*, p. 12

"If we are doers of the word of God, we shall be followers of Christ, and our lives will be characterized by holiness in aim, holiness in aspiration, holiness in action, which is progressive sanctification. We shall have Christlike sympathy for all souls, both saints and sinners; but with this experience there will be no vain boasting of our sinlessness." –*The Signs of the Times*, May 23, 1895

"True sanctification will not lead any human being to pronounce himself holy, sinless, and perfect. Let the Lord proclaim the truth of your character." –*The Signs of the Times*, May 16, 1895

There are many men in the Bible who were very close to God. Can we say that they led a sinless life?

For example: firstly there was Abraham. He was called, "Abraham Thy friend." 2 Chronicles 20:7. "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." James 2:23. How sinless was the "friend of God"? He proved very faithful when he was called upon to sacrifice his son. The Lord had a very high opinion of him. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment." Genesis 13:19. However, we can read that he lied twice stating that his wife was his sister (Genesis 12:10–20; 20:1–3). And in listening to his wife, he took a second wife (Hagar) and bore a son (Ishmael) (Genesis 16). Are not these grievous sins? Yet Abraham found forgiveness when he repented.

"(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)" Numbers 12:3 "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Exodus 33:11. Moses was very close to God. He had the privilege of speaking to Him face to face. Early on in his life, he murdered a man. In the end of his life, you would have thought he would certainly be sinless, after so many conversations with God. Yet even he

made the mistake and sinned when he struck the rock in his old age (Numbers 20:8–12). And Moses also found forgiveness and is today in heaven with his Friend.

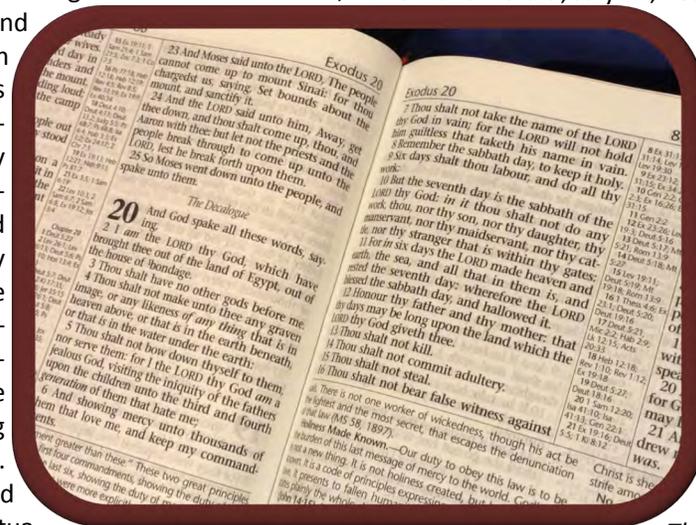
And what about David? “I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My will.” Acts 13:22. Surely a man who is described as a man after God’s own heart would lead a sinless life, would he not? Yet we see how he fell with Bathsheba, committing adultery and then murder (2 Samuel 11). Towards the end of his life when he should have been almost sinless, he was found to be numbering Israel after being counseled by Job not to do so (2 Samuel 24). The Lord’s anger was actually kindled against David in this instance. Yet David also found forgiveness after a sincere, heartfelt repentance.

And the Apostle Paul, after living so close to the Lord, preaching and teaching, and being saved from death in many miraculous ways, was found in Jerusalem performing a purification ceremony in accordance with the ceremonial law which he had been preaching for many years was unnecessary. He was completely contradicting his preaching, listening rather to the unwise counsel from the leading brethren (Acts 21:26–27). Yet God still overruled and used Paul in his prison situation. At the end of his life he was confident that the Lord had a crown prepared for him in heaven when He would return to take His redeemed home (2 Timothy 4:7).

When some Christians think of salvation they stress about whether they are saved or lost. They see their sin, they know the standard and they are discouraged when they see they fall so far short of it. “We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. Say with the apostle Paul, ‘I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me’ (Galatians 2:20). Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 70–72

“Christ imputes to us His sinless character, and presents us

to the Father in His own purity. There are many who think that it is impossible to escape from the power of sin, but the promise is that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. We aim too low. The mark is much higher. Our minds need expansion, that we may comprehend the significance of the provision of God. We are to reflect the highest attributes of the character of God. We should be thankful of that we are not to be left to ourselves. The law of God is the exalted standard to which we are to attain through the imputed righteousness of Christ. We are not to walk according to our own ideas, and present before others in our example a human standard which they will follow; but we are to follow in the footsteps of Christ, and make straight paths for our feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. We are to keep the commandments and live.” —*The Review and Herald*, July 12, 1892



“Think of the possibilities and probabilities before us. We can have all the strength of heaven.” —*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 321–322

“What is the justice of God? It is the holiness of God in relation to sin. Christ bore the sins of the world in man’s behalf that the sinner might have another trial, with all the divine opportunities and advantages which God has provided in man’s behalf.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible*

Commentary, vol. 7, p. 951

When can we finally claim that we are sinless?

“Everyone who by faith obeys God’s commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 146

“We cannot understand the mystery of redemption. It is enough for us to know that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to die for us. The penalty of our transgression fell upon a pure, holy, innocent Substitute, even the Son of God. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we might at last stand before God clothed in the robe of sinlessness.” —*The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1903

“When the conflict of life is ended, when the armor is laid off at the feet of Jesus, when the saints of God are glorified, then and then only will it be safe to claim that we are saved, and sinless.” —*Signs of the Times*, May 16, 1895

May God help us to daily strive to reach a higher and holier standard. Amen. **Wendy Eaton**



Sinlessness and Salvation

The Claim to Sinlessness [EXCERPT FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY ELLEN G. WHITE AT SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 7, 1885.]

“Says John, in speaking of the deceiver that doeth great wonders: He shall make an image to the beast, and shall cause all to receive his mark. Will you please to consider this matter? Search the Scriptures, and see. There is a wonder-working power to appear: and it will be when men are claiming sanctification, and holiness, lifting themselves up higher and higher and boasting of themselves.

“Look at Moses and the prophets; look at Daniel and Joseph and Elijah. Look at these men, and find me one sentence where they ever claimed to be sinless. The very soul that is in close relation to Christ, beholding His purity and excellency, will fall before Him with shamefacedness.

“Daniel was a man to whom God had given great skill and learning, and when he fasted the angel came to him and said, ‘Thou art greatly beloved.’ And he fell prostrate before the angel. He did not say, ‘Lord, I have been very faithful to You and I have done everything to honor You and defend Your word and name. Lord, You know how faithful I was at the king’s table, and how I maintained my integrity when they cast me into the den of lions.’ Was that the way Daniel prayed to God?

“No; he prayed and confessed his sins, and said, Hear O

Lord, and deliver; we have departed from Thy Word and have sinned. And when he saw the angel, he said, My comeliness was turned into corruption. He could not look upon the angel’s face, and he had no strength; it was all gone. So the angel came to him and set him upon his knees. He could not behold him then. And then the angel came to him with the appearance of a man. Then he could bear the sight.

“Only Those Far From Christ Claim Sinlessness. —Why is it that so many claim to be holy and sinless? It is because they are so far from Christ. I have never dared to claim any such a thing. From the time that I was 14 years old, if I knew what the will of God was, I was willing to do it. You never have heard me say I am sinless. Those that get sight of the loveliness and exalted character of Jesus Christ, who was holy and lifted up and His train fills the temple, will never say it. Yet we are to meet with those that will say such things more and more.—*Manuscript 5, 1885*

Let God, Not Men, Declare It

“I want to say to whomsoever the glory of God has been revealed, ‘You will never have the least inclination to say, “I am holy, I am sanctified.”’

“After my first vision of glory, I could not discern the brightest light. It was thought that my eyesight was gone, but when I again became accustomed to the things of this world I could see again. This is why I tell

you never to boast, saying, 'I am holy, I am sanctified,' for it is the surest evidence that you know not the Scripture or the power of God. Let God write it in His books if He will, but you should never utter it.

"I have never dared to say, 'I am holy, I am sinless,' but whatever I have thought was the will of God I have tried to do it with all my heart, and I have the sweet peace of God in my soul. I can commit the keeping of my soul to God as unto a faithful Creator, and know that He will keep that which is committed to His trust. It is my meat and drink to do my Master's will.—*Manuscript 6a*, 1886

Not Until This Vile Body Is Changed

"We must establish an unyielding enmity between our souls and our foe; but we must open our hearts to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. . . . We want to become so sensitive to holy influences, that the lightest whisper of Jesus will move our souls, till He is in us, and we in Him, living by the faith of the Son of God.

"We need to be refined, cleansed from all earthliness, till we reflect the image of our Saviour, and become 'partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' Then we shall delight to do the will of God, and Christ can own us before the Father and before the holy angels as those who abide in Him, and He will not be ashamed to call us brethren.

"But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotlessness and infinite purity, we shall feel as did Daniel, when he beheld the glory of the Lord, and said, 'My comeliness was turned in me into corruption.'

"We cannot say, 'I am sinless,' till this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus, the blessed hope

is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; complete in Christ, robed in His righteousness and perfection. —*Signs of the Times*, March 23, 1888

The Assurance of Salvation Now

"The perishing sinner may say: 'I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17). I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised.'—*Justified by Faith* (a pamphlet published in 1893), p. 7. Reprinted in *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 392

He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, cannot be overcome. Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace. This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sin, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin. How thankful ought we to be for the gift of Christ's example. —*The Review and Herald*, Jan. 28, 1909

Don't Worry, Your Hope Is in Christ

"A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might."

Selected Messages vol. 3, pp. 353–356

LOOKING FOR YOU . . .

If you are interested in submitting an item for publication in *The Reformation Messenger*, please submit by email or mail.



Submit: Drawings, Announcements, Reports, Articles, Poems, Photos, Personal Testimonies and Experiences.



In this article we would like to study the four conditions that Pharaoh gave to Moses before he could free the Israelites from their slavery; and see how these conditions are being used by Satan on God's people in our time.

The children of Israel had been in Egypt for just over two hundred years where they were made to work as slaves. The time drew nigh when they should go back to the land of Canaan, so God sent Moses with a message to Pharaoh to let the Israelites go.

God warned Moses of Pharaoh's hardness of heart and that he would not easily let the Children of Israel go; hence God would execute judgments against the gods (or princes) of Egypt through a number of plagues until Pharaoh submitted and agreed to set God's people free. The Egyptians regarded quite a number of things as sacred and worshiped some of them; these included the Nile River, Frogs, Cattle, the Sun, and the Pharaoh himself. The plagues would be directed towards these very things held sacred, to lay their glory in the dust, so that the Egyptians could see that there was only one true God—the God of Israel, and that He alone deserved all the glory.

Upon his arrival in Egypt from the land of Midian, Moses informed the Israelites of the purpose of his return and then, accompanied by his brother Aaron, went to meet with the Pharaoh to deliver the message from God. The message was straight and to the point, "Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness," said Moses (Exodus 5:1). But Pharaoh replied with arrogance and said, "Who is the LORD, that I should

Go, But on Four Conditions!

obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go" (verse 2). So, instead of hearkening to God's command, Pharaoh decided to increase the burdens of the Israelites. From Exodus 7:16 we actually learn that God's message to Pharaoh was that he should set the Israelites free so that they may not only hold a feast unto the LORD but also "serve" Him. As long as the Israelites were serving Pharaoh, they could not serve God freely; and this is why God wanted their freedom. This principle applies to all people including those in our time: If we are servants of sin, we cannot serve God; if we love the world and its pleasures, we shall have no room for God's love or holy things in our hearts (1 John 2:15). This is what Jesus meant when He said, "no man can serve two masters," in Matthew 6:24.

Pharaoh's defiance against God's authority called forth God's judgments upon his nation. First came the plague of blood upon the Nile River (Exodus 7:17), second came the frogs (Exodus 8:3), third came lice (verse 16), and at this point Pharaoh's magicians had to admit that this was not magic, but the finger of God (verse 19). Fourth came the swarm of flies (verse 21) which made Pharaoh reconsider his position for he was now getting a little bit of sense of just how mighty God was.

First Condition: Serve God within Egypt

Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and told them that they were to go and sacrifice to God within the land of Egypt (Exodus 8:25), but Moses replied that they could not sacrifice to God within Egypt because that would corrupt their service with the abominations of Egypt. Furthermore, the Egyptians would take offence at the Israelites if they saw them sacrificing things that the Egyptians considered sacred; hence in order for their service to be accepted, the Israelites had to be separated from sin and sinners (verse 26–27).

Does Satan use a similar argument today? Indeed he does! When many are confronted with a call to righteous living, they make claims that it does not matter how one eats, dresses, or lives—what matters is the

heart and that we are saved by grace. But what they forget is that the grace of God teaches us “that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:12–13. Many times people fail to realize that separation from all that pollutes is the first law of God’s kingdom in order to be accepted as sons and daughters of God.

Paul states in 2 Corinthians 6:17–18, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” Very often when God has called for reforms and made explicit calls for people to separate themselves from Babylon, which symbolizes all forms of false and apostate religion, we hear sentiments such as, “No, you don’t have to separate from the church, stay within the boat and reform within, let’s all love one another.”

Many seek to carry out reformations within corrupt systems which show no signs of reform at all. This question begs consideration: how possible is it that one who knows what God’s will is can serve and fulfill that will within a system that does not recognize God’s authority or at least pretends to recognize God’s authority when in practice the opposite is true? Moses’ response to Pharaoh tells us just how impossible that is. Furthermore, Sister White even speaks of the early Reformers and how they had to separate themselves from their former churches because the religious leaders of those churches could not tolerate the light that God had given to His people (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 232). A similar case was when the early Adventists (commonly referred to as the Millerites, who later formed the Seventh-day Adventist Church) had to separate themselves from the protestant churches in the summer of 1844 when those churches had proven to be working at cross purposes with God in rejecting the first angel’s message (Revelation 14:6–7) and denying their members the opportunity to attend Miller’s meetings or even to speak of their hope in the Second coming of Christ in the social gatherings of the church (*The Great Controversy*, p. 376).

We can clearly see here that the reason why God wants us to separate from Babylon (Revelation 18:1–4), is not only that we should not share in her plagues, but also that we should be able to offer an acceptable sacrifice to Him; because in Babylon our minds become conformed to this world and we cannot distinguish between the holy and the common, we cannot approve what is that

good, perfect and acceptable will of God (Romans 12:1–2). This is why for those that choose to serve God within their corrupt systems, Jesus says, “This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:8–9

“There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in the last days. Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity. The state of corruption and apostasy that in the last days would exist in the religious world, was presented to the prophet John in the vision of Babylon, ‘that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’ Revelation 17:18. Before its destruction the call is to be given from heaven, ‘Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ Revelation 18:4. As in the days of Noah and Lot, there must be a marked separation from sin and sinners. There can be no compromise between God and the world, no turning back to secure earthly treasures. ‘Ye cannot serve God and mammon.’ Matthew 6:24.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 166

Second Condition: Go, but do not go very far!

After Moses responded to serving God within Egypt, Pharaoh modified his condition and said, “I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; *only ye shall not go very far away*: intreat for me.” Exodus 8:28 (emphasis supplied)

Pharaoh gave the Israelites their freedom, but he told them not to go very far! Why? Because he wanted them back! All he wanted was that they should have an illusion of freedom when in reality they were still slaves.

Why is it that many professed Christians today do not go very far in their Christianity, insofar as being Christ-like is concerned? Why is it that even those that profess to have physically left Babylon are in spirit and practice still in Babylon? The problem lies in not fulfilling



Christ's conditions of following Him: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23. Why is death to self imperative?

"The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is *not a modification or improvement* of the old, *but a transformation of nature*. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172 (emphasis supplied)

Membership in God's church, "comes not by belonging to the church in order to belong to Christ, but by belonging to Christ in order to belong to the church. And the difference between these two things is the difference between Christianity and the mystery of iniquity. The difference between these two things is the difference between the mystery of God (1 Timothy 3:16) and the mystery of iniquity (2 Thessalonians 2:7). The mystery of iniquity exalts the form, the name, the idea of the church, and then calls and sweeps and forces the world into that church—not for salvation, for salvation is not there, not for righteousness, for righteousness is not there. The people are the same as before, though they bear a different name. They conform to different forms of things than they did before, but in character, in life, in all that they ever were, they are the same as if they were not members of the church at all.

"But the church, the church of Christ, is Himself manifested. Therefore to belong to this church we must first belong to Him. And membership in this church depends altogether on our membership of Him. And being in this church depends altogether on being in Him. Then when we come into the church by coming into Him, and be in the church by being in Him that makes a new people. That changes the individual into another man. That makes him a Christian such as is Christ, Christ manifest.

"Then we need to consider ourselves daily, each one for himself, and ask, 'Am I a member of the church? Not because I am enrolled in the church book, but am I a member of the church because my name is written in the book of life? Am I a member of the church because I have given myself to Christ, and belong to Him, and live and move and have my being in Him?' Those who satisfy all these conditions are the only members of the church on this earth. It matters not how much we have our

names on the church book, nor how long we have been members of the church by joining what is an idea of a church in form—a collection of individuals, we will never be members that way." —1903, *Alonzo. T Jones, General Conference Bulletin*, p. 40

Although there is no salvation by simply having your name on the church books, church membership is an important part of salvation. Salvation is in Christ alone. One can be a church member without knowing Christ, however, one cannot know Christ without being led to be a member of the body of Christ—His church. To truly know Christ will result in church membership in His church.



Third Condition: Go, but only the men should go

Pharaoh still hardened his heart after the plague of the swarm of flies was removed. This brought the murrain of cattle (Exodus 9:4), the boils (verse 9), the hail (verse 18), and the locusts (Exodus 10:4). He then called for Moses and asked him, "Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go?" Moses replied by saying, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD." But Pharaoh said, "Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD." Exodus 10:8–9, 11

Here we find that Pharaoh wanted only the men to go, leaving behind their wives, children and possessions. This would have the effect of bringing the men back to Egypt.

Similarly, we see today that Satan is busy attacking families and causing division among them, even those of God's children. In many cases, only the men seem to care much about religion and exert much effort to study the Bible and share the gospel. In other cases, perhaps only the women are serious while their husbands are not. And still in other cases, many children of God's people tend to either rebel against their parents or simply choose not to be so serious with religion. This is all part

of Satan's plan, for he knows well that the unbelieving will always have a negative influence on the believing ones. God wants to save entire families; He wants the service of men, women, youth, and children. But Satan makes some youth and children to think that holiness is only something that can be achieved by elderly people while young ones should be left to indulge in whatever pleasures they choose—dress as they please, eat as they please, form associations with whoever they choose, amuse themselves with whatever they choose. In his first letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul admonishes the young man to “be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12. He does not say be an example **to** but **of** the believers; in other words, he admonishes youth to correctly represent the faith of Jesus before the world—their friends, families, and all with whom they associate.

What are you doing for your family to ensure that you go to heavenly Canaan with your young and with your old, with your sons and with your daughters? How shall you answer to the question, “where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” Jeremiah 13:20. Will you be able to stand before God and say, “Behold I and the children which God hath given me”? Hebrews 2:13

Fourth and Last Condition: Go, all of you, but your flocks remain

Since Pharaoh had not fulfilled God's requirement that all the Children of Israel go, not the men only, God allowed the plague of locusts to come and devour the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:13) and after that came the “darkness which could be felt” for three days (verse 21). This made Pharaoh to offer his fourth and last condition, “Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you” (verse 24). But Moses replied, “Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God.” Exodus 10:25–26

Why did Pharaoh want the Israelites to go to Canaan while leaving their flocks and herds behind in Egypt? It is simple, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matthew 6:21

It is a common saying that, “It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving.” How could the children of Israel go to hold a feast unto the LORD empty handed? How could they serve God while investing their wealth in Egypt? Is this Satan's plan today?

Jesus left us the gospel commission in Matthew 28:18–20 and in chapter 24:14 he states that the end shall not come until the gospel is preached to the entire world for a witness. So, what does it take for God's church today to reach the entire world with the gospel? Is it a question of numbers of members or of the size of the world? I think it is none of that! The real question to ask is: do all the professed members in God's church actually belong to the church? Christ left a small number of disciples (about one hundred and twenty assembled on the day of Pentecost) but that small number grew and reached the “whole world” in their generation. Is it a question of money? Maybe, but I still do not think so! God's people have money, but it does not *all* belong to the church, that is the problem. There is enough talent, enough ability, but the problem is, they do not all belong to the church.

This leads me to ask: If my money belongs to the world, do I belong to the church? If my talents, my abilities are put into the work of the world, as of the world, and not into the work of the church as of the church, then the question is worth considering, do I belong to the church myself?

How much does it take to compose me? How much is there of a man? Could you have a man here and his faculties yonder, his abilities in another place, and the fruit of his faculty, the fruit of his abilities, the results of his life and endeavor, in yet another place? Could that be, and the man is here—all of him? I say **NO!** All my faculties, all the fruit of my life, must be where I am if I myself am to be there. Then do I belong to the church, do I? Do all of God's professed Remnant People belong to the church? Do we? That is the question (1903, *Alonzo. T Jones, General Conference Bulletin*, p. 41).

In conclusion, Satan is playing the game of life with souls. He tells some to serve God in their sins promising them salvation in sin; and to those that choose to leave Babylon, he makes some be at ease with a superficial religion that does not involve an entire surrender of the will to Christ; and to some he weakens their faith through unbelieving family members or friends; and still to a larger number, he leads them to withhold their means, time, talents and abilities from God. May God help us that we may let nothing come between us and Him, that we may lay aside every weight and sin that easily besets us and run with patience the race that has been set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1–2). Amen

Mukelabai Mukelabai





Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb

archs and Prophets, p. 252, "Humility and reverence should characterize the deportment of all who come into the presence of God. In the name of Jesus we may come before Him with confidence, but we must not approach Him with the boldness of presumption, as though He were on a level with ourselves. There are those who address the great and all-powerful and holy God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, as they would address an equal, or even an inferior. There are those who conduct them-

While there is a lot of scholarly speculation about the mountains, Sinai and Horeb—some say that they are one and the same mountain, while others state that they are separate and not even found in the same region—today we will be investigating the Biblical significance and what that means for our lives today.

The first time one of these mountains is mentioned in the Bible is in Exodus 3:1–5. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

In relation to this astounding event, we read in *Patri-*

selves in His house as they would not presume to do in the audience chamber of an earthly ruler. These should remember that they are in His sight whom seraphim adore, before whom angels veil their faces. God is greatly to be revered; all who truly realize His presence will bow in humility before Him, and, like Jacob beholding the vision of God, they will cry out, 'How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' Although Mount Horeb was also known as the mountain of God, Moses entered into its terrain; and only after being commanded by God to take off his sandals did he come to reverence more fully the holy place."

Afterwards, God gave Moses his mission, "And He [God] said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." Genesis 3:12

And we can read in the Bible all about Moses' journey back to Egypt and about the trials that beset him there. After all these experiences, we find in Exodus 19 that "In the third month, when the children of Israel were

gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes. And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai." Exodus 19:1–2, 10–11

By the time the Israelites had arrived at Sinai, they had seen the mighty power of God. They saw how He delivered them by many miracles from Egypt; how He split the Red Sea, and provided manna for them each morning. The presence of God traveled with them by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Encamped by Mount Sinai, something very special happened. God told Moses to prepare the people by washing and thorough consecration, because on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." Exodus 20:18–19

With the thunder, lightning, and smoke, the people were very afraid, so Moses went up to talk to God instead. Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain for 40 days.

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. . . . And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel,

which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an alter before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast unto the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Exodus 32:1, 4–6

Yes, idolatry at Sinai, at the foot of the mountain of God, in the presence of God. The people who had seen for themselves the might of God, now turned back to their evil ways so quickly.

"During this period of waiting, there was time for them to meditate upon the law of God which they had heard, and to prepare their hearts to receive the further revelations that He might make to them. They had none too much time for this work; and had they been thus seeking a clearer understanding of God's requirements, and humbling their hearts before Him, they would have been shielded from temptation. But they did not do this, and they soon became careless, inattentive, and lawless." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 314

Many condemn Israel quickly, but when we think about it, we are often placed in the same situation: 1) Reverence in God's presence (Mount Horeb); 2) Idleness in our spare time (Mount Sinai) (still in presence of God).

It is my desire that we can take the lessons found at both these locations and apply them to our own lives. Amen.

Elaine Romero



Zion National Park ,USA

Does It Pay To Keep The Law Of God?



In our society today, almost everyone desires to do only that which will pay. So, we often hear the question: “Will this pay?” In this article, we examine if it pays to keep the Ten Commandments, the Law of God.

To a person without the presence of Jesus abiding in him, speaking of the law of God to him is to speak only condemnation. It is the sound of a death knell upon him. If so benumbed by the pleasures of sin, he may for a time or longer be insensible to its claims; nonetheless, it still demands his life! “Sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. And, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:20. It is also plainly said: “For the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23

If nothing is done, the transgressor must die for his sin according to the law. In the world, there is only one remedy for sin. The law is good for it leads the condemned to that remedy—Christ, through His blood. It is the great compass, pointing us back to where life is, in the Holy Scriptures; it is said to be our school master. “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Galatians 3:24. “In this scripture, [Galatians 3:24] the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1110

Now we know that to be in Christ, and to have Him in us, we must receive Him into our heart by faith, believing His word. Repentance and confession then follow. Immediately a new life begins! Condemnation has ended. The new man stands in front of the holy law and is

not afraid, for he is justified, forgiven. When the Holy God looks at him, He only sees the righteousness of His Son. He has moved from death to life (John 3:18 first part). “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1. Ah! What a wonderful spectacle!

Already we seem to have gotten ahead of the story! The law triggered us to seek a way to obtain an important asset, the asset of peace. PEACE is a short word. It has only five letters. Yet the world is spending billions in money to try to have it—external peace. The results show they have radically failed and are disillusioned. Even great peace think-tanks hold little or no hope of peace. They seek it in the wrong way! The only true way to have both inner and external peace has been stated above. Those in Christ, along with the psalmist, are able to say: “Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” Psalms 119:165

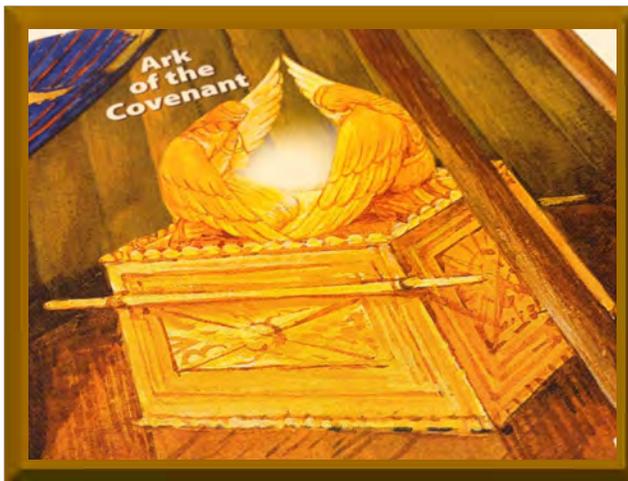
Not long ago, I asked Jesus if He had any words for me, as His child. I prayed that since He speaks to us through His word, I will open the Bible with my eyes closed, not knowing where I am to open it, so that it should be Him to show me where to listen. I did this to be sure the passage I will open is His voice to me. When I opened the Bible, it turned out to be 2 Samuel. 6:9–12. It is an inspiring instance, depicting how our dear God moves to bless all those who are very exact on keeping His law. “And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me? So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the

house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months.” (verses 9–11, first part)

The ark of God had long been at Kirjath-jearim. King David purposed to bring it to Jerusalem, his city, as a symbol of the divine presence. But, when it smote Uzzah on the way, David’s personal heart assessment revealed that he could not live near it or else it would cause great devastation in the presence of any impurity. But the man, Obed-edom, had a clear conscience; it was not at variance with the claims of the law. So the ark was taken to his house. What a wonderful privilege! For three full months he and the whole family gazed at it with reverence. Doubtless, now and again, they were renewing their vows to obey its precepts. Young children get anxious to know when something new is in the house. Imagine his young children asking to know what the box was. “Dad, what is that beautiful box?” He may have answered in a sweet tone: “It is the ark containing the Holy Law of God, the transcript of His character. It contains the binding claims of which I have been teaching you all along.” Had Obed-edom been cherishing a rebellious spirit toward the Ten Commandments or practicing known sins, his fate could have been similar to that of Uzzah, being smitten to death.

With keen interest, the whole of Israel waited to see what would become of this Gittite for taking upon himself such “risk”. Then inspiration leaves us with the following record of results: “and the LORD blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.” (verse 11, last part)

What followed? “The favor shown to the house of Obed-edom led David again to hope that the ark might bring a blessing to him and to his people.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 706. The news spread far and near, even unto king David of how the Lord had done bountifully with Obed-edom, His commandment-keeping servant. “And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that [pertaineth] unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. (verse 12)



The Lord, through His servant Jeremiah, speaks of His people, in the latter days, who will have the law written in their hearts. He writes: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers. . . . But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. . . . they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:31–34. To have the law in our inward parts means more than memorizing the Decalogue. It implies a strong conscience to discern evil and a strong will against sin. Actually, it means living out its principles, as did Obed-edom.

Now let us conclude in this way: Our dear brother of old, Obed-edom, was privileged to dwell in the physical presence of the Holy Ark right in his house. To us, that chance has not been given. Instead the law is engraved in our hearts. Despite this difference, the results of living it are the same. A free flow of blessings from above will follow all those that are exact keepers of His law in this life, together with their household and all that they have. When the perfect image of the Creator is wrought in us, the news will be spread far and wide of His blessings upon us. As our neighbours, with deep interest, seek to discern the secret of our success, the law of God will be presented to them as a condition for their prosperity. Many will come to know the Lord! More than this, Christ speaking to the revelator, in the spirit, looking down the ages to the time of eternal deliverance, talks of the characteristic of those that will have the right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city when he writes: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14. So, does it pay to keep the Law of God? With all confidence we respond in a sweet but loud tone: “Yes, it pays!” Amen. **Joel Msiska**



Sleep

Part 1

Rest and Restoration

“And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Genesis 1:4–5. In the beginning, when God created the world, on the first day He created Day and Night, light and darkness. He intended that man would have a daylight period in which to work, followed by a rest period which would occur when the sun went down.

Let us look at two concepts: Man was created with the need for a period of rest or sleep every 24 hours; and God designed that this would be accomplished in the darkness He called Night.

The rest period that God gave to man served a very important purpose. We all feel fatigued after a hard day's work and our bodies need a period of rest to recover. But, is sleep solely for physical recovery, or does sleep provide other health benefits? Sleep is necessary for survival. If sleep deprivation lasts for too long, death will occur. Lack of proper sleep also affects the immune system in detrimental ways, leaving us more susceptible to infections and disease. It is also necessary for our nervous systems to work properly. Too little sleep leaves us drowsy and unable to concentrate the next day. It also leads to impaired memory and physical performance, as well as reduced ability to carry out complex calculations. If sleep deprivation continues, hallucinations and mood swings may develop. Sleep also gives neurons (brain cells) used while we are awake a chance to shut down and repair themselves. Without sleep, neurons begin to malfunction. Sleep also may give the brain a chance to exercise important brain cell connections that might otherwise deteriorate from lack of activity.

The average sleeper takes about 7 minutes to fall asleep. Children fall asleep faster than the elderly. As we sleep, we pass through five different stages, from a very light sleep in Stage One where it is easy to be wakened, to the deepest part of sleep in Stage Four, then to the stage that

allows us to dream, called REM (rapid-eye movement) sleep. During REM sleep, dreams can be very intense, as our brains are more active during this stage. We move through the five stages of sleep in about 90–110 minutes. During the deep stages of non-REM sleep is when the body repairs and regrows tissues, builds bone and muscle, and strengthens the immune system. Babies can spend up to 50% of their sleep in the REM stage, compared to only about 20% for adults. REM sleep stimulates the brain regions used in learning. This may be important for normal brain development during infancy, which would explain why infants spend much more time in REM sleep than adults. Babies and children also have longer periods of deep sleep, which is why it seems that they can sleep through anything. As we get older, the amount of deep sleep decreases.

During the deepest part of sleep, growth hormones are released in children and young adults. Many of the body's cells also show increased production and reduced breakdown of proteins during deep sleep. Since proteins are the building blocks needed for cell growth and for repair of damage from factors like stress and ultraviolet rays, deep sleep may truly be “beauty sleep.” Activity in parts of the brain that control emotions, decision-making processes, and social interactions is drastically reduced during deep sleep; this rest helps maintain peak emotional and social functioning while awake. Learning and memory is also improved during deep sleep. Students who deprive themselves of sleep, cramming for a test or memorizing school work are affecting their ability to retain what they have learned.

How much sleep do we need? There are people who claim they can function on just 4–6 hours of sleep each night; however, adults who receive fewer than seven hours of sleep, even for just one night, have difficulty concentrating, impaired judgment, slowed reaction times, poor hand-eye coordination, and have more mood problems than people who sleep at least seven hours a night. Studies among adults also show that getting less than seven hours of sleep a night is associated with increased rates of heart disease, and death from all causes overall. Driver fatigue is responsible for an estimated 100,000 motor vehicle accidents and 1,500 deaths each year in the United States. Since drowsiness is the brain's last step before falling asleep, driving while drowsy can—and often does—

lead to disaster. If your sleep is frequently interrupted or cut short, you are not getting quality sleep. The quality of your sleep is just as important as the quantity. We need to cycle through the various stages to get proper, restorative sleep. Disrupting the cycle impairs the quality of sleep, even if we are woken briefly by noise, going to the wash-room, or from pain.

The length of sleep that is needed differs with age. Infants and toddlers can sleep up to 13 hours in a 24-hour period, which includes naps; school age children need 9–11 hours of sleep at night; adults need 7–8 hours of sleep a night. However, some adults can function on less, and others may need nine hours of sleep a night. The amount of sleep that each person needs varies from individual to individual. The amount of sleep needed tends to be determined by heredity.

Have you ever lay in bed, wide awake, unable to get that beautiful restorative sleep that you know you need in order to stay awake and function at a level that you need for the following day? What do you find usually keeps you from getting a good night's sleep? Is it the thoughts of all tasks that you need to complete? Is it worrying about the health of a family member? How about the spiritual condition of someone you love? Perhaps it is something simple as outside noise, especially for those who live in crowded cities. Or, are you trying to sleep during the day for various reasons? There are many reasons for poor sleep which have effects on your health, both on a short-term and a long-term basis.

As people get older, they sleep more lightly and get less deep sleep. Aging is also linked to shorter time spans of sleep, although the amount of sleep needed is the same as when people were younger. Often older adults nap during the day to make up for lost quality and quantity of sleep during the night. As we get older, our sleep also tends to be less restorative. Some of this is part of the natural aging process; however, some sleep problems can arise from poor health. Deterioration in sleep follows general health to a closer degree than it does true chronological age. For those who suffer from heart conditions such as high blood pressure, heart attacks, stroke and heart failure, sleep is especially compromised. Sleep problems unrelated to other health conditions also tend to get progressively worse with age, including sleep disorders such as insomnia, sleep apnea, circadian rhythm disturbances, and restless legs syndrome. More about this next month.

In our modern, fast-paced world, sleep appears elusive. Most people need to wake themselves up with some sort of alarm to get up in time for work, to take their children to school or to run all the errands that are needed. Not many of us are able to sleep every night and wake up when our body tells us that we are ready to awaken, re-

stored and refreshed. We often do not get the sleep that we need. Most of the world today is chronically sleep deprived. The amount of sleep that adults receive has been decreasing over the past 50 years to an average of seven hours or less a night. Technology, which has sped up the performing of mundane tasks of everyday life, has not lengthened the amount of sleep that people get. Most of us can function if we have one night of poor sleep, but for a lot of people, this is not the case.

Sleep is regulated by two body systems. When we have been awake for a long period of time, “sleep/wake homeostasis” tells us that the need for sleep is accumulating and that it is time to sleep. It also helps us maintain enough sleep throughout the night to make up for the hours of being awake. In this way, sleep/wake homeostasis creates a drive that balances sleep and wakefulness.

The second system is the circadian rhythm. The circadian rhythm dictates that there are ideal times within each 24-hour time period for our body to sleep, eat, and do activities. The hormonal and chemical changes that your body goes through in its circadian rhythm support certain functions that you *should* be doing during certain phases of the 24-hour period. Your circadian rhythm controls your sleep/wake cycles—it wants you to wake up in the morning when the sun comes out and go to sleep at night when it is dark out. As it gets darker out, your brain produces higher doses of melatonin, a hormone produced by our body, which signals that it is time to go to sleep and makes you drowsy. Before the era of electric lights, people would go to bed when it got dark, and woke up when the sun rose again in the sky, with the sleep/wake cycle staying in tune with the body's circadian rhythm. Now, with artificial lighting, we can have light 24 hours a day and our working hours are not dependent on the light from the sun. No longer do people only sleep when the sun goes down. Many people work shift work, or travel across time zones, or have illnesses which alter sleep patterns. What implications do all these have on our health? We will learn more about this next month.

“Sleep, nature's sweet restorer, invigorates the weary body and prepares it for the next day's duties.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 147. “Give yourself proper time to sleep. They who sleep give nature time to build up and repair the weary waste of the organism.” —*Medical Ministry*, p. 80

NEXT MONTH: SLEEP DISTURBANCES, DISORDERS AND WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR SLEEP





MOUNTAINS

MOUNT ZION

The definition of Zion is “the hill of Jerusalem on which the city of David was built;” also “the historic land of Israel as a symbol of the Jewish people.”

“When the LORD shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory.” Psalm 102:16. To me, this means He built it just for us.

Sister White described Mount Zion like this: “I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, ‘They will never fade.’ Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after. Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here; no, no; but light, and all over glorious; the branches of the trees moved to and fro, and we all cried out, ‘We will dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.’ We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion.” —*Early Writings*, p. 18

We just read that Sister White described the area around Mount Zion as “the most glorious to behold.” She goes on to say that on top of the mountain was a glorious temple, and around it were seven other mountains, covered with roses and lilies. There were also all kinds of trees around the temple, the box, the pine, the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate, and the fig.

The temple was supported by seven pillars of transparent gold with beautiful pearls. She also saw tables of stone which contained the names of the 144,000 engraved in gold. Sister White says in the same book that Jesus said “Only the 144,000 enter this place.”

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 14:4

Here John pictures them standing on Mount Zion, ready for holy service, dressed in white. But all who follow Jesus in heaven must follow Him here on earth first.

We can be part of the 144,000 but we must be faithful and love God above all. Mount Zion is a wonderful place and I want to be there, how about you? Amen.

Stephen Newby



MOUNT NEBO

Mount Nebo is in present day Jordan, overlooking Israel. God told Moses to go to this mountain. He commanded, "Get thee up unto Mount Nebo and view the land God gave to Israel, and then die."

Moses was now to depart on a new and mysterious errand. He knew he was to die alone. No earthly friend was permitted to minister to him in his last hours. When earlier his brother Aaron died, he died in Moses' arms.

But now Moses was alone. The severest trial was his separation from the people with whom his life had so long been united. For the last time, Moses stood in the assembly of his people. The Spirit of God rested upon him and he blessed each tribe—closing with a benediction upon them all.

Then Moses turned from the congregation, in silence and alone he made his way up Mount Nebo. Upon this lonely height he stood and gazed with undimmed eyes upon the scene spread out before him. The Land of Promise was presented to him—every part of the country was shown to him.

Moses saw the chosen people established in Canaan. Then it was shown to him the history after the settlement of the Promised Land—the long, sad story of their apostasy. He saw that because of their sins they were taken as captives to Babylon and then later restored back to their own land; at last to be brought under the dominion of Rome.

He was shown the time of Jesus, as a baby in Bethlehem and His humble life in Nazareth. He saw His ministry of love, sympathy and healing, and also His rejection by the proud, unbelieving nation.

As Moses beheld the final rejection of the people, his heart was wrung with anguish—bitter tears fell from his eyes to the ground.

He followed the Saviour to Gethsemane and beheld the agony in the garden, the betrayal, scourging and the crucifixion. Horror filled Moses' heart as he viewed the hypocrisy and satanic hatred shown against the Redeemer. These were his people. Moses prayed for the Israelites that God take his own name off the book of life if He could not forgive them. For 40 years he had patiently led them in the wilderness.

He saw Jesus dying of a broken heart. Moses' heart bursts in anguish, and he too dies of a broken heart. His strength was still unimpaired, his sight was perfect, but

he died on Mount Nebo—but yet. . . the two hearts that were broken will beat together in heaven.

Moses was shown the history of God's people all the way to the New Earth.

It was shown to him when Jesus, after the resurrection, comes to heaven, it is Moses who will open to Him the everlasting gates.



How small the trials and sacrifices of his life were compared with those of the Son of God. Moses rejoiced that he had been permitted, even in a small measure, to be a partaker in the sufferings of Christ.

The vision faded and he rested his eyes on the land of Canaan in the distance. Then, like a tired warrior, he lay down and died—alone on the top of Mount Nebo. But we know that he was not alone. Angels were there, and Jesus, his Friend, was near.

The angels buried him and watched over the grave. Moses was not a long time in the grave when Jesus came to take him to heaven. But also there was Satan. In Jude 9 it is written that Satan was fighting for Moses' body—he said, "he belongs to me. He had sinned, but Jesus said, "He repented of his sins and he is Mine."

Jesus resurrected Moses and took him to heaven where he is now.

So, remember, when you hear the name, Mount Nebo—remember that the greatest man that ever lived, aside from Christ, died on that mountain. Amen.

Tiffany Bessec

MOUNT ARARAT

Noah and his family began to build an ark according to God's command. It was a very large boat, and the people of the city made fun of Noah because, since they were sinners, they did not believe that water would come down from heaven. In fact, they had never seen rain before. When the ark was finished, and Noah, his family, and all the animals were inside, the door was suddenly closed by an angel and the rain started to fall.

It rained for 40 days and 40 nights. The water rose 15 cubits, which is about 22 ½ feet above the highest mountains. For five long months, the ark was tossed about. As the waters began to go down, God made this big boat to float to a group of mountains that had been preserved by His power. These mountains were a little separated from each other, and here the ark quietly moved about them, instead of being tossed about in open water.

"And the ark rested in the seventh month, of the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat." Genesis 8:4

Just like the ark found refuge in the mountains of Ararat and just like the angel told Lot, "escape for thy life,

escape to the mountain," we will too. In the time of trouble, when we will be persecuted, we will leave the cities and run to the mountains and we will be safe there.

"He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:16

Some will find safety in the mountains, but some will cry to them. Sister White says that some will cry out, "Rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" —*Confrontation*, p. 87. These people will also run to the mountains, not to find safety but to hide from God.

When Jesus comes, there will be two kinds of people, the obedient and the disobedient. Which will we be?

It is my wish and prayer that we may listen to God no matter what. So that when He comes in the clouds, we will be happy to see Him and not be afraid. Amen.

Sarah Newby

Believers in Jamaica



Congo



Left: Ten new souls baptized on December 6. Here they are holding their baptismal certificates.

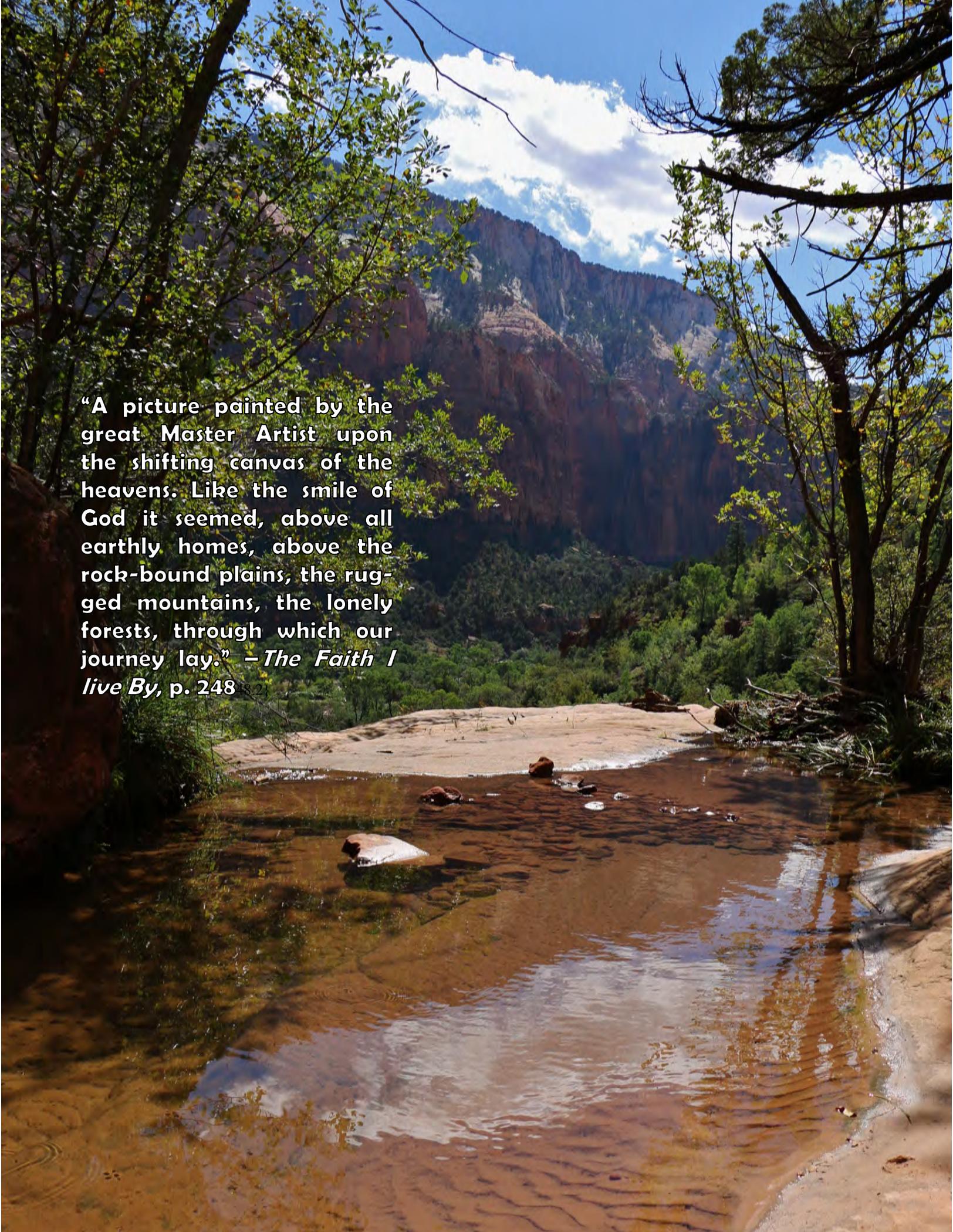
Below: leaders with their family members. (President, Vice President, 2 Bible Workers and 2 Elders)



Malaysia



This was taken on a missionary visit 250 km away. The woman in the centre is a Chinese business woman who is an interested soul, having Bible Studies.



“A picture painted by the great Master Artist upon the shifting canvas of the heavens. Like the smile of God it seemed, above all earthly homes, above the rock-bound plains, the rugged mountains, the lonely forests, through which our journey lay.” –*The Faith I live By*, p. 248 ⁸²