



The Reformation
Messenger
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Behind the Cloud

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Building for Eternity

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Do We Build on the Rock?

WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin,

guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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Behind the Cloud



a spotless character will endure to all eternity. God gives you intelligence and a reasoning mind, whereby you may grasp His promises; and Jesus is ready to help you in forming a strong, symmetrical character. “ –*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 81

“When trials come, remember that they are sent for your good. . . . When trials and tribulations come to you know that they are sent in order that you may receive from the Lord of glory renewed strength and increased humility, so that He may safely bless and support and uphold you. In faith and with the hope that ‘maketh not ashamed,’ lay hold of

“All heaven is interested in the work going on in this world, which is to prepare men and women for the future, immortal life. It is God’s plan that human agencies shall have the high honor of acting as co-workers with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls. . . . They should look upon the work of God as sacred and holy, and should bring to Him, every day, offerings of joy and gratitude, in return for the power of His grace, by which they are enabled to make advancement in the divine life. . . .

“It is not necessary that anyone should yield to the temptations of Satan and thus violate his conscience and grieve the Holy Spirit. Every provision has been made in the Word of God whereby all may have divine help in their endeavors to overcome.

“In the religious life of every soul who is finally victorious there will be scenes of terrible perplexity and trial; but his knowledge of the Scriptures will enable him to bring to mind the encouraging promises of God, which will comfort his heart and strengthen his faith in the power of the Mighty One. He reads: . . . ‘that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. . . .’ (1 Peter 1:7). The trial of faith is more precious than gold. All should learn that this is a part of the discipline in the school of Christ, which is essential to purify and refine them from the dross of earthliness. . . .

“Summon all your powers to look up, not down at your difficulties; then you will never faint by the way. *You will soon see Jesus behind the cloud*, reaching out His hand to help you; and all you have to do is to give Him your hand in simple faith and let Him lead you. . . . A great name among men is as letters traced in sand, but

the promises of God.

“O how good the Lord is to us all, and how safely we may trust Him! He calls us His little children. Then let us come to Him as to a loving Father. It is His desire that the bright beams of His righteousness shall shine forth from our faces and in our words and deeds. If we will love one another as Christ has loved us, the barriers that separate us from God and from one another will be broken down, and many obstacles that hinder the Holy Spirit’s flowing from heart to heart will be removed. . . . Trust Him with all your heart. He will carry you and your burdens.

“The Lord designs that His people shall be happy, and He opens before us one source of consolation after another, that we may be filled with joy and peace in the midst of our present experience. We are not to wait until we shall get into heaven for brightness and comfort and joy. We are to have them right here in this life. . . . We miss very much because we do not grasp the blessings that may be ours in our afflictions. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, and in short all things, work together for our good. . . . All experiences and circumstances are God’s workmen whereby good is brought to us. *Let us look at the light behind the cloud.*

“Our happiness comes not from what is around us, but from what is within us; not from what we have, but from what we are.” –*My Life Today*, p. 185

(emphasis added)

Ellen G. White





Building for Eternity



excuses of time and circumstances as to why they cannot help with the church building, and personally they use

“Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.” Haggai 1:2

In the time when Haggai wrote these words the Israelites had just returned from Babylonian captivity and were busily building their own houses and cultivating their own lands. They were very concerned for their own material welfare while the work on the house of the Lord was placed “on the back burner.” It was not a priority for them.

The Lord asks further, “Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?” Haggai 1:3

The example is recorded here of the Israelites failure at this time, but history has repeated itself many times in regards to delaying the building of the house of God. “In the hour of their opportunity, the Israelites had not shown themselves willing. Prompt obedience is expected of those whom the Lord chooses and leads. Pleas for delay are a dishonor to God. And yet those who choose to follow their own way, often frame ingenious excuses in self-justification. Thus the Israelites declared that they had begun to rebuild, but that they were broken off in their work because of the hindrances devised by their enemies. These hindrances, they reasoned, were an indication that it was not the proper time to rebuild. They declared that the Lord had interposed difficulties to reprove their hot haste.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1175

And so it is, people still continue to make excuses as to why they cannot help build the church and the cause of God, or live according to the high standard placed before them in the Word of God. Commonly, people make

weakness as an excuse for lack of any personal character building happening.

“The Israelites had no real excuse for leaving their work on the temple. The time when the most serious objections were raised, was the time for them to persevere in building. But they were actuated by a selfish dislike to encounter danger by arousing the opposition of their enemies. They did not possess the faith that is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. They hesitated to move forward by faith in the opening providences of God, because they could not see the end from the beginning. When difficulties arose, they were easily turned from the work.” —*Ibid*, p. 1175

The separation in the Seventh-day Adventist church in World War I arose from this very excuse, “dislike to encounter danger by arousing the opposition of their enemies.” Therefore, they capitulated to the pressure of the government, stepped off the high platform of truth, and joined in the hellish activities of warfare. Meanwhile a faithful few remained on the platform and suffered much persecution, but their love for Jesus and truth was greater than their love for their own lives. They made no excuses for building up the Kingdom of God on this earth. They built against all opposition and left the results to the Lord.

“This history will be repeated. There will be religious failures because men do not have faith. When they look at the things that are seen, impossibilities appear; but God can lead them step by step in the course He desires them to take. His work will advance only as His servants move forward by faith. While they may be called upon to pass through trying times, yet they should ever remember that they are contending with a

weakened, beaten foe. God's people will finally triumph over every power of darkness." *-Ibid*, p. 1175

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." 2 Corinthians 13:5. How is your relationship with the church? Are your duties towards the church "on the back burner" as they were with Ancient Israel? Are you building for this world or for eternity?

When there is a call for church missionary work, Bible studies, canvassing, is this a priority in your life? Or what about a call to help with church cleaning and maintenance? Or to help the poor and sick and needy? Or are you too busy with your own homes, hobbies and jobs that you do not have time for these endeavours? All that we have will one day be burned up, and of what value will they be then?

Are you building for this earth or are you building for eternity? They are quite the opposite. Finances are a big indicator of what building you are erecting. Jesus says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:19-21

We are told that "if riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Psalm 62:10. "The heavenly Guest is standing at your door, while you are piling up obstructions to bar His entrance. Jesus is knocking through the prosperity He gives you. He

loads you with blessings

to test your fidelity,

that they may flow out from you to others.

Will you permit your selfishness to triumph?

Will you squander God's talents,

and lose your soul through idolatrous love of the blessings He has given?" *-The Review and Herald*, November 2, 1886

Ask yourself if your own interests are taking priority over God's interests in your finances, your time, your energy, and your talents. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways." Haggai 1:7. "Viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may. . . live for that which is true and noble and enduring." *-Prophets and Kings*, p. 548

We are all called to be a part of this building, and assist

in the building of it. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Ephesians 2:19-20. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1-2. God's purpose for giving strength, time and talents to His children is so they can use these gifts to be a blessing for others, not to enrich themselves and have a comfortable life. In this world, there is no stopping to rest; no time to be "comfortable." There will not be a time when we can say the building is done, I do not need to build any more.

We are not only called to be labourers with God in His church, but also in our individual character building. If we are building good characters, we will automatically be building the church for eternity. The strength of the church is not in numbers, but in quality members.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." 1 Corinthians 3:9. Here Paul tells us that "ye are God's building." Individually we are called to aim at the high standard of perfection. Many delay this building. They leave their character building "on the back burner." They do not take seriously the fact that their "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 6:9. Nothing you have is of your own. It all belongs to God, including you.

In order to shine, and be able to successfully assist in the building of the church, the members must individually be polished by the Lord. He wants polished stones in His building. "Christians are Christ's jewels. They are to shine brightly for Him, shedding forth the light of His loveliness. Their luster depends on the polishing they receive. They may choose to be polished or to remain unpolished. But every one who is pronounced worthy of a place in the Lord's temple must submit to the polishing process. Without the polishing that the Lord gives they can reflect no more light than a common pebble." *-The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1177

"The divine Worker spends little time on worthless material. Only the precious jewels does He polish after the similitude of a palace, cutting away all the rough edges. This process is severe and trying; it hurts human pride. Christ cuts deep into the experience that man in his self



-sufficiency has regarded as complete, and takes away self-uplifting from the character. He cuts away the surplus surface, and putting the stone to the polishing wheel, presses it close, that all roughness may be worn away. Then, holding the jewel up to the light, the Master sees in it a reflection of Himself, and He pronounces it worthy of a place in His casket.” –*Ibid*, p. 1177

“Blessed be the experience, however severe, that gives new value to the stone, and causes it to shine with living brightness.” –*The Review and Herald*, December 19, 1907

In the Christian churches today there are a variety of individual standards that Christians aim for. Many make their own standard of character development, and some are not very high. Even in God’s church, there are some who are aiming at a lower standard. Or some are just content to remain on the standard they are on, not wanting to build higher. They are content with their characters as they are and do not want to build any more. They will be sadly disappointed in the end.

It is time now to reach for the high standard of perfection. Jesus says, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48. It is time now to work with the Lord to build your character for eternity. It is not easy work. It will take much, “blood, sweat and tears” to prepare you to be a living stone in God’s building. You just need to allow the Master Polisher to do His work. Let Him direct in the building process.

“Each day God works with His building, stroke upon stroke, to perfect the structure, that it may become a



holy temple for Him. Man is to co-operate with God. Each worker is to become just what God designs him to be, building his life with pure, noble deeds, that in the end his character may be

a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by God and man. There is to be no flaw in the building, for it is the Lord’s. Every stone must be perfectly laid, that it may endure the pressure placed upon it. One stone laid wrong will affect the whole building. To you and to every other worker God gives the warning: ‘Take heed how

you build, that your building may stand the test of storm and tempest, because it is founded on the eternal Rock. Place the stone on the sure foundation, that you may make ready for the day of test and trial, when all will be seen just as they are.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 173

“Man is called upon to strain every muscle and to exercise every faculty in the struggle for immortality, but it is God who supplies the efficiency. God has made amazing sacrifices for human beings. He has expended mighty energy to reclaim man from transgression and sin to loyalty and obedience, but He does nothing without the cooperation of humanity. . . . It is by unceasing endeavor that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan.

“No one is borne upward without stern, persevering effort in his own behalf. All must engage in the warfare for themselves. Individually we are responsible for the issue of the struggle.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 159

Many years ago I knew a young man who loved eating his dairy products. He stated very firmly he will never give up eating cheese until the General Conference says he must. And I have heard others say similar things regarding other health damaging foods such as chocolate. What is God’s standard? This man was not aiming for



God’s standard. He was looking to make his own standard and not building for eternity. He was building for this earth, not willing to change his own perverted appetite for an appetite God approves of. Has God bestowed knowledge only to the few men who are in leadership at the General Conference level? Or does He impart knowledge also to the faithful members who are seeking for a higher standard? Can He not impart to the individual members as to what is healthful to the body and what is not? Does the General Conference need to mandate every unhealthy ingredient as prohibitory? This would make a long list. Would it not be enough for each member to follow the principles of health as the Lord reveals to us and abstain from all unhealthy foods and ingredients, following the general principles laid out by the General Conference? We would be considered a cult if we blindly followed only the General Conference “rules” on diet, without recognizing the health damaging properties in various foods. I have been asked, “Are you a vegetarian only because your church says you must be?” I say, “no I am a vegetarian because

it is more healthy and I am glad I have found a church that upholds healthy living.”

It is a sin to indulge in any foods that are damaging to the health. It is time now, as we live on the verge of eternity to adopt the best diet possible; one that will be eaten in heaven. Or do we say like the Israelites “the time is not come.” Haggai 1:2. “No man or woman has any right to form habits which lessen the healthful action of one organ of mind or body. He who perverts his powers is defiling the temple of the Holy Spirit.” – *Temperance*, p. 142

Remember Daniel’s experience (Daniel chapter 1). How important was a proper diet for him? Yet today many Christians do not believe that diet needs to be too strictly heeded. When will we reach the standard of the heavenly diet? Now or when Jesus comes?

“There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking as of too little consequence to require such a decided stand—one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly advantage. But those who reason thus will find in the day of judgment that they turned from God’s express requirements and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They will find that what seemed to them unimportant was not so regarded of God. His requirements should be sacredly obeyed. Those who accept and obey one of His precepts because it is convenient to do so, while they reject another because its observance would require a sacrifice, lower the standard of right and by their example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God. ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is to be our rule in all things.” – *The Sanctified Life*, p. 19–20

God has given us a high standard to reach in all areas of life, from Sabbath keeping, to dress reform, diet, time management, finances. Why? Does He like to see us struggle and suffer? No, He wants perfect loving, unselfish people in heaven and all His requirements are for the perfecting of our character and happiness. We are not only building for eternity, we are building for happiness.

You are God’s building. *You* are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Is your temple a place where they delight to dwell? A place that is clean and pure?

“God forbid that we should neglect to learn the trade of character building. The course to be pursued in this work is not according to the ideas of the world; the fashioning is not similar to the fashioning of the world.

Those who enter the work of God without hiding self in Christ will soon disconnect themselves from the Master’s building.

“In your work of character building be sure that Christ is your director. It makes a great difference whether you are laborers together with God or whether you are laborers together against God; whether it is your highest ambition to magnify God or to magnify yourself and your plans. Christ declares, ‘Without me ye can do nothing’—nothing that will be approved by God. Study your motives carefully, and make sure that you are not working in your own wisdom, apart from Christ.

“With pure, noble, upright deeds every man is to build. The result of his work will be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple honored by God and men.” – *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1087

“Man cannot be towed to heaven; he cannot go as a passive passenger. He must himself use the oars, and work as a laborer together with God.” – *Our High Calling*, p. 310

Every day our building is to grow and improve. “God desires all who believe in Him to feel the necessity of improvement. Every intrusted faculty is to be improved. Not one is to be neglected. As God’s husbandry and building, man is under His supervision in every sense of the word; and the better he becomes acquainted with his Maker, the more sacred will his life become in his estimation.

“God asks His children to live a pure, holy life. He has given His Son that we may reach this standard. He has made every provision necessary to enable man to live, not for animal satisfaction, like the beasts that perish, but for God and heaven.” – *Temperance*, p. 143

Are you building for eternity in all areas of your life? Are you building at all? As we individually build with Christ in our character, the building of His church will become a glorious church. “That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:27. It is my prayer that we can all say that, “by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:10. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



Why Should We Meet Together for Worship?



“Does it really matter whether or not I go to church? Nobody seems to care whether I am there or not. Besides, the people there are so lukewarm. As long as I am abiding in Christ and faithful to the Three Angels’ Messages, that’s all that matters. As long as I keep the Sabbath, I will just make it a special day every week for me and my family.”

Are these sentiments in harmony with Bible doctrine? Let us consider a well-known passage from Hebrews chapter 10. As believers who understand the vital truth about the sanctuary in Heaven where our High Priest is ministering in our behalf, we are graciously invited to have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh” (verses 19, 20). Here is depicted the direct, vertical relationship we are privileged to enjoy between our individual souls and our Creator.

CHRIST AND HIS FLOCK

“Never entertain the thought that you can be Christians and yet withdraw within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the nature and quality of your experience will be largely determined by the experiences of those with whom you associate. . . . Then let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

“If Christians would associate together, speaking to each other of the love of God, and of the precious truths of redemption, their own hearts would be refreshed, and they would refresh one another. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. *A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to an-*

other. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. . . . We should not come together to remain silent; those only are remembered of the Lord who assemble to speak of His honor and glory and tell of His power; upon such the blessing of God will rest, and they will be refreshed.

“We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. . . . The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 246 (emphasis mine)

“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25. “Make the social meetings of the church as interesting as possible. Let everyone present feel that he has a duty to perform in the meeting.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 190. “One person is not to do all the witnessing for Jesus, but every one who loves God is to testify of the preciousness of His grace and truth.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 92

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Acts 2:42

God’s people have always looked forward to being with one another. For example, the first Christians were eager to meet together to worship the Lord and learn about Him. Of course, you too likely look forward to going to the meetings. But like all your brothers and sisters, you may find it difficult to be at the meetings regularly. Perhaps you need to work many hours or you have a lot to do or you always feel tired. Remember that when we are alone for too long, it becomes too easy to overlook our own defects of character. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.” “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” Proverbs 16:25; 12:15; 27:17. When we seek to avoid and escape this sharpening process, we tend to be-

come spiritually dull. So, what will help us to do everything we can to be at our meetings? How can we encourage our Bible students (interested souls) and others to be at our meetings regularly? This article will explain why attending meetings: (1) is good for us; (2) helps others; and, (3) pleases Jehovah our God.

MEETINGS ARE GOOD FOR US

How does meeting together help us to learn about God? *Meetings educate us.* Every meeting helps us to learn more about the Lord, the plan of redemption, righteousness by faith through Jesus, and last day events as described by prophecies and their fulfillment. At the meetings, we need to be listening carefully when the Bible is read. (Nehemiah 8:8). Sabbath school, testimonies, sermon and songs of praise lift our sight above and we are spiritually strengthened. Think of the many things we discover every week when we prepare for the Bible reading, Sabbath school lessons, and then hear what others have learned from them.



Meetings teach us to use what we learn from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy in our lives. (1 Thessalonians 4:9–10) For example, have you attended a *Sabbath School class* or a *Bible study* that made you want to do more in God's service, to improve your prayers, or to forgive a brother or a sister?

And "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17. "It is a serious mistake to neglect the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service should not be lightly regarded. Those who attend upon the sick are often unable to avail themselves of these privileges, but they should be careful not to absent themselves needlessly from the house of worship." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 511

Satan's world tries to weaken our faith and make us feel stressed and discouraged, but our meetings encourage us and give us the strength to keep serving God. (Read Romans 15:30–32). Often, we discuss how prophecies in the Bible have come true. This can help us feel even more sure that God's promises for the future will come true. Our brothers and sisters encourage us, not only when they give talks, but also when they give comments and praise Jehovah by singing from the heart. And when we speak to them before and after the meetings, we feel refreshed because we have many friends who really care for us and have the same faith as us. 1 Corinthians 16:17–18

At the meetings, we receive the help of God's Holy Spirit. Jesus uses this Holy Spirit to lead the congregations. In fact, He told us that we should "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Revelation 2:7. The Holy Spirit can help us to resist temptation and to preach boldly. It can also help us

make good decisions. That is why we must do all we can to be at our meetings and receive the help of God's Holy Spirit.

WE HELP OTHERS AT THE MEETINGS

At the meetings, we have opportunities to show our brothers and sisters that we love them. Many in our congregation are enduring great difficulties. The apostle Paul wrote: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:24–25. We can show we care about our brothers by meeting together to encourage one another. When we go to the meetings, we show our brothers that we want to be with them and talk with them and that we are interested in how they are feeling. We also encourage them when they hear us comment and sing from our heart (Colossians 3:16).

When we go to the meetings, we help the congregation to stay close together (John 10:16). Jesus compared Himself to a shepherd and His followers to a flock of sheep. Think about this: If two sheep are on a hill, two other sheep are in a valley, and one sheep is somewhere else, are those five sheep a flock? No, because a flock of sheep stays together and follows the shepherd. In a similar way, we should not stay away from our brothers by not coming to the meetings. We need to meet together to become part of "one flock" and to follow "one shepherd."

Our meetings help us to be united as a loving family (Psalm 133:1). Some in the church have been rejected by their close family members, such as their parents or their brothers or sisters. But Jesus promised to give them a family who would love them and look after them (Mark 10:29–30). If you attend meetings regularly, you could become like a father, mother, brother, or sister to someone in the church. When we think of that, we want to do our best to be at all the meetings.

At the meetings, we give God what He deserves. Since he is our Creator, we should thank Him, honor Him, and praise Him. (Read Revelation 7:12; 14:7). We can do this at the meetings when we pray to God, sing to Him, and speak about Him. What a wonderful opportunity we have every week to worship Jehovah and Jesus our Savior!

God notices that we really want to be at the meetings and values all the effort we make to be there. God created us, and we should obey Him. He commanded us to keep meeting together, especially as we get closer to the end. So when we obey that command, God is pleased (1 John 3:22). He notices that we really want to be at the meetings and values all the efforts we make to be there (Hebrews 6:10).

When we go to the meetings, we show Jehovah that we want to draw closer to Him. At the meetings, we study the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. We learn from God what we should do and how we should live (Isaiah 30:20–21). Even when some who do not serve God come to the meetings,

they will realize that God is guiding us (1 Corinthians 14:23–25). God is directing our meetings with His Holy Spirit, and what we learn there comes from Him. So when we go to the meetings, we listen to what God says, feel how much He loves us, and draw closer to Him. Jesus, the Head of the Church, said: “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20

“Those who do not feel the necessity of seeking the assembly of the saints, with the precious assurance that the Lord will meet with them, show how lightly they value the help that God has provided for them. Satan is constantly at work to wound and poison the soul; in order to withstand his efforts we must breathe the atmosphere of heaven. We must individually get hold and keep hold of Christ.” —*The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 934

When we go to the meetings, we show God that we want to obey Him. God does not force us to do as He says (Isaiah 43:23). So, when we choose to obey His command to attend meetings, we show Him that we love Him and that we believe He has the right to tell us what to do (Romans 6:17). For example, what will we do if our employer expects us to work so much that we cannot be at our meetings regularly? Or maybe the government says that if anyone meets to worship Jehovah, he will have to pay a fine, go to prison, or be punished with something even worse. Or at times we may simply prefer to do something else instead of going to the meetings. In each of these situations, we must decide what we will do (Acts 5:29). But each time we must choose to obey God.

KEEP MEETING WITH YOUR BROTHERS

After meeting together on Pentecost in the year A.D. 31, Christians met regularly to worship God. They continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles and associating together (Acts 2:42). They did not stop meeting together even when they were persecuted by the Roman government and the Jewish religious leaders. Although it was not easy, they did all they could to continue meeting together. Today, too, God’s servants feel very grateful for the meetings and enjoy being there. Do you also feel that way about worshipping God? If so, keep doing all you can to be with your brothers at the meetings, even when it is difficult. Show The Lord that you truly feel like King David, who said: “LORD, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.” Psalms 26:8

Members should give prayer meetings a higher priority. “Many declare that it is certainly no harm to go to a concert and neglect the prayer-meeting, or absent themselves from meetings



where God's servants are to declare a message from heaven. It is safe for you to be just where Christ has said He would be. Those who appreciate the words of Christ will not turn aside from the prayer-meeting, or from the meeting where the Lord's messenger has been sent to tell them concerning things of eternal interest. Jesus has said, ‘Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.’ Can you afford to choose your pleasure and miss the blessing? It is indulgence in these things that has a telling influence not only on your own life and character, but upon the life and character of your associates. If all who profess to be followers of Christ would be so in deed and in truth, they would have the mind of Christ, and would work the works of God. They would resist temptation to indulge self, and would show that they do not enjoy the frivolous pleasure of the world more than the privilege of meeting with Christ in the social meeting. They would then have a decided influence upon others, and lead them to follow their example.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, April 23, 1912

“A prayer meeting will always tell the true interest of the church members in spiritual and eternal things. The prayer meeting is as the pulse to the body; it denotes the true spiritual condition of the church. A lifeless, backslidden church has no relish for the prayer meetings.” —*Pastoral Ministry*, p. 183

OUR ATTITUDE IN THE MEETING OF WORSHIP

We should be glad that we have the freedom to worship in a house of prayer. Never take for granted that you have a place for worship. Be it a church, or a room in a house; be it a rented hall or under a tent; be it in a basement or under a tree—any place where we congregate for the worship of God is a joyous yet reverent place of holy ground. “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.” Psalm 122:1

“My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” Psalm 84:2

REVERENCE IN PRACTICE

All our worship services must be directed towards the praise of our God. “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” Psalm 29:2. The sanctuary is to be a place of reverence. “Ye shall keep My sabbaths, and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.” Leviticus 19:30. Yet many times our irreverence in the sanctuary is a denial of God’s presence there. Moses and Joshua were instructed that wherever

God meets with His people in holy ground (Exodus 3:5; Joshua 5:15).

In the times of Israel's wilderness wanderings, the presence of God in the sanctuary was visible "and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." Exodus 40:34. After Solomon completed the Temple, the presence of the Lord was visible in it (2 Chronicles 5:13–14).

Even today, this presence is here for "the LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him." Habakkuk 2:20. Many fail to realize the fact that the presence of God is in their midst, so they treat the house of God without due respect. There is walking in and out, commotion, whispering, passing of notes, and so on. We have all, from time to time, engaged in such things. But are these to be permitted? Being in the presence of our God should bring us to a realization of the awe and silence that should pervade this place. The only sounds to be heard in this place should be those of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

Our failure to be particular about our actions in the house of God will lead to disastrous ruin. No common things could be brought into the sanctuary of old, and the same principle applies today. "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD." Leviticus 10:1–2. No "common fire" should ever be present in the Lord's sanctuary. No worldly entertainments should be permitted in this place. But instead we are to assemble in reverence

ORDER

In our public worship, we must be sure to have order in all we do. For many people who come to the services of the church for the first time, the impression they receive of such services will determine if they will return again. "Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Corinthians 14:40. "Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully.

"They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the cooperation of the heavenly messengers must work in

unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can cooperate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder. All these evils are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy courage, and prevent successful action." *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 649–650

TIMELINESS

God has appointed the Sabbath as *His* day, and He gives us this day so that we may assemble together to praise Him without the cares of this world in mind. On other days, when we assemble we have just come from work, or from doing some task, but on the Sabbath we are to assemble having left our earthly cares behind. "Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, *an holy convocation*." Leviticus 23:3

"It is a sad failing with many that they are always behind time on Sabbath morning. They are very particular about their own time, they cannot afford to lose an hour of that; but the Lord's time, the only day out of the seven that the Lord claims as His, and requires us to devote to Him, quite a portion of this is squandered away by sleeping late in the morning. In this they are robbing God. It causes them to be behind in everything; it makes confusion in the family; and finally results in the tardiness of the entire family at Sabbath school, and perhaps at meeting. Now why can we not rise early with the birds, and offer praise and thanksgiving to God? Try it, brethren and sisters. Have your preparations all made the day before, and come promptly to the Sabbath school and meeting, and you will thereby not only benefit others, but you will reap rich blessings for yourselves." —*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 170

"Meetings for conference and prayer should not be made tedious. *All should, if possible, be prompt to the hour appointed; and if there are dilatory ones, who are half an hour or fifteen minutes even behind the time, there should be no waiting.* If there are but two present, they can claim the promise. The meeting should open at the appointed hour, if possible, be there few or many present." —*The Review and Herald*, May 30, 1871 (italics mine)

REVERENCE IN PRAYER

Today, many people have forgotten how sacred the time was when God spoke with Moses and Joshua. Our prayers become informal and often people do not realize to Whom they are speaking when they are in prayer. The psalmist made it

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Psalm 84:10. As we assemble together we strengthen and encourage one another. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:25

clear that even in prayer, reverence is essential. "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker." Psalm 95:6

REVERENCE IN SONG

Music is a wonderful gift from God. It is a great tool that we can use to open the hearts of the people and implore them to give their hearts to the Saviour. Since it is so powerful, music is an important part of the services of the church. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name." Psalm 100:4. "Serve the LORD with gladness: come before His presence with singing." Psalm 100:2

"Singing is a part of the worship of God, but in the bungling manner in which it is often conducted, it is no credit to the truth, and no honour to God. There should be system and order in this as well as every other part of the Lord's work." — *The Review and Herald*, July 24, 1883

Singing, as a part of religious service, is as much an act of worship as is prayer. "Music can be a great power for good; yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and at other times those who sing are left to blunder along, and the music loses its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering." — *Evangelism*, p. 505

"Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voice can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued." — *The Signs of the Times*, June 22, 1882

REVERENCE IN SABBATH SCHOOL

The teachers and superintendents of our Sabbath schools should ensure that those under their charge are properly instructed. No student should ever be so forward as to speak without being called upon to do so.

CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

At the start of Christ's public ministry, right after the miracle at Cana, Christ cleansed the earthly sanctuary. At the close of Christ's ministry He was compelled once more to perform this act. "And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And He taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? But ye have made it a den of thieves." Mark 11:15–17

So today, Christ is engaged in the work of cleansing the sanctuary in heaven, and we on earth should be engaged in the

preparatory work for His soon coming. Let us be sure that our physical sanctuaries are places that are worthy of God's presence.

HEAVENLY SABBATHS AND WORSHIP

Remember that character is the only thing you may take with you to heaven. And in heaven there will be many times when we will assemble together for worship. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD." Isaiah 66:22–23. Let us therefore be wise to our need for reverence in the sanctuary today. Let us not be as fools when we meet before the great King.

"When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places." — *Counsels for the Church*, p. 251

It is a great privilege we have in this time of relative freedom to gather together each Sabbath and worship the Lord. But the signs all around us show that this time of liberty will soon draw to a close. Until then, how do we act when we assemble for the worship of God? Other churches have loosened their "formality" during services, opting for "modern" services instead of "traditional" ones. The flavour of the day in the popular churches seems to be one of loose services that are very informal, and supposedly "fun." Churches have become ordinary places and the holy has been made profane. In our churches within the IMSSDA Reform Movement we praise the Lord that we have not followed the world in this trend. Nonetheless we should ever be watchful of the danger of losing reverence within our churches. I have had the privilege now of visiting many of our churches around the world, and while we do not follow worldly trends, we can do much more to further improve the spirituality of our meetings in many places. Presidents, prime ministers, kings, and other persons of prominence expect that when one is in their presence they should be shown respect. How much more then should we, who worship the true God—the King of kings—show reverence in His presence! Amen.

Victor Shumbusho,
D R Congo / Union Secretary



Bad Things Happen,

But God Provides

The Bible has successfully survived all the attacks of its enemies for thousands of years. It remains today a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path (Psalm 119:105). In love to you, God gave the Bible long ago. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. Others of His servants through the ages have preserved God's Word for you, at the cost of countless suffering and even martyrdom. The Book of the prophet Daniel has likewise endured and survived all the attacks of those who would oppose the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Why study the book of Daniel and Revelation? "Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of [our] faith. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'" —*Gospel Workers*, p. 148

"When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart." —*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 114. We can see from these inspired statements how important it is to have a pure heart and to develop a perfect character in order to meet with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In regard to interpretation of Bible prophecy we use the Historicist method, not futurism or preterism. The Historicist method was the standard one before and during the time of the reformation. To turn the attention away from the papacy, during the reformation era, two Jesuit priests were asked by the papacy at that time to develop a different school of apocalyptic prophetic interpretation. Ribera

developed futurism which put apocalyptic prophecy in the far future; and Alcazar developed preterism which taught that all prophecy had past fulfilment in the time of the Imperial Roman Empire. In later years, Protestantism accepted more and more the method of futurism for the interpretation of apocalyptic or last day's prophetic events. We follow strictly the Historicist method for the interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation.

In Daniel chapter 1, we read a story in which we find Daniel and his friends in a situation which none of us would like to be in. They were taken into captivity. God had made a covenant with the people of Israel, promising that He would care for them and bless them if they obeyed His statutes, but if they disobeyed, He would chasten them and scatter them among the Gentiles. "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste." Leviticus 26:33

From history we know that around 605 B.C., Nineveh and Assyria had fallen. It was just Egypt and Babylon who were seeking world supremacy. The young brilliant new king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, went out and defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish. He marched on to Judah, during Jehoiakim's reign, and took thousands of Hebrews back to Babylon, including Daniel.

Ancient Babylon was situated near where Baghdad today is, about 500 kilometres north west of the Persian Gulf and about 50 kilometres south west of what is called Baghdad today. Nebuchadnezzar made two more attacks when he heard of the rebellion in Judah. The 2nd attack was in 597 B.C. Each time he took captives, including Ezekiel the prophet. The 3rd attack took place around 586 B.C.

Only a remnant of the weakest, poorest, and least threatening Jews remained and Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed.

The first chapter explains how Daniel was called, prepared, matured, and blessed of God. Vital parts of this chapter and not only this particular chapter but throughout the book of Daniel, are three important things which God's enemy, Satan does: First, Nebuchadnezzar attacks the city and the Sanctuary; Second, Nebuchadnezzar takes God's people into captivity; Third, Nebuchadnezzar takes the sacred vessels of God's sanctuary, dedicated to the true worship of God, and places them in a pagan temple. When we look carefully at these three attacks, namely against the Sanctuary, against God's people, and against God Himself, we will notice that these attacks are what Satan uses as a pattern against God in this controversy throughout history. The book of Daniel gives us several examples. "And out of one of them came forth a little

horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down." Daniel 8:9-11. Is he attacking the Sanctuary? Is Satan attacking God? Is he attacking His people? Also in Daniel chapter 11 the same story is recorded of attacking God, His people, and the Sanctuary. "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days." Daniel 11:31-33. It is important to understand this in order to be prepared and not be taken by surprise.

Daniel chapter 1 introduces theme of the great controversy; the conflict between Christ and Satan, between good and evil, between right and wrong. Two kings, Jehoiakim and Nebuchadnezzar. Two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon: Jerusalem, the city of God, the city of truth, and Babylon, the centre for rebellion against God, the centre of confusion and error. "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim

king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god." Daniel 1: 1-2. Have you ever heard people say, If God is so good, why is it that wrong seems to triumph over right? Good people end up bad and bad people apparently succeed in this life. A man named Asaph was envious when he saw that the wicked prospered and the righteous going through affliction. "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." Psalm 73:3, 13. When did Asaph understand the end of the wicked people? "Until I went into the Sanctuary of God, then I understood their end." Psalm 73:17. The sanctuary of God teaches us how God deals with the problem of sin and Satan hates

that because if we understand this issue then he loses us.

It was the Lord who led Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem and Lord gave him the victory. Why would the Lord give victory to a foreign country over His people? They had been not faithful. Reading from history in 1st and 2nd Chronicles and 1st and 2nd Kings, you begin to see that Israel had not remained faithful to God and His covenant and God

finally said; if you do not obey My statutes you are going to go into bondage for seventy years (Jeremiah 25).

But there is something interesting in Daniel 1:3-4. "And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." The king wanted to gather the noble, the wealthy young men, the people with a good heritage. "And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king." Daniel 1:5

We can only imagine what it must have been like for Daniel and his friends when they were taken away from their homes by force as they were traveling all the way to Baby-



lon to possibly face a life of slavery. Imagine then the surprise they had when they reached Babylon to receive new clothes and food from the king's table. The best food, the best drink for the next three years. "Now among these were the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-Nego." Daniel 1:6-7. The king changed their names because he wanted to change their identity. When you change the person's identity you change the person's mission. In the Bible a name means something important. Jacob, which means deceiver, was changed to Israel which means overcomer. The names of these four Hebrews were tied to God. Daniel means "God is my Judge", but they changed his name into Belteshazzar, which means Bel will protect. Bel was one of the Sumerian gods. They had changed their names from the true God to their god in an attempt to change their way of thinking from what they were raised to believe.

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the



wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Daniel made a decision. How many of us have decided to do something at a certain point and later we changed our mind? But the Bible says, Daniel

decided in his heart to be faithful to God, no matter what. When did he make that decision? Do you think that he made that decision when they brought out that food? "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6. Any teenager who would make a decision that he would rather die than be unfaithful to God would have had a good upbringing. Daniel was raised to believe the truth, raised to believe the Bible, raised to believe in the God of Heaven, Who could watch over every move in his life, even when he was taken to Babylon. Daniel could look up to God and say; "Why Lord? Where are You? You said You would never leave me You would never forsake me, why is it that I am on my way to Babylon as a captive?" There were so many reasons for Daniel to doubt, but he did not. He made a decision in his heart; he purposed that he would not defile himself.



If we get anything out of this chapter, I think we need to

make a decision to purpose in our hearts that we will not defile ourselves in any way, even beyond food. To be faithful to God and obey His word and whatever He asks us to do.

Sometimes, I talk to young people, and they say, "you know, it's impossible to really be a Christian today and serve God, because everybody in my high school is having illicit relations." At least they think everybody is. "Everybody in my high school is involved in drugs, everybody in my high school is involved in parties at night, and it is impossible to serve God in this environment." Some men think, "I work in a very rough factory where everybody is cursing and swearing, and everybody is telling jokes. In the environment I work in, it is impossible to serve God." Business people may think, "You cannot serve God and be honest, because if you are going to get ahead in business, you have to be dishonest." Daniel is an example of a man in a corrupt, godless society, whose mind could have been shaped by that society, but the Bible tells us that Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." Proverbs 4:23

There is something very important in Daniel 1:16 that I would like to bring attention to, "Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse [vegetables]." It was the steward who took away their portion of the meat and wine. Unless you let God take away your gossip, your immorality, your jealousy, your anger, or any hindrances, you cannot receive blessings from God. To receive the richest blessings of God in your life, you must allow Him to take away the hindrances first.

In this first chapter we have learned something very important in our spiritual walk with our Mighty and Loving Father. We have learned about circumstances, choices, and commitment in the life of these four young and brave Hebrews. A wonderful first chapter with lessons to be learned and put to practice even in the 21st century. In the last days of earth's history, God is looking for men and women who have one passion in their heart and one desire in their lives, namely to please Him, and not to defile themselves with the pressures to conform that constantly surround us. Are you willing to present yourself as a living sacrifice to God as Paul talks about? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2. May this be our decision. Amen!

Nicholas Anca



Do We build on the Rock?

We are building our spiritual house. Some are building their house on the solid rock, while others are building on a sandy foundation.

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” Matthew 7:24–27

Sixty-two years ago, there was a terrible rainstorm in Toronto, accompanied by a hurricane named Hazel. Eighty-one people died, and many houses were washed away along the river banks, and disappeared, never to be found again. People who had built their houses on these river banks did not know of the danger to their houses and to their lives until it was too late to save themselves.

We are building a house of faith. From the outside, they all may look good and solid, but when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds are blowing, then the differences will be seen. Some houses will stand firm, while others will fall. Some are wise builders and others foolish.

Wise builders are found in the Bible. Enoch, who walked with God; Noah, the preacher of righteousness; Abraham, the father of faith; Moses, the greatest leader; Job, the man of patience; Joseph, the moral giant. They all started with the same characters as everyone else. They had nothing better than what we have in the beginning. They

built their buildings using the same tools and materials that are available to us.

The foolish builders were Cain and the people in the time of Noah; also Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Balaam, and Judas. They all were religious, but did something wrong in their building process. Even the Laodicean church has many foolish builders in it. All their buildings are going up, only to be destroyed in the wind and floods that are testing their foundations.

“A storm is arising that will wrench and test the spiritual foundation of every one to the utmost. Therefore avoid the sand bed; hunt for the rock. Dig deep; lay your foundation sure. Build, oh, build for eternity! Build with tears, with heartfelt prayers. Let every one of you from henceforth make your life beautiful by good works. Calebs are the men most needed in these last days. That which will make our churches

vigorous and successful in their efforts is not bustle, but quiet, humble work; not parade and bombast, but patient, prayerful, persevering effort.” *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 129–130

When is the time to build, and when is the time for wind and rain? These both are going on now, today. Many are blown away now, many are offended, and many are losing their faith, while others are being rooted and established in the faith, and building for eternity from the solid timbers, and on the sure foundation, that is Jesus Christ.

When the rain was falling, and Noah was inside the ark, now the whole world would have entered in, but the door was closed. While the door was still open, they did not believe that the words of Noah were true. The same thing happened with the Jewish nation. Jesus said, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” Luke 19:42

The angel of the Laodicean church thought that they were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing, while the complete opposite was true; they did not know their true condition.

Many accidents happen on the highways, also to airplanes, and ocean liners. Many of the people who perished in these disasters lost their eternal life also because, not expecting to die, they were not prepared for death.

Yet all these disasters and calamities have been only a small foretaste of what is coming upon our world in the near future. Jesus said, “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matthew

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.” Daniel 12:1

Now our time could be called “preparing for the storm”. The signs are clearly visible, the clouds are gathering for the storm. The time will come when we must leave our homes and flee to the woods and mountains. Not only do God’s people see the storm coming, but also the world leaders tremble as they see these storm warnings. They are afraid of the possible World War Three.

To a Bible student, these are not only a possibility but a fact. The word of God, which has never failed yet, leaves us not a shadow of a doubt that these events are before us. This same certainty occurred as the destruction came upon Jerusalem, because they rejected Jesus, and the message of His disciples. This is the time when Sister White writes to God’s people, “Draw together, draw together, draw together.” The world is our enemy, and the fallen churches hate us also. Sister White writes, “I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it) will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics as those who disregard the institutions of the people: that is, that they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.” —*Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 2

The Sunday-keeping churches hate the one church which still keeps the Sabbath during the Sunday law. Everything is getting worse in the world. There will be more crime, more murders, more wars. Also, more storms, earthquakes, and floods. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy tell us that the angels are holding back the winds a little longer so that the work of God, the sealing of His servants, will be finished (Revelation 7:1–4).

When the great ship, Titanic, was plowing through the sea, seemingly so safe and secure, people were dancing, drinking, feasting, laughing, and joking on the night of their death. They faced eternity, completely unprepared.

Today this is repeated; even professing Christians are more interested in good times and enjoyment, rather than preparing for the coming storm, and for heaven.

“Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5,

The Lord is working for us; He is purifying us and preparing us for the coming storm.

“But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.” Malachi 3:2–3

God is purifying us in the fiery trials. Every wrong characteristic must be cleansed away from us. The love of money must be overcome; it is the root of all evil. We must learn charity, like the poor widow who gave up her last two mites in the offering. “No charity is complete unless it reveals an appreciation of the gospel. Those who now, in this time of emergency, selfishly hold on to their means, will soon suffer the loss of all they have. Those who are truly converted, and who have more than sufficient for their immediate necessities, will freely impart of their abundance to help those who are poorer than they.” —*AU Gleaner*, December 19, 1906

Neglected duties can take our salvation away. God has given us talents which we must use in His work. “A Christian who does not work cannot be healthy. Spiritual disease is the result of neglected duty.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 235–236

One of the characteristics that we must learn is patience. As time goes on, many who have not enough patience will become tired of waiting and turn back to the world.

Worldliness must be burned away in the fire of affliction; also selfishness, pride, and love of pleasure. Finally, God will have a small remnant left, who are drawn into close unity, seeking encouragement and support from each other. They have built their house of faith on solid rock, on Jesus Christ.

One brick looks so insignificant, but when you put one on top of another, the great building is made, and a beautiful character is created. The Good Samaritan may have less knowledge than the priest and the Levite, but he had a practical religion which was more important. His character building was far more advanced than the characters of the priest and the Levite.

Are you ready for the coming storm? Are you ready to leave all behind and flee to the mountains?

Is your spiritual building finished, and is it on solid foundation? Then you are ready for the time of trouble and persecution, and also for the coming of Jesus and for eternal life. Amen.

Timo Martin

Honey



What honey is...

Honey is a sweet liquid made by bees using nectar from flowers. Bees first convert the nectar into honey by a process of regurgitation and evaporation, then store it as a primary food source in wax honeycombs inside the beehive. Honey can then be harvested from the hives for human consumption.

Honey is graded by colour, with the clear, golden amber honey often at a higher retail price than darker varieties. Honey flavour (the sweetness of the honey) and colour, will vary based on the type of flower from which the nectar was harvested.

Both raw and pasteurized forms of honey are available. Raw honey is removed from the hive and bottled directly, and as such will contain trace amounts of yeast, wax, and pollen. Consuming local raw honey is believed to help with seasonal allergies due to repeated exposure to the pollen in the area. Pasteurized honey has been heated and processed to remove impurities.

THE HISTORY OF HONEY

In ancient Egyptian history, we find a very famous person named Imhotep. This man was a multi-genius who is also greatly revered in Greek literature for his success as a physician. Many things about Imhotep match the description of Joseph in the Bible perfectly. One point that is interesting is that Joseph was also head of the physicians in Egypt (see Genesis 50:2).

One of the natural remedies that Imhotep used for treating patients was honey. Considering the great success that he had as a physician and the fact that he used honey in his treatment of the sick, should lead us

The potential health benefits of honey

to take notice, because honey has very many useful purposes in God's plan of healing for mankind.

The potential health benefits of consuming honey have been documented in early Greek, Roman, Vedic, and Islamic texts; and the healing qualities of honey were referred to by philosophers and scientists all the way back to ancient times, such as Aristotle (384 -- 322 BC) and Aristoxenus (320 BC).

- Over four thousand years ago, honey was used as a traditional ayurvedic medicine, where it was thought to be effective at treating material imbalances in the body.
- In pre-Ancient Egyptian times, honey was used topically to treat wounds.
- Egyptian medicines used honey.
- The ancient Greeks believed that consuming honey could help you live longer.

The beneficial properties of honey have been explored in modern times, and there is evidence to suggest that these historical claims may hold some truth.

PROPERTIES

1) Nutritional value of honey

Honey contains over 90 precious ingredients, among which the most important are the essential oils, herbal dyes, and acids.

It is composed of glucose, fructose, enzymes, amino acids, essential oils, vitamins and minerals (Vitamin B1, B2, B5, B6, C, E, K, sodium, potassium, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, zinc, iodine, copper, chromium) and other ingredients.

Below is a typical honey profile:

Fructose: 38.2%
Glucose: 31.3%
Maltose: 7.1%



Sucrose: 1.3%
Water: 17.2%
Higher sugars: 1.5%
Ash: 0.2%
Other/undetermined: 3.2%

- Honey is a healthy alternative to sugar
- Kept well sealed, honey has unlimited shelf life.
- Crystallization of honey is a normal process that does not affect its quality. Place the jar in warm water and again you get liquid honey.
- Honey has high levels of monosaccharides, fructose and glucose, containing about 70 to 80 percent sugar, which gives it its sweet taste. Minerals and water make up the rest of its composition.
- Honey is rapidly absorbed into the body

2) Healing properties of honey

Honey also possesses antiseptic and antibacterial properties. In modern science, we have managed to find useful applications of honey in chronic wound management.

Honey has been consumed for thousands of years for its supposed health benefits.

Modern science is finding that many of the historical claims of honey being used in medicine may indeed be true. In the Bible (Old Testament), King Solomon said, "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good." Proverbs 24:13. There are a number of reasons why it may be good.

Acid reflux

Honey may be helpful in preventing GERD (Gastroesophageal reflux).

Infantile gastroenteritis

A clinical study which used honey in an oral rehydration solution in children and infants with gastroenteritis showed that honey shortens the duration of bacterial diarrhea in infants and young children. Honey does not prolong the duration of non-bacterial diarrhea, and "may safely be used as a substitute for glucose in oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes."



Healing wounds and burns

There have been some cases in which people have reported positive effects of using honey in treating wounds and honey may be able to help heal burns. Topical honey is cheaper than other interventions, notably oral antibiotics, which are often used and

may have other deleterious side effects.

Honey for treating allergies

There is some research to suggest that honey may be useful in minimizing seasonal allergies. Honey even "beats cough medicine" at alleviating and reducing the frequency of cough.

Fighting infections

A study published in the journal *Microbiology* revealed that Manuka honey is effective at treating chronic wound infections and may even prevent them from developing in the first place. Manuka honey kills bacteria by destroying key bacterial proteins. Some studies have revealed it may even be effective for the treatment of MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) infections. Manuka and other honeys have been known to have wound healing and anti-bacterial properties for some time. Honey may even help reverse bacterial resistance.



With honey, parents can treat their children's nocturnal cough and sleep difficulties due to URI (upper respiratory infections). Honey may be a preferable treatment for cough and sleep difficulties associated with childhood.

But "natural honey kills bacteria three times more effectively" than an artificial honey solution of the same thickness and sugar concentration.

Cold relief

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend honey as a natural cough remedy. Honey reduces nighttime coughing and improves sleep quality in children with upper respiratory infections better than the cough medicine, dextromethorphan, or no treatment.

Everyone knows honey tastes sweet and is delicious mixed with herbal tea and lemon; but chances are you never realized how many health-related uses this versatile food possesses. It makes a wonderful do-it-yourself home remedy that helps to cure many conditions that ail you. The best honey is honey that is totally raw, organic and contains the honeycomb in the jar. It should also include royal jelly, propolis and bee pollen for maximum health benefits.

Here is a whole list of useful ways in which to use honey for better health, both medicinally and for everyday good eating:

MEDICINAL USES:

Moisturize skin with a mixture of honey, eggs and flour.

- Honey is antibacterial and makes a powerful antiseptic to cleanse and heal wounds and prevent scabs from sticking to bandages.
- Kills viruses and bacterial infections when mixed and eaten with raw, minced garlic.
- Boosts energy, reduces fatigue, stimulates mental alertness, strengthens immunity, provides, minerals, vitamins, and antioxidants.
- Restores eyesight, relieves a sore throat, and makes an effective cough syrup.
- Prevents heart disease by improving blood flow and prevents damage to capillaries.
- Regulates the bowels; cures colitis and IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome).
- Soothes burns, disinfects wounds, reduces inflammation and pain, and promotes faster healing.
- Reduces anxiety and acts as a sedative; creating a calm and restful sleep, and alkalizes body's pH.
- Anti-cancer agents protect against the formation of tumours.
- Relieves indigestion and acid reflux, and also heals peptic ulcers.

• Honey is source of energy because it is easily digested and is recommended for athletes it increases endurance and reduces muscle fatigue

• Honey is excellent antioxidant. Pregnant women that during the pregnancy ate honey, born healthier and more vital children;

• For the children the honey is recommended after the second year.

• Relieves the symptoms of flu and colds, respiratory diseases such as sinus and sore throat.

• The honey helps in constipation, gastritis, gastric ulcer;

• If you burn yourself, immediately apply honey. This will, prevent to create a bubble, and the skin will heal without scarring;

• The hone helps with skin problems, such as cracked skin, rashes, itching.

• On the wounds have an effect of antiseptic, it reduces the pain and also removes the poison insect bites.

- Makes a great lip balm and refreshing herbal wash or lotion.
- Destroys bacteria causing acne, and prevents scarring.
- Flushes parasites from liver and colon.
- Heals diabetic ulcers with topical applications.
- Mix with powdered herbs for topical applications or to reduce bitterness when taken internally.
- Smooths and exfoliates facial skin, reduces surface lines, and softens dry skin on elbows and heels.
- Add to green coconut water for supercharged athletic drinks.
- Protect hair from split ends with a honey conditioner; honey rinse promotes shiny hair.
- Soften hard water by adding honey to bath water.
- Speeds metabolism to stimulate weight loss.
- Improves digestion with natural enzymes.
- Mix honey and lemon with warm water first thing in the morning for an effective cleanse.
- Anti-fungal properties cure vaginal yeast infections and athlete's foot.
- Relieve hay fever by chewing on honeycomb.
- Protects topically and internally against pathogens such as Staphylococcus aureus, Pseudomonas aeruginosa and MRSA.
- Builds immunity to hay fever allergens by mixing honey and bee pollen and taking early in the season.
- Quenches thirst and relieves heat stroke; also stops hiccups.
- Lessens the effects of poisons and toxins.
- Has mild laxative properties.
- Relieves asthma when mixed with ginger.

- Controls blood pressure when mixed with fresh garlic juice.
- Mixing honey and hot water in varying amounts relieves arthritis, bladder infections and abdominal gas; lowers LDL cholesterol, and improves digestion. Additionally, it kills the flu and other viruses, slows the aging process, restores hearing and relieves bad breath.
- Applying honey, cinnamon, and hot olive oil topically prevents hair loss as well as stops a toothache.

HONEY AS FOOD

- Make a salad dressing using honey.
- Sweeten baked goods with honey instead of sugar.
- Smear honey on toast.
- Preserve fruit by adding honey to water and pouring over fresh fruit in canning jars.
- Make fresh fruit jams with honey instead of sugar.



WARNING

Honey is still a form of sugar and intake should be moderate. The American Heart Association recommends that women get no more than 100 calories a day from added sugars; men no more than 150 calories a day. This is a little over two tablespoons for women and three tablespoons for men.

Honey may contain botulinum endospores that cause infant *botulism*, a rare but serious type of food poisoning that can result in paralysis. Even pasteurized honey has a chance of containing these spores. For this reason, it is recommended that infants under one year do not consume honey. So, never give honey to babies under the age of one due to the risk of botulism. Honey carries botulism spores and babies do not have enough immunity for proper protection.

THE PROPER USE OF HONEY

The recommended daily amount of honey for an adult is between 60 and 100 grams, divided into three parts (in the morning, during the day, and at bedtime).

The recommended daily amount of honey to children under the age of 10 years is 30 grams, also distributed three times a day.

When you add it in hot drinks, the liquid should not be warmer than 40 degrees Celsius, in order to preserve its properties. At temperatures above 41 degrees honey loses its healing properties. So be careful while adding honey to warm tea.

Honey is a food that prolongs your life expectancy. Honey is a food given to us by God. Today it is hard to imagine life without honey.

Victor Shumbusho

DR Congo Union Secretary



**Coming in the next issue:
GMO's: A Modern Dilemma
Part 3**



God's People, Conflict, and the End

(Continuation of Love Divine, so sublime)

Satan could not Jesus make to fall, thus his war is raging against all
Who chose to follow Christ their Saviour, obeying Him does bring no failure,
But a crown, eternal life in waiting, though first through trials, sorrow they are wading.
Martyrs without number by Satan's hand fell under,
But only to his own defeat—they in judgment he will meet.

The war for souls is going on, soon more fearful, ever strong,
The last days soon will be at hand; this evil world must have an end.
Now is the day to heed God's voice, be not stubborn make the choice
To run the race as set before you, obey God's word to Him it's due.

Christ and Satan fight for you and me, the outcome of it what will be?
To stand for Jesus in the test, when the beast will rage his quest,
Forcing Sunday as the day of rest.

Prepare today for what is soon to come, that none be overcome,
For all the world the beast will follow. But God's faithful then will hallow
His commandments trodden down by Rome's supreme demand,
They defending boldly make their stand.

With love, faith, patience—virtues pure, to win the battle is made sure,
With trust in Jesus' strength and grace, for never did He lose a case.
Thus be humble, meek and teachable, every instant when times terrible
Shall plunge the world by hell's surprise, into chaos, strife incredible,
Causing the last war to rise.

Yielding to the flesh's demand resist, alone defeat it reaps, you must persist
In prayer constant heavenward, bravely pleading the reward
Of victory be given: the death to self, then Spirit-driven,
Conquer Satan and the world's alluring schemes, forever cast away its foolish dreams.

Now is the time God's people must unite before the tempest will ignite.
The minds and hearts must now be drawn to the "Upper Room" that there may dawn,
An all the need for love to one another, with tenderness forgive the other,
Reconcile and be a brother, like the disciples gave this great example.
Then the Holy Spirit fell and ample filled the host with strength and power,
God's grace rained down in mighty showers upon the multitude who now perceived
His love for all now to receive the gospel message plain and clear,
Into the heart and draw them near, to truth, forgiveness and new life,
In Christ, to enter Paradise.

.....

Events cast shadows for the end, God needs a people firm to stand
On His commandments, self-forgotten, pure and holy, bold amidst the rotten
Masses, hostile, mean and drunken, from the wine of Babylon the sunken
Whore who with cunning, shrewd beguiling flair, draws in her net in perfect score,
All the world to follow her.



Soon the hundred thousand forty four, receive what they be waiting for,
The Holy Spirit without measure, Heaven's gift so great a treasure.
The Cry the loud will shake the world - a message clear and sound be heard,
Even to remotest corners. The light will shine in all the earth,
Every soul will understand God's call and shout, "Separate, come out,"
From them who void the law Divine, setting up a man's ensign.

In bold defiance war against the Lamb, decree to kill who will not stand
With the beast to call him lord, and worship him according to his word.
This is the climax of iniquity, and Satan's triumph of all history—
Be god on earth—this is his dream, the beast he uses in this scheme:
The world be one great family with all religions in sole unity,
To feed the minds with Satan's leaven, to false security and earthly peace,
Promising all war and strife would cease.

But the Cry the loud those lies lays open, the words of saints are freely spoken,
And every soul the truth so plain, will then discern through the Spirit's pouring out
Leaving Babylon with great a shout.

Now the dragon's vengeance rages against the saints who cried the message.
Troubled Babylon is now to rise with fury, full ablaze with hate and haste
To haunt with rigor God's elect, with condemnation to beset.
The time of trouble so severe, the Bible speaks of is then here.

The saints are seized to stop their voice, evil minds rejoice
In the proclaimed conclusion—their execution—
So that death is to devour that hated sect in one set hour.

Behold, one by one the plagues are falling, man and beast are languishing
Woes unrivaled ravishing the impenitent, in all this misery do not repent
For grace has past—probation closed—cursed is thus the wicked host.
The race rebellion-driven is now reaping, for not having given,
Heed to Christ's last call to safe, God's cup of wrath that now does wave
All mercy from it, they must drink and down to hell will sink.

.....

Then as the wicked raise their hands to strike the deadly blow upon the saints
They stall in midair, fall to the ground as terror grips the mob with horror,
At the sound of thunder blasting with tremendous angry lightning.

The wicked shudder at the sight so dreadful, alas, no way to flee the scene so awful,
For now the earth is moving, heaving, reeling to and fro,
The waters cease to flow, all nature screams in agony because of man's iniquity.
This is the end—now the world is in the hand of
Him who comes to take His faithful home, evermore to be His own.

Amidst the darkness, chaos, fright, God's people stand in heavens light.
The trumpet sounds aloud to shake graves open, sleeping saints now to awaken,
Coming forth with bodies glorious, pure in Christ's own righteousness,
To meet the Lord then in the air, with the living saints translated in God's image fair.
As Christ with power, splendor bright in dazzling light draws nigh,
The wicked are consumed as He descends and stands
Above the earth with all the angels who gather the redeemed to mingle With them, lift them up to Jesus on the
cloud and rise to heaven with the shout



Of victory to leave this earth now doomed and ruined.

Seven days the ride will take, Jesus teaching clear to make
To those who had not known the day, the Lord had hallowed to remember
God's creation and to render worship due to Him
On His day of rest—the holy Sabbath—
The man of sin had changed to wrest from the heart of the commandments
God had given for remembrance.

.....

Then Jesus opens wide the gate to Paradise. All enter through the pearly door,
And God the Father comes to bless the throng His Son had died for,
And desired those be with Him, who gave their earthly fame, and gain and lives,
To be with Him who bought their souls to make them whole,
With blood so precious on the cross, nevermore to suffer loss.
But a crown, a mansion, life eternal, as reward be given all.
They cast their crowns at Jesus' feet with thankfulness and gratitude
And praise Him at the grand banquet, astute,
Jesus has prepared for them as welcome to the heavenly realm.

Then crowns Him blessed Israel, to be their King Immanuel.
They honour, worship Christ the King, so that all the heavens ring,
With sacred anthems, joyous voices, every ransomed soul rejoices
In adoration for Him who wrought such great salvation.
In bliss, joy, peace, love, happiness the days are spent,
For all sorrow, woe came to an end. Amen.

Edda Tedford, Canada



NORTH AMERICAN YOUTH CONFERENCES 2016

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12

TORONTO, CANADA. July 31-August 3. If you are between the ages of 13 to 32, like camping, canoeing and communing with nature, come join us for some time away from the city and experience the handiwork of our Creator. There will be some interesting workshops and outdoor activity in the rugged beauty of Killbear Provincial Park, 3 hours north of Toronto. **Cost: \$100.** For more information email: osner777@hotmail.com or call (+1) 514- 521- 7272

CEDARTOWN, U.S.A. JULY 17-23. An International Youth and Family Conference will be held in Cedartown USA. Presentations will be given by brethren who have carried the gospel message around the world, touching the hearts of many young people and families. Time will be devoted to topics of particular interest to various age groups. There will also be public outreach, praise, fellowship, recreation and much more. For more information email: youth@sda1844.org or youngreformers.us@gmail.com or call (+1) 770-748-0077 or (+1) 678-246-9085. See <http://www.imsyouthconference.us/>



To Forgive

Janet and Julie were sisters. They were also best friends. They played together every day after school. Best of all, they liked playing with their dolls. Janet's best doll had real hair and would drink water from a bottle. Julie's favorite had the most beautiful dress you could ever imagine.

One day the girls had to ride downtown with their mother on an errand. They didn't mind because they just pretended they were taking their dolls for an outing. But the trip took longer than they had expected, and after a while they got tired of playing with their dolls. Before you knew it, the girls were fighting.

"Hey, you're crowding me. Get over on your own side of the seat," Janet fussed.

"I'm not on your side! Mom, Janet's fussing at me and I'm not doing anything," Julie whined.

"And keep your hands off my doll," Janet answered back.

"I'm not hurting your doll. What do you care if I smooth her hair, anyway. You don't take care of her!" Julie kept the fight going.

"Then see how you like it if I give your precious little doll some excitement. You never take her out for any fun!" Janet dangled Julie's doll out the window by one leg. "Whee, baby! Don't you love feeling the wind in your hair?"

Julie went crazy! "Mom, Janet's going to throw my doll out the window! Make her stop! Make her stop!"

Janet felt the car slow as Mom put on the brakes. "Julie needs to be taught a lesson," Janet thought. "She's always getting into my things. I'll just let go of her doll and give her a scare. Mom's stopping the car anyway." So Janet let go of Julie's doll and Julie began to wail.

Mom stopped the car and turned to ask the girls what on earth was going on. "She threw my doll out the window!" Julie screamed.

"I only dropped her as Mom brought the car to a stop." Janet pouted. "She's not hurt. You'll see. Anyway, you started it. You touched my doll first!"

Mother opened the car door. Julie and Janet pushed their heads out the window. The worst possible scene met their eyes. Julie's precious doll was pinned under the car's rear wheel. Her beautiful dress was covered with mud and her chest pressed flat.

"Now look what you've done!" Julie yelled. "I'll never forgive you, I won't, I won't! And I don't ever want to play with you again. You're not my friend! And I wish you weren't my sister!" Julie began to cry.

How do you feel when someone hurts you badly? Usually you feel so bad you just wish you could hurt the person back just like they hurt you. You don't want anything to do with them, and there doesn't seem to be any way you could ever be friends again.

But God has provided a way for us to heal the hurts between us. The Bible teaches us how Christians live in relationship with one another. Human beings will hurt each other because of their sinfulness. But the Bible teaches us to say we are sorry when we have done wrong. And Jesus helps us to forgive one another even when we have hurt each other deeply. Saying we're sorry and forgiving one another is hard, and it doesn't happen fast. But it is God's plan for helping us to live together as His family.

At first Janet was so mad at Julie she didn't want to say she was sorry. But after a while she began to feel very badly about what she had done. It would be hard to admit she had done wrong. Maybe Julie wouldn't want

to be her friend anymore. Then Janet had an idea. She would give Julie her favorite doll with the real hair and her baby bottle. It was the only way she could think of to show how sorry she was.

Meanwhile, Julie was so upset about her broken doll that all she could think about was getting back at Janet. She knew what she would do! She would sneak into her room and rip the hair out of her favorite doll and stomp on her baby bottle with her foot. A little part of her was worried she'd miss Janet as a friend, but right now she didn't care. Quietly she opened Janet's bedroom door. "Oh! Janet! I didn't know you were here!" she cried out in surprise. Her plan would just have to wait, she thought to herself.

Imagine her surprise when Janet invited her into her room. "I'm really sorry I dropped your doll out the window and she got run over," Janet said. "Mom says there's nothing that can be done to fix her up. So I want you to have my doll with the

real hair and the baby bottle. Here. She's yours now."

Julie just looked at her friend. She thought about her plan to stomp on the baby bottle and pull out the doll's beautiful hair. "I'm sorry too for wanting to get you back," Julie said softly. I can't take your favorite doll. But we can share her! I tell you what. Let's play like we're teachers and all our dolls are our students, want to?

One thing was sure. Janet never wanted to hurt Julie like that again!

Saying you're sorry and forgiving can make it possible for friends and family who hurt each other to come back together and live together happily again. It's God's special gift to His family on earth. He was the first to forgive, and when He lives in our hearts, His love makes it possible for us to say we're sorry and forgive too. It's a gift you'll want to pass on in your family and among your friends.



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Gambia



Brother Judicaël M. Luboya

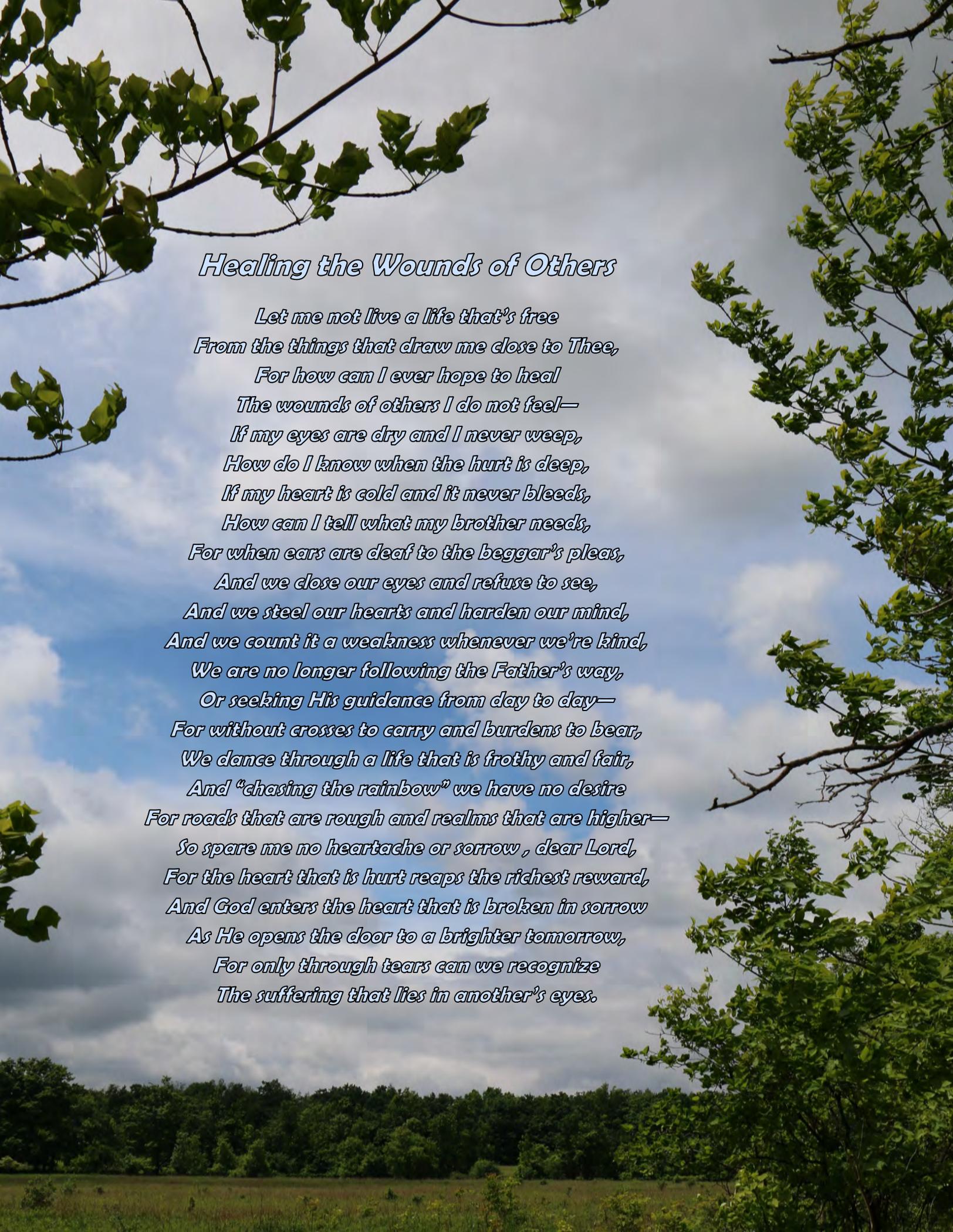


Pastor S. Moyo, Congo Union president, in his visit in Kananga , Central Congo Field.

During Central Congo Field reorganization

Ethiopia





Healing the Wounds of Others

*Let me not live a life that's free
From the things that draw me close to Thee,
For how can I ever hope to heal
The wounds of others I do not feel—
If my eyes are dry and I never weep,
How do I know when the hurt is deep,
If my heart is cold and it never bleeds,
How can I tell what my brother needs,
For when ears are deaf to the beggar's pleas,
And we close our eyes and refuse to see,
And we steel our hearts and harden our mind,
And we count it a weakness whenever we're kind,
We are no longer following the Father's way,
Or seeking His guidance from day to day—
For without crosses to carry and burdens to bear,
We dance through a life that is frothy and fair,
And "chasing the rainbow" we have no desire
For roads that are rough and realms that are higher—
So spare me no heartache or sorrow, dear Lord,
For the heart that is hurt reaps the richest reward,
And God enters the heart that is broken in sorrow
As He opens the door to a brighter tomorrow,
For only through tears can we recognize
The suffering that lies in another's eyes.*