

The Reformation
Messenger

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 2, FEBRUARY 2011



International Missionary Society of the S.D. A Church Reform Movement



**Therefore if any man be
in Christ, he is a new
creature: old things are
passed away; behold, all
things are become new.
2 Corinthians 5:17**

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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Exodus 20:1-17

- I Thou shall have no other gods before me
- II Thou shall not make any graven images
- III Thou shall not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain
- IV Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy

- V Honor thy father and Mother
- VI Thou shall not kill
- VII Thou shall not commit adultery
- VIII Thou shall not steal
- IX Thou shall not bear false witness
- X Thou shall not covet

A Perfect Christian

Have you ever met a perfect Christian? One who is keeping all the commandments of God perfectly, who loves every person in the world, including his enemies, who never speaks evil of anyone, and is patient as Job? One who never gets angry or upset, and is humble and meek as Moses or John the Baptist, and also has a great desire to do missionary work?

Does such a Christian exist? Is it even possible for us to be perfect and sinless?

Another question we need to answer: Is perfection necessary for eternal life and heaven? Will God save almost perfect people, who may have only one little sin left, one sinful indulgence?

Job said, "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will He help the evil doers." Job 8:20.

A perfect Christian does not take chances but an almost perfect Christian can be lost; he takes chances, and may not make it to heaven.

"Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Ps. 1:5. Sinners do not feel at ease or comfortable among God's people; sooner or later they want to leave.

Sister White wrote, "The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause." EW 50

What is the measure or standard of perfection that we must reach?

Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. This means keeping the 10 Commandments.

A professed Christian who does not believe that perfection is possible will never reach it. He is not hungering and thirsting after righteousness. He has set a low standard for himself, and even that standard he fails to reach.

Yet the Bible is clear, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.

Jesus never said that perfection is impossible; He said to people that He healed, "Go, and sin no more."

The rich young man who came to Jesus asked, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Matt. 19:16. Jesus told him what he had to do in order to be perfect. To every person Jesus has an answer, what it is they have to do in order to reach perfection.

The Pharisees considered themselves perfect in obedience to God, and condemned Jesus and His disciples of wrongdoing. In outward ceremonies they were perfect, but not in all things. Jesus said, "But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Luke 11:42.

The Pharisees were not perfect. They hated the Romans, also they would not enter into the house of Gentiles for fear that they would contaminate themselves. They hated Jesus and His disciples. They looked perfect

from the outside, but their hearts were not clean.

“Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.” Luke 11:30.

David gave instruction to his son, Solomon. “Solomon my son, know thou the God of your father, and serve Him with perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.” 1 Chron. 28:9.

When the heart is polluted, then the whole body is evil. Jeremiah writes about the human heart, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it.” Jer. 17:9.

Amaziah was the king in Judah and he did many things correctly, but we read of him, “And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.” 2 Chron. 25:2.

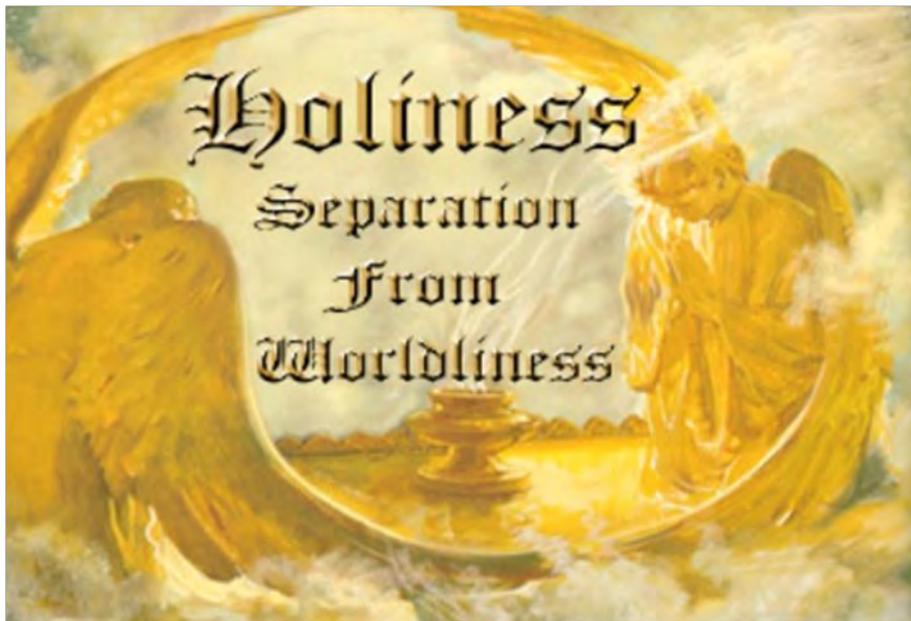
Many Christians serve God for selfish reasons. They want heaven and eternal life, but they do not love God, neither their fellow man. Outwardly they are faithful but their hearts have not been converted. Their minds understand the truth, but they do not love it.

This happened to the church in Ephesus. “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name’s sake has laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” Rev. 2:2-4.

They were not perfect Christians because they had lost their first love.

Paul writes, “Though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” 1 Cor. 13:2, 3.

A perfect Christian is filled with love to God and to his fellowmen. John writes to us, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” 1 John 4:18.



The old Israelites in the time of Moses were fearful of the giants in the land of Canaan. They wept all night, “And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron... And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt.” Num. 14:2, 4.

Because they had no love to God, therefore they were fearful and murmured against God. And God said to them, “Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness... from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against Me.” Num. 14:29.

A fearful person is the first one mentioned of the people who will be cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 21:8)

Anyone who has fear of the Sunday law, time of persecution or the time of trouble is not a perfect Christian and therefore will not be found in heaven.

It is not enough that we keep the Sabbath, pay tithes, and are vegetarians. These are important but they are not everything. We must be perfect in humility. If we learn this characteristic we can never be offended. A humble person agrees with all evilspeaking of himself.

He says like Paul that there is nothing good in him; he is the least of his brethren.

We need to be perfect in love, so that we can love even our enemies, and speak well of them to others.

We have to be perfect in missionary work. Our love to the lost sinners must be so great that we make it a priority in our lives, and all other things must take second place.

We need to be perfect in health reform. We must control our appetite, and learn to fast, and to eat only healthy foods and at the proper times.

We need to be perfect in tithes and offerings. One who robs God in tithes and pays a lesser amount will not have a treasure in heaven. Rather we must pay more than 10 percent.

We also need to learn patience. We must be like Job. This is not an easy lesson, but with the help of God we can learn it.

Also perfection in forgiveness must be learned. We do not need to wait that one who has offended us will come and ask for forgiveness. No, as soon as an offense is done to us, it is already forgiven.

One of the more difficult lessons to learn is sacrifice. It goes against the natural human nature, but if our love to God is greater than our love to ourselves, then it becomes possible to practice.

Many other things can be added to this list of characteristics which we must learn in order to be perfect Christians. This can include our prayer life, Bible reading, our thoughts and our words.

The church of God is the school where He is teaching us perfection. When the school year is nearing the end, then the students are given tests to find out if they have learned the lessons.

God also is testing us to find out if we have reached the perfection that is in His own character. If not, then we are not prepared to enter into the higher grade which will be in heaven.

In 1844, God called about 50,000 to His school—the church. Then when they had to pass the test on

October 22nd, only about 50 people passed the test, and only they were able to enter into the higher grade to continue their learning.

In 1914, only 2 percent of the believers passed the test in Europe, and they were called to continue their studies in the higher school of the Reformation.

We are not alone in learning all these lessons, but God, with the help of the Holy Spirit and His angels is our School Master; He will perfect us.

Paul writes, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Cor. 7:1.

God has made a promise to perfect our holiness. He is expecting the end result of His 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.” Eph. 5:27.

At that time, every half-converted, lukewarm Christian will be shaken out, and the perfect church will receive the latter rain and finish the work of God on the earth. May the Lord help us to learn all these lessons before it is forever too late. AMEN.

Timo Martin

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THE PRIVILEGE OF KNOWING REALITIES

It is not uncommon to hear preachers begin their sermons with such words as "God is good!" or "God is wonderful!" Then we hear the response "all the time!" or in some churches such is followed by loud AMENS. Well, one characteristic that makes God good and wonderful is that "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7). For six thousand years of this earth's existence, God has been doing this for the betterment of His people. In doing so, He has been unfolding the realities that the world would face. Whatever God speaks comes to pass regardless of how long it takes--mind you He does it at His appointed time! In all cases, it has required a decision on the part of the receiver of the message before the reality comes.

Genesis 6: 8-22, presents the days of Noah when God revealed realities to him of "things not seen as



yet" (Heb. 11:7). He told him to prepare an ark for He was going to destroy the earth with water. For 120 years the realities of the flood were not seen and Noah was greatly mocked by unbelievers. But Noah was sure of the realities for by faith he saw them, was obedient and was eventually saved. The unbelievers also saw the realities of the flood but quite too late after it had already begun and they all perished.

In the time of Lot, (Gen. 19:1-29) Lot was told of the realities of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and rushed to warn his relatives. But what did they do?

They laughed at the realities and Lot went away bitterly. But that morning his relatives saw the realities as told by Lot but it was too late for them to adjust and free themselves!

In the days of Ahab, (1 Kings 22:7-38) the prophet Micahiah told him about the realities of the war but he ignored the warning and perished there. So too was Judah in the times of Jehoiakim the king, warnings had been given about the realities of captivity but were accompanied with no repentance and confession, so the people were taken to captivity by the strong empire of Babylon, led by king Nebuchadnezzar.

Nineveh, in the time of Jonah had been warned of realities to take place just 40 days later. The people, including the king humbled themselves and the anger of God was averted and so they were saved.

God revealed the realities of the Saviour's birth to the wise men of the East. These wise men passed through Herod's house and told him about the reality, but Herod was bent upon the destruction of the King of kings and thus died unrepentant. But when the angels told the shepherds of the realities in Bethlehem about the Saviour's birth, they went to see Him and thus God blessed them!

When He made an appearance at a Synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30), Jesus told the congregation of the realities that the prophecy in Isaiah 61 had been fulfilled. But instead of acknowledging Him as the Messiah, the Son of God, and humbly prostrated themselves before Him, they asked "Is not this Joseph's son?" (v.22) and were filled with wrath and wanted to kill Him. Thus they forever lost their opportunity of being with the only One who could save them from their sins and wretchedness.

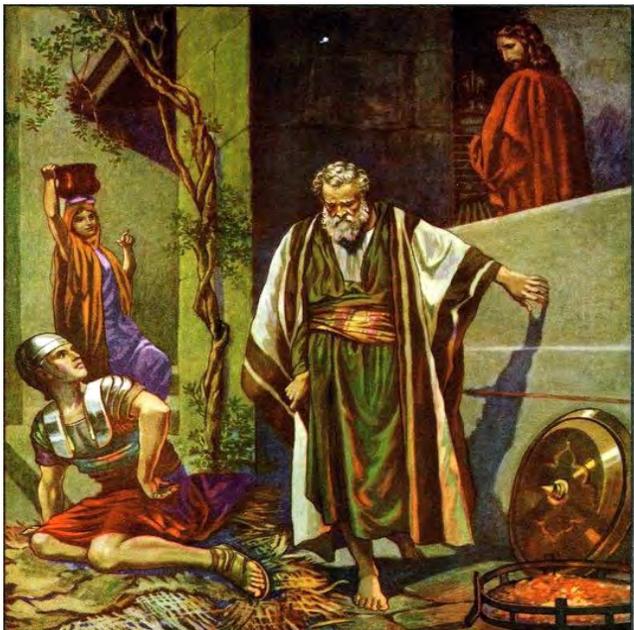
Peter the disciple, one who would become the great defender of the truth, when told of the reality that he will reject his Master, instead of humbling himself and praying to overcome by God's power, he chose to enter into contention with the One who was acquainted with the end of things from the beginning. When he faced

the situation he cried bitterly for it with his heart breaking! This saved him; because he did not hesitate to acknowledge his sin! Remember always that “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9.

In Matthew 24, Christ revealed the end time events (realities) which included the destruction of Jerusalem. And according to the instructions given, all Christians heeded them and “not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.” GC 30. Alas! Behold, there was a man who spoke of realities to befall Jerusalem day and night but ended up being killed together with the rest of the ungodly!

In Daniel 8:14, realities are revealed relating to the time frame that extends to 1844. Consequently, a little before the end of this period, as early as 1833 a man of God arose by the name of William Miller to tell the people the realities that 1844 would bring. But as seen in his dream recorded in EW 48, many joined the movement out of fear and when the disappointment came, they were all swept away except about fifty people, who remained faithful and continued with the Advent Movement. Many realities were revealed unto them relating to the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary.

In 1904, 1909, and 1913, through the prophet E.G White, God revealed the realities of bloodshed in both WWI and WWII and admonished the church to stand firm in the trials. But in over 14 countries in Europe where this test came so gravely, the church yielded its stand of being non-combatants, and allowed their



members to join the army. Thus they lost the identity of the remnant church, “keeping the commandment of God and the faith of Jesus” in 1914. Not long after this (1915, 1920) the General Conference completely sided with those in apostasy, sanctioned and ratified all the acts of violence and the taking of life, and with it, Sabbath violation, under the disguise of what they still call “*liberty of conscience*”. In this way the church gives license to her members to transgress the laws of God. This is what realities can bring.

At this point, it is worthwhile to pause and look around. Which direction do we take each time we meet similar realities? Do we yield to the powers of darkness? There are certain realities which we cannot afford not to think about without compromising our own salvation. These are:

- a) The close of probation;
- b) The National Sunday Law; and the
- c) Second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in power and great glory.

The first of these is the most solemn in that it will decide one’s eternal destiny. No man knows when the work of ministration will finally end and the door of mercy be forever shut. Finding mercy in reality (a) means happily progressing to reality (b) and thereafter reality (c).

Dear readers, brothers, sisters and all friends you have the knowledge of the realities that will soon overtake the world, some of which are already being fulfilled. On the other hand, the closing of probation is a reality, so what is our spiritual standing? Remember, having the knowledge of realities is important but this knowledge in itself has no saving power. Knowing what realities will be cannot earn us heaven, but how close we are to the Source of life—Jesus Christ—“for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). We need not just to be content with being in the church. Cry aloud unto God for Him to rid you of all the defects of character!

In conclusion, knowing realities is a privilege in order for us to change before they strike. Let us take this present opportunity when these realities have tarried to accommodate us, the wayward children, and get saved. Let us pray to God in humility and with our whole hearts and with fasting, He will transform us. This is the time! **AMEN.** *Joel Jungubawa Msiska*

Blantyre, Malawi

“IT IS ENOUGH!”

“But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” 1 King 19:4 (KJV)

DIGNIFIED HARLOT

Jezebel, a pagan princess to King Ahab, scornful to execute her wicked plans in secret, sends to Elijah, the prophet, to tell him that she has sworn to kill him, pretending that nothing could deter her from nor protect him against her stroke of death. Yet, Elijah the Tishbite was called by some of the Jewish Rabbis, “the flower of the prophets.” His name signifies, “my God is Jehovah.”

When persecutors cannot wreak their malice and fury against God, they do it upon His servants. But they, who by their own sins provoke God against a nation, are the real troublemakers of it! Unsettled notions about religion lead to unsound practices; and there can be no communion between Christ and Belial. Elijah, who stated that, “my God is the Lord,” was also called the “troubler of Israel” by King Ahab. “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” (1 Kings 18:17).

The promoters of false religions desperately hate those who zealously oppose their designs. And “no persecutor is more malicious or furious than a profane woman” (Diogenes Laertius). Chilon, an eminent Greek philosopher also had an interesting precept saying, “to threaten no one, because that is a woman’s behaviour,” was claimed by Herodotus as the wisest of the Seven Sages of Greece in one of his aphorisms.

How weak and spiritless are the greatest zealots for God when left to themselves! Elijah had just commanded both King and subjects; now he shrinks for fear of a dignified harlot!

LIKE PASSIONS

But earlier, Elijah knew that King Ahab was his enemy, and sought his life, yet, without hesitation or fear, upon God’s command he went to face him! God, however, often exercises His people with the heaviest trials after they have met with remarkable favors or success. Ahab thus accusing Elijah, expressed, but unwillingly though, to be a messenger from God because he could never

have supposed that a man had it in his power to cause a famine and the consequent calamities.

Elijah furthermore boldly met with the prophets of Baal, who, in their desperation to call down their god and to hear them even “cut themselves after their manner until blood gushed out upon them.”(v-28); (this is a heathen custom practiced for ages and may still be seen among some savages of central Africa; and by a sect of Mohammedans “the howling dervishes” in most solemn feasts, but especially in times of national affliction as an act of penance). It is a poor religion that consists chiefly in externals; and a devilish one that requires inhuman severities.

Elijah, however, fled to Beer-Sheba situated in the southern extremity of the land between Judah and Simeon; though he was a holy prophet. Yet from James 5:17, we learn that “he was a man subject to like passions as we are.” He went into this direction because he feared. He must have made a great circuit, as that journey might be performed in just a few days. But, this is one of many scriptural coincidences; Moses, Elijah, types, and John the forerunner of Christ, all were forty days in the wilderness, the same as Christ himself!

This, however, is not merely a story of King Ahab and the pagan princess, Jezebel threatening the life of a singular prophet who in fear fled into the wild country and who impatiently wished for death, but of one who deserted the path of duty.

Other giants of faith, in fact, “men subject to like passions as we are,” also shrank from the path of duty:

Moses in Numbers 11:14, 15, said, “I can’t bear all these people any more alone – it’s too heavy for me.” Moses was complaining. (It Is Enough!) The mixed multitudes weeping for the fleshpots of Egypt (in the wilderness) said, in essence, “If this is how you’re going to treat me, kill me right now.”

Jeremiah said in Jer. 20:14-18, “Cursed be the day I was

born. Why didn't you kill me in the womb...with my mother as my grave?" (It Is Enough!)

Jonah said in Jonah 4:3, 8, "Lord take my life from me... better for me to die than to live." (It Is Enough!)

Jesus Christ was constantly faced with failure...Satan was working to oppose Him and His way. Isaiah 49:4 writes, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought... and in vain." (It Is Enough!)

Ah! But when men impatiently wish for death, they are ordinarily in a frame of mind very unfit for it; and would be ready to recall their wish if God were to grant it! We ought never to desert the path of duty though it leads us "through the valley of shadow of death." (Psalm 23) However dark providences appear we should never despair! We know not what further work or purpose God has for us. To desire to be with Christ is laudable but to be weary of our warfare is sinful.

BRINK OF DESPAIR

Jezebel, in 1 Kings 19:2 clearly states, "Your life" (the life of Elijah!). Here is a man of God, a devout servant, who has done a valiant service for His Master; an enthusiastic religious leader and ardent patriot; a man of great physical endurance. His feat of running before the chariot of King Ahab from Mt. Carmel to the palace of King Ahab and Jezebel demonstrates his excellent physical condition. But now is threatened with death for all his efforts. Jezebel swore vengeance on the withering prophet.

It is not in this world that the righteous receive just rewards for service performed in the name of the Lord. The tragedies of life may be in those who do the most in the cause of righteousness; and are those who suffer the most. Many do not understand the reasons now, but there is comfort in knowing that Jesus Christ, the Sinless One, suffered more than any one, you and I, or any one ever will. The Apostle Paul, of all the disciples, suffered the most next to Jesus.

Elijah arose, and "ran for his life." (v-3). This after a stupen-



dous victory over the 400 prophets of Baal and showing so much courage; fire from Heaven; with this could meet any trial of faith. He did not cringe before the fanatic position of the priests of Baal! He had the presence and blessing of God; never guessing his courage would fail him.

Suffering from reaction so often follows success. He hoped victory at Mt. Carmel would break the spell of Jezebel and the King. When Jezebel heard of Elijah's victory and the death at his hands of the 400 prophets of Baal, she stubbornly rejected Elijah's reformation. It was just more than he could take saying... "It Is Enough!"

He was not ready! Not prepared! Not aware! Not watchful! He was not ready for the cool, cunning, calculated, hatred of this wicked queen. Are you prepared? Such circumstances and ploys abound today! They come suddenly, unexpectedly!

ESCAPE!

Elijah's only thoughts were on escaping her clutches without thinking of the consequences. Has this ever happened to you? Escaping the crisis? I am sad to say that most often we take the same position as Elijah; running away from the problem or earthly cares; or perhaps even worse... denying the problem.

Elijah did not do right! He left his post of duty; in military terms; AWOL (Absent With Out Leave). His work wasn't over yet. The battle was only beginning! Here was the human side of Elijah. If he was courageous, he would have sent a message back to the queen to remind her that the same God that gave him the victory over Baal would not leave him. He would have angels to protect him; God's wrath would have fallen on Jezebel and a mighty reformation would have spread over the land. But, by running away he played into the hands of the enemy; running away from a heinous woman.

Elijah, however, didn't stop at Judah, but kept on going, traveling day and night into the wilderness, not even resting. His strength came from fear and adrenalin run-

ning in him. Here he demonstrated himself as a man of like passions with us; by fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel to Beersheba, 130 miles south of Jezreel, well into the territory of Judah and out of Jezebel's jurisdiction. By divine assistance he reached Horeb, the mountain of God, on the borders between Judah and Simeon, some 200 miles further South.

Depressed and discouraged he said, "It Is Enough!" At Mt. Carmel, only a few days ago, he was at the top of the sky... victorious! His spirits now sank to a new low. He is so defeated that he hides under a Juniper bush. Overcome by fatigue and strain he wishes to be dead! But, only an angel appeared and encouraged him to go on to Horeb, where he found shelter in a dark, dingy cave where the Lord confronted Elijah, saying, "What doest thou here?"

Here is a typical reaction for many people today... overstrained feelings... escaping, denying. But, by a divine kind of experience, a soul can be lifted to new heights of glory and victory; a religious revival, when the soul gives away discouragements and depression of everyday life problems, personal matters, and realities. Every day being born again, saved, finding Jesus, having His presence, the truth. But, remember, and listen! No one in this world can stay on top of the mountain always. (Mt. Carmel for Elijah) But, remember also--in our deepest distresses God is nearer to relieve us than we think, and faith must silence all objections! A promise of God is instead of a thousand arguments or excuses.

Moreover, to encourage their own peevish or bad-tempered forwardness, the impatient saints are apt to think matters in the church worse than they really are. But whom the Lord loves He will rebuke and chasten, He will direct and further employ. No place can exclude His gracious manifestations. It is the folly of human weakness to be discouraged for want of success in God's work. It bodes ill, however, when God's favourites become intercessors against a people. We may expect quickly to hear or see instruments of God's wrath, raised up to destroy them; for in His due time God will avenge His people.

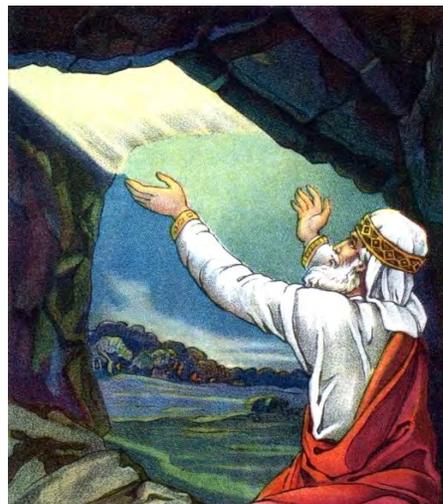
FAILED OR FAILURE?

But, Elijah's arguments and excuses caused his faith to fail; fleeing to the wilderness for fear of his life, and here he could not discharge his duties for which the

Lord has appointed him. Has your faith failed? The work he had begun he was not to complete. He failed! Ah! But, he was not a failure! God still read his heart. Elijah was not to perish in discouragement, and solitude in the wilderness. He would not go down into the tomb, but ascended with God's angels to be present in the glory of God in a convoy of flaming chariots. They, who can trust God with their all heart, will find themselves not losers (failures) by Him. God often exercises His people with the heaviest trials after they have met with remarkable favours.

God spoke to the distraught prophet (1 Kings 19:9-18; Ex 34:17-23) rebuking him for being where he should not have been (v -9,13). What a contrast; Elijah, the hero of faith on Mt. Carmel, victorious over Baalism. Elijah now the coward, of unbelief at Horeb, self-occupied, utterly discouraged, wishing to die (Rom 11:2 -4) praying against rather than for God's people... in fact a "nothingness!"

But the Lord's message as He spoke to Elijah was not in the earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the "still, small



voice" of His revealed will which probed the prophet's failure and directed him to wind up his ministry. Ah! Elijah learns an amazing secret! Jehovah, the Lord God Almighty is not to be found in the overwhelming power of nature unleashed. Some-

times His power is most dramatically released when He moves through the still small voice of a "changed conscience." How? "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). We fail too, for we have "like passions," but to be a failure is abominable – nasty, disgusting, vile! This is what we must fervently guard against! We can have another chance!

God, subsequently, ordered him to anoint another to be prophet in his place, his successor – Elisha, like many other biblical heroes – a man who was close to the soil; considered to be a man of some consequence, since his ground required twelve ploughs. He accompanied the

older prophet, Elijah, his master, in rounds to the prophetic schools or “sons of the prophets.”

It has been remarked that the miraculous works of Elisha are double the number performed by his predecessor (healing of the leper Naaman, the Syrian; parting of the Jordan; multiplying of the loaves and grain, the Shunamite’s son, purifying of the spring, etc.) What a calling!

HOW LONG?

These experiences will help what every human being will one day understand. What is this? That sin can only bring sorrowful shame, regrets, loss, unbelief and – failure! Ah! But that God’s mercy reaches into the deepest depths and channels of our heart; and faith lifts up the repenting soul to share in the glory of God. But, are you willing? “And Elijah came to all the people, and said, ‘How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’” (1 Kings 18:21). Well, how long, dear friends and brethren?

From Elijah’s experience, we learn another exciting lesson. What is that? “Apostasy today is similar as it was in Elijah’s day, spread over Israel.” (PK 170). This occurs by exalting human above divine, praise of popular leaders, worship of mammon, teaching of science above the truths of revelation, transgressing the Law, and many following after Baal. Satan is trying to break our hold on God by doubt, questioning, discouragement, and indifference, which brings our mistakes and failures before us, and tempts us to distrust God and question His love and concern for us until we say like Elijah – “It Is Enough!” Although God’s saints are generally few; they are often more numerous in times of general apostasy, than good men think; and all of them are under the special knowledge and care of God.

The Lord said to Simon, predicting his denial, “Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me strengthen your brethren.” (Luke 22:31, 32). You see, God brings us under His chastening until our stubbornness is broken. Our will falls, rebellion is ended and we are humbled at last before God. We can also quietly ask ourselves the probing question, “What are we doing here – elsewhere?” Furthermore, do you have the faith and persistence of Elijah for this time? Where are the Elijah’s of today?

How long?

The Apostle Paul, arguing for the “principle” of a remnant of Israel, referred to the 7,000 faithful worshipers in the time of Elijah (Romans 11:2). Here’s the story, also, of the combination of zealous bravery and human failure, giving added weight to the power of prayer exemplified in this man of God. He was a man of like nature with ourselves, but he prayed fervently, and God answered him. (James 5:17, 18). Great and inexpressible is the power of fervent prayer with God.

FAINTING SPELLS

Faint not! When you have reached the agonizing point of saying, “It Is Enough,” and fainting overcomes you; without courage or hope; failing strength, without vigor or enthusiasm, what is a timid one to do? God asks of you, “when faint, and the fierce fires of affliction surround you, don’t try to be strong!” Rather, it is time to declare an exuberant declaration of faith! Well, how? David said, “I would have lost heart, unless I had believed, that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!” (Psalm 27:13,14). Another of David’s undaunted psalms of refuge and comfort when fainting prods one is, “Be still, and know that I am God! (Psalm 46:10)

And great is the mercy when troubles and deliverances concur to strengthen our faith and increase our knowledge. God will have his witnesses in the worst of times and will endow them with gifts and graces proportionate to the difficulties with which they are called to struggle.

When dangers appear greatest, our faith in God’s promise and perfections should be strongest. If we can triumph in God as our own God, we may triumph over every trouble and danger. The revolutions on earth can little affect them whose hearts are duly fixed on things above. They need never fear, and they shall never fail, who have God for their refuge and their strength.

None can resist his effectual and heart-touching call; and no earthly cares can detain them from His service!

Say not now, **“IT IS ENOUGH!”**

John Theodorou, U.S.A.



BEHOLD THE KING

Central Canadian Region Conference (Dec 24-26, 2010)

For the final Sabbath of 2010, the Canadian Field decided to hold a second conference (in addition to the summer-time conference). The whole world is in a stir, many in a frenzy of activity, getting into the "Christmas Spirit." It is a time where people spend extravagant amounts of money for gifts for others (often useless), and feasting and gluttony, all in the name of celebrating Christ's birth. What a difference from the account we read in the Bible from the actual time when Christ was born over 2000 years ago.

While the rest of humanity is feasting on the things of this world, God's people decided to gather for a spiritual feast, providing an alternative to family and friends as a refuge in this time of revelry.

The theme of the conference was, "Behold the King", with the Scripture reading taken from Isaiah 33:22. "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us."

FRIDAY:

Brother Clive Russell gave the opening address on Friday evening, by introducing the theme and the Scripture reading. This scripture reading (Isaiah 33:22), relates three basic needs for the Christian. We need a Judge who can give us justice. We need a Lawgiver to make laws to guide us, and we need a King to govern. There are many judges, lawgivers and kings on this earth, but only one who will judge righteously. We

must choose carefully who we want as our judge and king. We were encouraged not to choose from those who have no part with Jesus. To them the preaching of Christ is foolishness. Behold the King whom you've chosen. Choose carefully. Jesus wants us to choose Him for our Judge, Lawgiver and King because He wants to save us.

Brother Errol Fletcher continued by conducting the next meeting. Although Jesus is all-powerful, limitless, omnipotent, He is the Branch that will execute judgment; the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, we read of Him as, "lowly, and riding upon an ass." Zech. 9:9. We have before us a King that the world has never seen before. With all His power and glory, He was without sin, full of goodness and truth. He rules over all the universe, yet He became sin for man. From His birth to His death on Calvary we see how lowly He was. He was born in a manger, baptized in the Jordan River and no one noticed Him until pointed out by John the Baptist. He was surrounded by children, publicans and sinners. Although He was lowly, He was also very dignified. We need to learn from Him and become lowly also. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Matthew 11:29.

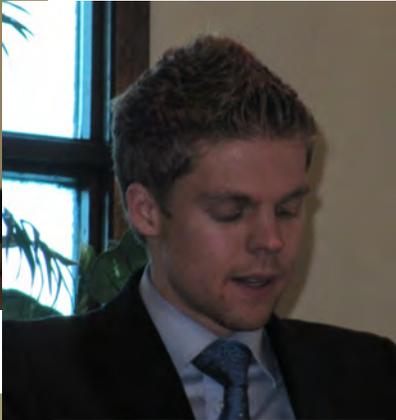
SABBATH

Sabbath morning dawned, and although the air was very cold, it was bright and sunny. After a lively Sabbath School, Brother Morris Lowe presented the Divine

Some of the Speakers



*Timo
Martin*



Richard Eaton



Nicholas Anca



Angela Russell



John Bescec



Lucy Flores

Service. “Behold the King.” Not **a** king, but **the** King. The Lord is our Judge. Why do we need a Judge? He determines our case and we all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. He determines our destiny. Jesus has the last word and it cannot be repealed. He determines whether we live or whether we die eternally. He is a kind and benevolent King and will judge righteously because He knows and understands where we have been. He will rule over the righteous, not the wicked—those who do not love Him. He will set up a kingdom where there will be no more sin. There are those who do not love Jesus because there are “too many rules”. They want freedom; however, they end up serving Satan which is the worst kind of bondage. Jesus says to take His yoke because it is easy and light. You have a choice to make. You must choose Jesus as King if you want to live forever in His eternal kingdom.

After a delicious lunch the children and young people presented songs and texts giving glory and praise to our King. Jesus is preparing mansions for us and we need to be patient a little longer. While Jesus is building mansions for us, we need to be building characters to be prepared to live in these mansions. Many promises made by our King were quoted, “Peace I leave with you,” “Another Comforter Will I give to abide with you forever.” “Fear not for I am with thee, when thou walkest through fire, I’ll be there.” “Ye shall seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”

Sister Angela Russell then brought our attention to the immense physical suffering our King endured at the hands of His enemies. This physical suffering is greater than any that man has suffered. We will never understand fully the physical pain; however, it was not from physical suffering that He died. He died of a broken heart for you and for me. Ponder what Christ did; the extreme suffering. Who will you give your allegiance to? He who harasses you? Or He who suffered for you? The choice is yours.

Brother Timo Martin reiterated the fact that we still have freedom and peace to do missionary work and we should earnestly use our time for this, because soon the time of persecution will be here, making it much more difficult to work. In *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, pg. 400, we read that it would do well for us to study the history of the Waldenses. They suffered and were terribly persecuted, but in the time of the end it will be worse, more intense. Brother Martin shared

with us some of the history and sufferings of the Waldenses as well as the victories. It was truly a terrible time. God's people have suffered many times in the past. In 1914 the faithful souls were betrayed to the authorities and many died in prison camps, but they were not afraid. Many faithful men in the Bible had to endure suffering before being exalted to positions of honour (i.e. David and Joseph). Daily we also are being tested. God is preparing us today for the future trials. There is only one thing we need to be afraid of--not the trials--but we need to fear sin. It will bring us eternal death in the end.

Following an encouraging testimony meeting, Brother Nicholas Anca gave our final meeting of the day. When Jesus comes, He won't change us. The change needs to be made day-by-day. We need to come to the true Shepherd for assistance. Jesus is our true Shepherd. We read from the life of David of how faithfully he guarded his sheep, risking his life. Our Shepherd gave His life for His sheep. The sinner needs compassion, and this the Shepherd will give. He has promised us a covenant of peace.

SUNDAY

In the morning Brother John Bescec shared with us the importance of titles. Titles are given to people to show status and importance, i.e. Professor, doctor, king, minister, priest, etc. It has often been the case that people do not live up to the titles they carry. Their behaviour proves them unworthy. To be called, **The King** means He is the King of Kings, the ruler of all. This title belongs to only one person – Jesus Christ. Jesus deserves the title. He will never fail us or back out of His promises. Soon our King is coming back to this earth and "every eye will see Him." Will this be a happy event for you?

All too soon came the time for the closing address. Brother Clive Russell encouraged us to reflect. Behold the King, our Judge and Lawgiver. He is so humble and lowly and came down to save us. Let us be grateful to God. He has given us another year of life. He has brought us thus far from different places. Although our King was meek, lowly, gentle and kind, He was also very dignified. May God grant us grace in the New Year to continue to walk in the straight and narrow pathway. The only way our spiritual life will be successful is if we, "Behold The King."

AMEN



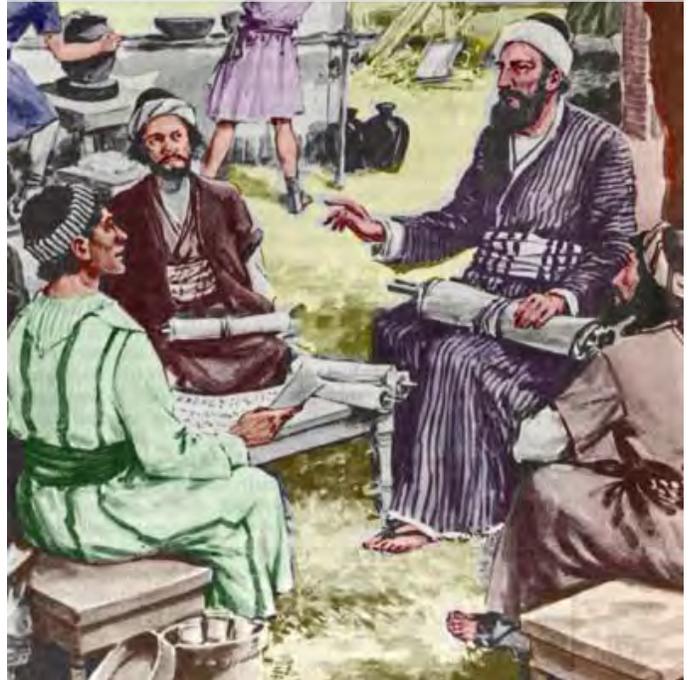
Music



CHILDREN



WHAT LEVEL ARE WE IN OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE?



What level are we in our spiritual life? What is our condition as a Christian, and are we ready to go to the next step? Are we ready to give our lives for Jesus? Are we ready, that if someone hits us on our left cheek, we give also our right cheek? Are we ready to put away jealousy, envy, anger, bitterness, impatience, irritability, hatefulness and vanity? Are we ready to be humble? If our answer is "yes" to all these questions, we are ready to go to the next level. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it says: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

In our society we try to be good citizens, whether we are at home, at school or at work. In Canada during graduation ceremonies in elementary school, high school or university, the students have to wear a special robe and hat. Everybody who has graduated that special day. Perhaps you remember when they handed you your certificate or diploma, signifying that you have finished university, high school or elementary school, and that you are ready to go to the next level. Those are very remarkable moments in our every day life. But as Christians, what is the next level? What are we going to receive once we are ready for the next level? Aren't you anxious to know how your spiritual life is?

When we get baptized, the most important step in our Christian life is to recognize Jesus as our Saviour and believe in His second coming. We give up many things that we liked and enjoyed. Often we think that we are making a big sacrifice. Sometimes we don't understand that we have to surrender our heart, our soul and our thoughts. We thought that as long as we are good Christians, everything was o.k. How wrong we are when we excuse ourselves for our defects of character that we still have, like resentment, impatience, irritation and jealousy. Do we truly know that God can cleanse us from all our heart's sins? Yes, but we have to believe. In 1 John 1: 8, 9 it says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

In the Bible we find different people that were almost ready to go to the next level, but because of some character trait they weren't able to do so. Their goal, for a moment, seemed very close but suddenly was far away and they couldn't reach that level. I we look at the first King of Israel, King Saul, chosen by God, the Bible tells us that the spirit of the Lord came upon him and he prophesied. In the book Patriarchs and Prophets, page 610, it says, "As Saul united with the prophets in their worship, a great change was wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. The light of divine purity and holiness shone in upon the darkness of the natural heart. He saw himself as he was before God. He saw the beauty of the holiness." How sad was the end of this king. On page 631 it says, "He who had been so highly favored of God, should transgress the commandment of heaven and lead Israel into sin." Stubbornness, jealousy, anger, envy and hatred grew in the heart of the King of Israel. He was ready to go the next level, but he couldn't. On page 683, we are told he was rejected by God and abandoned to destruction: "Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord."

If we still have some character traits that are holding us back from going to the next level or to just keep going at the current level, it is time to get rid of them. In Proverbs 28:13 it says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy."

We all want to wear the gown that Jesus is preparing for us. If we want to be sure that our names are written in the Book of Life, we need to get ready to prepare ourselves as if it was the last day of our life. Be a

cheerful Christian. Rejoice when troubles are coming. Be ready when the devil comes and tempts you. Study the word of God and be an A+ student. Sometimes that level seems very far away and looks very hard to reach, but if we invite Jesus to be with us, to seek Him, to know Him, and if we trust Him and obey Him daily and at every moment, we can get to the next level.

When I came to Canada I didn't speak any English I started with the Link programs, then after a few months I went to ESL. I studied English as a second language until I was almost eight months pregnant with Elaine. Time flew. Almost two years later I returned to school. One of the teachers made me take a test to see which level of English I was at now. They put me into levels 5 and 6. The classes started, but everything seemed very slow, and I felt I could learn faster. One day as I was going to my class I noticed another English class. It looked like they were participating more and the teacher impressed me with the way she was talking to the students. I asked my current teacher what level of English that class was. She said it was Grade 11 and 12 High School for adults. Without thinking I said, "I want to go to that level. I want to go to that class." The teacher reminded me that I am in level 5 and 6 of ESL English.

It was almost the end of July and the class was almost finished. I really wanted to go and ask if I was ready to take the High School classes, but I felt discouraged after what the teacher told me. A few days before the classes finished I saw the secretary from the High School, so I went and asked her. She told me that I had to talk with the Principal. The Principal asked me what level of study I had done in Mexico. I told him that I was a secretary. He determined that I needed four credits in order to finish High School. The courses I would have to do were Grade 11 and 12 English, and Grade 11 and 12 Computer Studies. For English you have to read a lot and at the end you have to write an essay. He looked at me and said, "I think you can do it." On September 1999, I started Grade 11 High School. It went very well. The teacher was very good and the way she explained things was easy to understand. I finished grade 11 and passed on to grade 12. I remember when the grade 12 class finished, the teacher encouraged me to keep reading and writing.

Now I was ready to go to the next class--the next level. Grade 11 Computer Studies was not very easy. The more I tried to concentrate, the harder it seemed. But I

kept going; and when we were going to have our final test I found myself full of doubts. I had a very difficult moment with the teacher the day before the test. Because of that I decided to go home for the day. I told her that I would come back the next day for the test. The next day she wanted revenge. She made me sit in her chair and use her computer. I felt very confused, knowing that everybody was looking at me; however, I tried my best.

The next day when we came back for our marks, I really wanted to cry because of my mark. One of the ladies that I knew since I started High School kept asking what my final mark was. I said I failed--I got 52. She said, "No you didn't. I got 50. We both passed. We can go to Grade 12 in Computers." I couldn't believe it. No way could I go to the next level with a 52. Even though I was not very happy with this mark, I decided I would do the last level, Grade 12 in Computers. Suddenly the teacher came and wanted to talk with me. She said "You were able to pass my class, but you can do it better if you stayed and took level 11 again, and gain a higher mark." I told her that I was going to think about it and I decided I didn't trust her. When I was in the new Grade 12 class, on the second day, my grade 11 teacher came to our class. I couldn't believe it. She started talking to my new teacher, all the time looking at me. When she left, my new teacher called me. She made selecting me sound random, but she said, "I want you to sit here in my chair and use my computer and explain to me all that we have learned yesterday up until now." The classes were very intensive. In one day we learned a lot of things. To remember both days was very difficult, but because I knew the other teacher was behind this I tried my best.

When I finished, the teacher told me to go back to my chair. She said "I wanted to be sure that you are in the right level." I really wanted to argue and ask, "why me?" I knew that half of the class marks were between 50-60% and wondered why they treated only me like that. I never understood.

I finished High school. I passed the levels. While one teacher told me I couldn't make it, the other told me that if I kept going, one day I could write books. Then another wanted me to go back and made me feel very unhappy, because she was unhappy too.

In our Christian life we find that some levels are harder than others. Sometimes we find that someone wants us

to go back to the level that we started from. Sometimes we hear ugly things about ourselves that are really hard to understand, especially if it comes from another Christian, and because of that we look back; but remember, the world doesn't need more sinners. Jesus Christ needs sinners and He is calling us to repentance. We must be determined, no matter what level we are at, to go to the next level. When we think of heaven and that one day we are going to meet Jesus our Saviour, we have to reach for the best mark, which is 100% or A+. Maybe we think that with 52% we can pass. Dear brothers and sisters, examine yourselves; make sure that the level you are in is the one that will take you to the next step -- the right one that will take you directly to heaven. And if you know that someone wants to do something for the Lord, please don't underestimate them, encourage them and help them.

Finally I would like to read something that I wrote during this time in High School:

"I came to this country for a better life and I love it. I like my homeland. Sometimes I have the feeling that I need to go back. I don't want to be rejected because I'm not as white as snow and I don't have the sky in my eyes or the sun in my hair. But I do have the night and soon I will have some silver stars. Canada has many children and like a mother, sometimes it can be angry; how different things could be if we all were as one. I wish that in the world we could all be the same, without colour or language to separate us; but we are all different and often we want to fight because of our differences.

"One day while I was walking through this land which I thought was the Promised Land, I saw pain, suffering, sickness, poverty, violence, hatred, and crime, and realized that this was not the Promised Land. It was not the one that I was looking for; how easy it was to get confused. My Heavenly Father, through these years, taught that there is another land, a land where we will never grow old, a land where there is no pain or tears, a land where you and I can go and live in eternal joy."





The Importance of Making Right Decisions

How important is it as Christians that we make the right decisions in our lives? And also, how do we even know what is the right decision to make versus the wrong decision? Once we have figured out what is the right decision to make, then who and what do we look towards in order to make that right decision?

“Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” 1 Kings 18:21. Isn’t that interesting that question that Elijah poses to the nation of Israel, how long halt ye between two opinions? How many people today are also stuck between two different masters, two different lifestyles, and ultimately two different decisions?

Many Christians go to church one day of the week and have an excellent outward appearance of godliness, much as the Pharisees in Jesus’ time did; but then for the rest of the week their heart is filled with corruption, wickedness, and all manner of evil. They believe that serving God half heartedly and when it is convenient for them will make them worthy of His kingdom, but how sadly mistaken they are. They believe it is enough to serve and honour God one day of the week and then the rest of the week they satisfy the desires of their own selfish heart.

And how many young people have we seen in this church who have been brought up to respect and honour God and to know the truth, but throughout their youth they have an obsession and an infatuation with

sin and the pleasures of this world? They never openly deny God, and in fact they may still attend church regularly and say they believe in God and want to be saved. However their actions speak so much louder than their words and their actions show that their heart is far from God and they have very little desire to serve Him with all their heart. So these young people and older ones as well who have a form of Godliness but never truly come to the foot of the cross and surrender all to Jesus, who are they actually serving? Are they serving God or are they serving Satan, the founder of all evil?

To answer the question, we read in Matthew chapter 6:24. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” From this verse it is quite clear that if you serve God then you will end up hating Satan and everything that he stands for, including all the pleasures of the world, no matter how much you may have once loved them. And if you love Satan and the pleasures of sin, then eventually, despite your efforts to keep up a good appearance of holiness through regular church attendance and tithe paying, etc. you will end up hating God and all the principles and morals that He stands for. According to the Bible it is humanly impossible to be serving and honouring both God and the prince of darkness at the same time.

But one important thing to remember is that God expects us to give Him our whole heart, soul and being. So therefore if we are serving God with 95% of our heart but there is 5% of our heart which is holding on to sin, are we actually serving God? The answer is a sure and most definite NO! So that means even if there is one little sin we are holding on to and just love too much to give up, then ultimately all the power of the gospel is lost upon us and we have made our decision for sin and Satan. So it is interesting that if we choose to serve Satan he doesn’t mind if we openly proclaim that we love God and want to honour Him as long as our actions and our personal lives speak otherwise. As long as Satan can get us to hold on to one sin or one selfish desire then he knows that we are under his captivity and we are his slaves. He also knows that if we continue to hold on to that one sin or selfish desire, then ultimately it will cut off our connection with God completely and we will drift further and further away from God until our final destruction is complete. So God expects complete and total surrender and obedience to His precepts and commandments. However,

Satan only wants a small piece of our heart because he knows that this small piece of our heart, which resists the love of God, will be our downfall in the end.

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:15

How interesting is this question posed unto Israel by Joshua. If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord choose you this day whom ye will serve. How many people in the world today seem to think that God is being unfair and unjust in asking us to serve Him with everything that we are. He is a kind and loving God who loves us unconditionally and does nothing but encourage and support us, yet still people think it is unfair that we are expected to serve Him. He came to this world as a man and suffered a life full of hardship and toil and then was crucified by those same people He came to save; and still people don't want to serve him and think it is too much to ask. He gives people chance after chance to serve Him and gives his grace and forgiveness freely to all those who want it and still people harden their heart against him.

But how inspirational is it that Joshua said “But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord?” Isn't that something that every one of us should be saying every day of our lives? Even if the rest of the world is choosing to serve Satan and openly disrespects God and tramples upon His Ten Commandments we will serve the Lord. Even if the stand we make for God is openly criticized and we are persecuted for His name's sake that will not stop us from serving Him. Even if we are brought to prison and to a martyr's death we will not compromise on a single one of our principles!

Examples of Wise Decisions Found in the Bible

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not

fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.” Hebrews 11: 23-27

Did Moses make the right decision when he chose to turn his back on the pleasures of sin and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God? It took great faith to do what he did, but Moses knew that despite the fact that he would be called upon to suffer hardships and afflictions, God would be with him through every trial he had to face. And he chose to face a life full of hardships and trials rather than a life of ease and pleasure without God.

All of us are facing the same decision in our lives today! We can choose the popular course that the world expects us to choose and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season or we can choose to suffer affliction with the people of God. But before making your decision remember that the pleasures of sin only last for a season whereas when you stand with the people of God, the Lord gives the gift of eternal life. Also remember, even if our lives may seem harder than those people who chose the wide road to destruction, whenever we face an obstacle, however insurmountable it may seem, we have God on our side; and if we allow Him, He will fight our battles for us. On the other hand, when people in the world begin to suffer tribulations, they often give up hope very quickly because they have nowhere to turn. And as sad as it is, many of them turn to drugs and alcohol in a futile attempt to deal with their problems and some of them even end up committing suicide. And this terrible end begins with their decision not to serve God but instead to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Another example of someone in the Bible who made a wise decision even in the face of great adversity was Daniel, choosing to still pray to the God of heaven despite the fact that this action could very well end his life. “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.” Daniel 6:10-11.

“Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.” Daniel 6:16.

“Daniel was high in command. The accusing host of evil angels stirred up the presidents and princes to envy and jealousy.... These agents of Satan sought to make his faithfulness to God the cause of his destruction....

“The king was ignorant of the subtle mischief purposed against Daniel. With full knowledge of the king's decree, Daniel still bows before his God, ‘his windows being open.’ He considers supplication to God of so great importance that he would rather sacrifice his life than relinquish it.

“God did not prevent Daniel's enemies from casting him into the lions' den; He permitted evil angels and wicked men thus far to accomplish their purpose; but it



was that He might make the deliverance of His servant more marked, and the defeat of the enemies of truth and righteousness more complete.... Through the courage of this one man who chose to follow right rather than policy, Satan was to be defeated, and the name of God was to be exalted and honored.

“Early the next morning King Darius hastened to the den and ‘cried with a lamentable voice,’ ‘O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?’

“The voice of the prophet replied: ‘O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me’....

“Daniel in the lions' den was the same Daniel who stood before the king as chief among the ministers of state and as a prophet of the Most High. A man whose heart is stayed upon God will be the same in the hour of his greatest trial as he is in prosperity, when the light and favor of God and of man beam upon him.... The power that is near to deliver from physical harm or distress is also near to save from the greater evil, making it possible for the servant of God to maintain his integrity under all circumstances, and to triumph through divine grace.” CC 255

Shouldn't this great Bible story inspire each and every one of us to also make the right decision--the decision for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Here was Daniel, one man in a heathen nation and he still showed no fear and he didn't hesitate to do the Lord's will despite him knowing full well that his obedience to God would cause him to be cast into a lion's den. What great faith in God. And also what great love Daniel had for the truth and how highly he valued doing what was right and making the right decision in every circumstance in life.

Daniel viewed talking with his best friend, Jesus on a daily basis as a privilege and an honour and it was something that he didn't take lightly. He viewed it as such a privilege and an honour that he was willing to lay down his life in order to continue pursuing this privilege. He would rather maintain his connection with God and stare death in the face than have his connection to God cut off and continue living. It is said that every human being faces hundreds of small decisions each day. And as a Christian every time we come to one of these decisions we are to seek that which is God's will, and rather than make the decision based on our own judgment we are to make the decision that God would want us to make. And even if the decision the Holy Spirit has impressed us to take will lead to us being ridiculed or persecuted or even killed, we are to make the right decision nonetheless.

How beautiful it is that God allowed Daniel's enemies to accomplish their purpose to a certain point but then He said, “No more; my servant Daniel has not completed his work here on earth.” And it was to make the victory of the truth more complete that God allowed this to happen.

Examples of Unwise Decisions Found in the Bible

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in

heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Matthew 19: 16-22.

"'If thou wilt be perfect,' Christ said, 'go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow Me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.'

"The lover of self is a transgressor of the law. This Jesus desired to reveal to the young man, and He gave him a test that would make manifest the selfishness of his heart. He showed him the plague spot in his character. The young man desired no further enlightenment. He had cherished an idol in the soul; the world was his god. He professed to have kept the commandments, but he was destitute of the principle which is the very spirit and life of them all. He did not possess true love for God or man. This want was the want of everything that would qualify him to enter the kingdom of heaven. In his love of self and worldly gain he was out of harmony with the principles of heaven.

"When this young ruler came to Jesus, his sincerity and earnestness won the Saviour's heart. He 'beholding him loved him.' In this young man He saw one who might do service as a preacher of righteousness. He would have received this talented and noble youth as readily as He received the poor fishermen who followed Him. Had the young man devoted his ability to the work of saving souls, he might have become a diligent and successful laborer for Christ.

"But first he must accept the conditions of discipleship. He must give himself unreservedly to God. At the Saviour's call, John, Peter, Matthew, and their companions 'left all, rose up, and followed Him.' Luke 5:28. The same consecration was required of the young ruler. And in this Christ did not ask a greater sacrifice than He Himself had made. 'He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.' 2 Corinthians 8:9. The young man had only to follow where Christ led the way.

"Christ looked upon the young man and longed after his soul. He longed to send him forth as a messenger of blessing to men. In the place of that which He called upon him to surrender, Christ offered him the privilege of companionship with Himself. 'Follow Me,' He said. This privilege had been counted a joy by Peter, James,

and John. The young man himself looked upon Christ with admiration. His heart was drawn toward the Saviour. But he was not ready to accept the Saviour's principle of self-sacrifice. He chose his riches before Jesus. He wanted eternal life, but would not receive into the soul that unselfish love which alone is life, and with a sorrowful heart he turned away from Christ." COL 391-393

So here we see the story of the rich young ruler who was faced with a decision as to whether he should go and sell everything he had and give to the poor and go and follow Jesus. But how sad it is that he chose his riches before Jesus! He had the choice of treasures in heaven and spending an eternity with Jesus, but he chose the riches of this world which only last a season and then they are gone. How many people in today's world are the same as this rich young ruler and are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing? They don't feel their need of Christ or their need of making any real change in their life. Today's world is the same as the world before the flood in which they were eating and drinking and giving in marriage and all the while they were making their decision to trample upon the truth and upon God's law. And because they were making their decision to trample upon the truth and upon God's law, they were also making their decision to be eternally lost and to experience the wrath of God which was displayed by the flood. And the people in today's world are also making their decision to trample upon God's law and to make an idol out of their houses, their lands, and their riches. Therefore the people in today's world will also experience the same end as the people before the flood; and it will be an end of destruction and of eternal death.

How many people in today's world are also the same as the rich young ruler in that they want eternal life but they will not receive into the soul that unselfish love which alone is life? They want all the pleasures of the world and heaven also.

"And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver." Judges 16:4-5.

“Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or the wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God. Joseph was a free moral agent. Good and evil were before him. He could choose the path of purity, holiness, and honor, or the path of immorality and degradation. He chose the right way, and God approved. Samson, under similar temptations, which he had brought upon himself, gave loose rein to passion. The path which he entered upon he found to end in shame, disaster, and death. What a contrast to the history of Joseph!

“The Lord has in His Word plainly instructed His people not to unite themselves with those who have not His love and fear before them. Such companions will seldom be satisfied with the love and respect which are justly theirs. They will constantly seek to gain from the God-fearing wife or husband some favor which shall involve a disregard of the divine requirements. To a godly man, and to the church with which he is connected, a worldly wife or a worldly friend is as a spy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray the servant of Christ, and expose him to the enemy's attacks.

“The history of Samson conveys a lesson for those whose characters are yet unformed, who have not yet entered upon the stage of active life. The youth who enter our schools and colleges will find there every class of mind. If they desire sport and folly, if they seek to shun the good and unite with the evil, they have the opportunity. Sin and righteousness are before them, and they are to choose for themselves. But let them remember that ‘Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.’” CC 135

What a sad history we have before us in the story of Samson; a man who had such great physical strength but so little moral strength.

It is quite interesting that Joseph's temptation with Potiphar's wife was forced upon him; however Samson went out seeking temptation and seeking the woman of the Philistines. This is a prime example of how putting ourselves on Satan's enchanted ground will lead to us falling short of God's honour and glory and falling into sin. If we know we are weak in a certain area we should never put ourselves in a situation in which that temptation will be put before us.

Also it is clearly shown here that Samson's life is an exam-

ple for each and every one of the young people in our church; when they are choosing a partner they are not to choose someone from the world because there will be definite consequences.

Samson chose to follow his own lusts and passions rather than being obedient to God and it ended with him losing the great strength that God had given him and ultimately he lost his life. He could have done so much greater good if he had simply been faithful to God and served Him with all his heart.

Some pointers on how to make better decisions

Make the decision to let God be God. You'll never make progress in this area as long as you refuse to give up control. It certainly isn't easy, and it certainly doesn't happen overnight, especially if you're a control freak as I once was. It almost drove me completely nuts when I began giving up control of things. But it helped immensely when I realized there was somebody a bit more qualified than me in charge of my life.

Study the Word of God. The only way you're going to get to know God and His character is to study His Word. It won't take long before you are able to judge situations and circumstances with a new view. Decisions are easier because you already know in advance the direction you want your life to take.

Surround yourself with people who are further along in the journey. There is no reason to learn every lesson yourself when you have perfectly good examples right in front of you. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we often counsel one another from what we've learned through our own mistakes. Take advantage of this counsel and learn from the mistakes of others so your own learning curve is not so steep. You'll be very glad you don't have to go through every mistake, as you learn from observing and listening to others. But, trust me, you will still make plenty of your own mistakes. You can take comfort in knowing that one day your mistakes may serve to help someone else.

Never give up. Be glad about your progress. Let yourself off the hook. You didn't start showing poor judgment overnight and you won't always show good judgment now, just because you want to. Just be happy you're making progress and you're seeing your life improve. Little by little as you gain wisdom from God's Word, you'll begin to see the results reflected in your decisions. AMEN.

Richard Eaton



CHANGES

We are living at a time in which everything changes at an incredible speed. These changes in society, in the ecology of the planet, in technology, in the atmosphere, do not take place after many generations, but in a short time.

There are things that some years ago we were able to do, but today we cannot do anymore and things that we used previously, that today are out-of-fashion. I shall bring two examples. A couple of years ago, I was in the country where I grew up, in a provincial city where people used to sit outside their homes in the evenings in the summertime and watch the passers-by or just socialize with one another. Now one cannot see a soul in the street. People are locked up at home and they take many measures if they have to leave the house. Society has changed. There is no more trust among people and criminality has increased.

Another example: About seven years ago I bought myself a small tape recorder, and recently when I went to the same shop to buy some cassettes, they did not have any. The man could offer me only CDs. The diskettes we used in our computers a few years ago are totally out of circulation. Everything has changed in an incredibly short time. I will not discuss whether these changes are good or not, whether the computer is better than the old fashioned typewriter or whether it just serves better our hectic pace of life, our need of comfort and speed.

The relationship between people has also changed. Friendships are no longer what they used to be. Marriage goes through a terrible crisis, mainly because nobody has time for the other.

It is very difficult to adapt to these sudden changes. Perhaps the many psychological problems are a result of all this? Is it a coincidence that in the last century psychiatry has become such an important science? In U.S.A many people go to see a "shrink".

But I have some wonderful news! *"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today and forever."* (Hebrews 13:8). He who said: *"I am the way, the truth and the life"* does not change; we can place all our trust in Him. He is the only way to true peace, joy, freedom, happiness. He is the

truth. In Him there is no lie, no deception, no disappointment. His is the only life that can make people happy and complete: spiritual life.

We can come to Jesus any time, just as we are, insecure, hopeless, disappointed, full of fears, with an imperfect character. He accepts us, but He does not leave us so. He does not want us to remain the same, to be like leaves on the wind, without a goal, without a support. He wants us to build up our life on Him, the Rock, so that when the storm comes we may remain. He heals our wounds, consoles us, forgives our sins; in His arms we find protection and security and without even realizing it we turn into a new creature and can live in another dimension. In a hopeless world we have hope. In a loveless world we have love. In an aggressive world we have peace. In a hectic world we have time.

Apostle Peter who experienced this wonderful change in his life, writes: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* (1 Peter 1:3-5)

We live in a world in which everything is corruptible, defiled, everything fades away but our spiritual eyes can see beyond all this into eternity.

Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever does not want us to adapt to this world that changes continuously and heads to destruction. That is why He tells us through John, His beloved disciple, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him."* (1 John 2:15) In His priestly prayer Jesus tells the Father that His followers are not of the world, even as He is not of the world. We are citizens of heaven *"from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body..."* (Philippians 3:20, 21).

In a world that changes constantly, even we do not remain static, but our change, as Jesus' followers who have eternal life as a goal, is inside, *"but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."* (2 Corinthians 4:16). Therefore, *"be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."* (Ephesians 4:23, 24). Amen. **Teresa Corti**



PAPAS, FIRST HEAD OF THE CHURCH IN ASIA

In learning the story of God's true church we have been looking at Europe and the British Isles, but we are now moving east of Jerusalem into a land and culture that we don't know as much about. We will be studying the spread of Christianity in the area where our most ancient history comes from - the "cradle of civilization" - the area known as Mesopotamia. Today we call that area Iran and Iraq.

Some of our favorite Bible stories come from this area. Tradition tells us that God planted the Garden of Eden in this area and the tower of Babel was built here. Abraham left Ur, a city in this region, to obey God's call, and Daniel and his three friends were brought here as captives to Babylon. Esther was crowned queen in the court of Ahasuerus, Ezra and Nehemiah worked for Persian monarchs, and the three wise men who came to worship baby Jesus were from this area.

After Jesus' resurrection and return to heaven the disciples obeyed their Master's command, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." Matthew 28:19. On the Day of Pentecost people from many areas of the East heard the powerful preaching of Peter and they took the gospel back to their family and friends. "Only a hundred years after the death of the apostle John, the Assyrian Christians had planted their churches among the Parthians, Persians, Medes, ... Turks, and Huns." *Truth Triumphant* 118.

Although most of us haven't learned much of the history of this Church in the East it was "the oldest of Christian sects; and, in their better days, were numerous through all the vast regions from Palestine to China; and they carried the gospel into China itself." *Truth Triumphant* 117. God's Church in this part of the world has been called by many names - the Nestorian Church, the Assyrian Church, the Church of Babylon and also the Chaldean Church - but we are going to call it the Church of the East.

Tradition tells us that the Apostle Matthew worked among the Parthians who were the rulers at that time in what is

now Iran and Iraq. Early Christianity had great success in preaching the gospel and changing the lives of its converts. As the holy scriptures were read, sang, or recited from memory, many of the Parthians came to know about the true God in heaven. These people who were known for their immoral lives began to follow God's laws. Those who were not kind to the sick and dying became compassionate and loving, and those who used to take justice into their own hands by stoning thieves now turned justice over to God.

This new church in the East was permitted to grow quickly till around AD 225. Because the ruling Parthians did not have an official state religion new religions were allowed to grow and prosper under their unprejudiced rule.

This was not the way the early Christians were treated by the Roman Empire in Europe. We have heard stories of the cruelty of Nero as he would use Christians as human torches to light up his evening entertainment. To escape these persecutions the early Christians dug out homes, meeting places and cemeteries under the city of Rome. Today if you visit that city you can take a tour into the catacombs dug out of the earth and rock and see how these faithful Christians lived.

One of the reasons for the rapid spread of the gospel was due to the many well-kept roads along the silk-trade routes linking the East and the West. These roads made it easy for people to travel, both for business and also for spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Travelers paused at the famous cities of Edessa or Arbela as they passed on their way from the Celts of Ireland to the Celts of Turkistan or Mongolia." *Truth Triumphant* 121.

Christian missionaries often sacrificed the comforts of a home and family to spread the good news of salvation. We are told that many young men chose not to marry so that they would be free to go where God led them without worrying about the obligations of a wife and family. We know the gospel went to the whole world within one generation after the return of Jesus to heaven.

All of this early activity gave a solid foundation to the Church of the East before persecution began from religions like Zoroastrianism. In AD 225 persecution began as the Persians replaced the Parthian kingdom. Its rulers were devout Zoroastrians. The leaders of that religion were worried as they saw so many in their region join Christianity. Five Christian leaders of various church districts were put to death for opposing Zoroastrianism.

Although there had been leaders over small districts before this time, it was decided that having one person over all the work in the East would help make the church a strong and coordinated organization. Papas was elected as the first person to become the head of the entire Church of the East in AD 285. He was so well thought of that churches stretching from Syria all the way to the Orient chose him to be their leader. He was known by the title "catholicos." He was a good choice because he was respected as someone with leadership qualities and he was well educated in Persian and Syrian literature.

When Papas organized the Church of the East, its first headquarters was located in Seleucia which is only about forty miles north from the ancient city of Babylon. This city was one of two cities founded on the Tigris River. Today there is another well-known city in that area that we call Baghdad - the capital of Iraq.

Baghdad is an ancient city with museums which chronicle the history of empires which existed thousands of years before Jesus was born. This is what made the looting of the libraries and museums during the 2003 war in Iraq so devastating. Those artifacts and manuscripts were valuable as a record of this "cradle of civilization" and all its history.

A supreme head of the church was valuable in keeping all parts of the work organized. Before Papas, district leaders had to solve problems, make decisions affecting the work, raise money, and plan expansion into new territories without others to counsel with. Now the districts were under the leadership of directors and they were expected to report yearly to the catholicos. Those from more distant lands, like China, were required to report at least every six years. Successes and needs could be presented and the church was able to send workers and funds where they were most needed. This caused the gospel to be spread more quickly and with better order.

We already learned about Lucien who started a college in Antioch. He and Papas lived at the same time and were both important in keeping true Christianity strong in the East. You'll remember that Lucien edited the manuscripts of scripture into what we call the *Textus Receptus*. This

translation was the basis for the Authorized Version from which our King James Version Bible came from.

We know that the Peshitta - the Syriac translation - was the Bible used by the Church of the East. This translation came from the same manuscripts that Lucien used, and many people believe that it came from the school of Lucian.

An interesting story comes from India. A man tells that while he was visiting around 1812 "he saw in that land a Syrian version of the Bible which according to popular belief would date probably as far back as 325, the year of the Council of Nicaea." *Truth Triumphant* 275. Having a pure translation kept the doctrines unchanged and free from corruption. The Christian church from Syria to China all had the same beliefs.

Both Papas and Lucien had to stand against the growing apostasy that was developing in the West as the Roman Church began to exercise power over all who would bow to her authority. The Roman Church "determined to bring together Easter, a yearly festival, and Sunday, a weekly holiday sacred to the worship of the sun, to make the greatest church festival of the year." *Truth Triumphant* 123.

Throughout its history we see the Roman Church using pagan festivals to help keep her new members. By keeping the forms of the holidays yet "Christianizing" them, the pagan people felt comfortable in their new religion. As one writer said, "It would have been suicide for the very early Christian converts to celebrate their holy days with observances that did not coincide with celebrations that already existed. The missionaries cleverly decided to spread their religious message slowly throughout the populations by allowing them to continue to celebrate pagan feasts, but to do so in a Christian manner.

The name Easter comes from the Anglo-Saxon pagan festival Eostre (pronounced "Easter"). This was a celebration that took place on the full moon after the vernal equinox - sometime between March 22 and April 25. Rome saw that she could begin conditioning people toward Sunday sacredness by using the resurrection of Christ on "the first day of the week" as a starting point. Victor I's decree in AD 190 made Easter always fall on a Sunday.

Today Satan is working to have all the world worship on Sunday. Through ecumenism and the use of the Church's festivals (like Easter and Christmas) Rome hopes to lead all Christianity back into her fold. Revelation 18:4 says, "Come out of her (Babylon), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." We must be sure we have come out of Babylon so we don't participate in her judgments.

The Church of the East would not agree to Pope Victor's decree and Papas found his church separated from the fellowship of the Roman Church. As we will see, this exclusion was actually a protection for the Church of the East. It helped to keep her doctrines pure and she had the freedom to spread the gospel through the region.

Easter was not the only difference between the Church of the East and the Roman Church. The Church of the East "rejected the use of images, and interposed no mediator like the Virgin Mary between God and man. The Church of the East also dispensed with candles, incense, relics, and many other usages of imperial Christianity.... [They] rejected the supremacy of the bishop of Rome." *Truth Triumphant* 273. The clergy were allowed to marry although, as was mentioned earlier, many of the young men chose to not marry so they could work full time for God's cause. The Church of the East did not teach transubstantiation, (the wafer becoming the **real** body of Jesus and the wine becoming the **real** blood of Jesus during the mass) or that there was a purgatory.

Not only did The Church of the East have to contend with Rome's anger over their unwillingness to accept pagan customs but it was met with hostility by other religions in their area. One of them was Zoroastrianism. This was a religion which was begun by a man named Zoroaster around the time when Daniel was in Babylon (around 600 BC). Some scholars believe he knew of the Jew's beliefs and thought he could become powerful through beginning a religion that had many similarities to the Hebrews' religion but which would appeal to human nature.

In Zoroastrianism we find angels, and a messiah that was to come. They believed in a resurrection of the dead and a judgment. Foods were divided into clean and unclean meats, a tithe was paid to support a priesthood and they taught that one day in seven was to be sacred. The many colorful ceremonies and processions pleased the people and Zoroastrianism's appeal grew rapidly. Today the ruins of its fire temples can be found in modern Iran, Iraq and India.

This new religion was primarily sun worship. Mithra, the god of light, was the object of their worship. "Sunday was devoted to Mithra, or the sun, the greatest of all gods of Zoroastrianism. ... Since it was pre-eminently a religion of sun worship, what was more appropriate than to choose Sunday, the day of the sun, as the holy day?" *Truth Triumphant* 130. The priests gathered the people together to be taught their religious laws and Sunday was chosen as their day of worship. Mithraism, a later religion, adopted Zoroastrianism and introduced it into the Roman Empire

"thus having paved the way for this form of sun worship to become a universal religion in the Roman world. ...This same religion captivated province after province of the Roman Empire until, through the popularizing of its sun-god, Mithra, it threatened to stifle Christianity." *Truth Triumphant* 268, 129. The worship of the sun was something the early Christians had to face in both the East and the West.

We are told a story of the catholico who succeeded Papas, Mar Shimun. The Persian Shah was his childhood friend and now he was in trouble with the king because he would not force his church people to pay taxes for a war between Persia and Rome. Mar Shimun "refused to do so, on the grounds that his people were too poor to pay and that he was not a tax-collector. His arrest and the destruction of all Christian churches was immediately ordered. He was arrested at Seleucia-Ctesiphon and taken to Karka d'Ledan where the king was.

"He was offered freedom, not only for himself, but for his 'melet' of people, if he would worship the sun only once. 'The sun went into mourning when its creator died,' said Shimun. The king begged him by the memory of their personal friendship to yield, but the [catholico] remained firm, and on the morning of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, in the year AD 339, along with five bishops and a hundred minor clergy, he sealed his testimony with his blood. Mar Shimun, the last of the company to suffer martyrdom, died for two of the noblest causes for which it is possible for man to suffer: his faith in God and his duty to his people."

God has told us that there will again be a test for His people over worshipping the sun. In *The Great Controversy* 605 we are told, "The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God."

Like Mar Shimun we will have a life or death decision to make. Are you learning now to trust God in everything so that you are ready for this terrible trial?

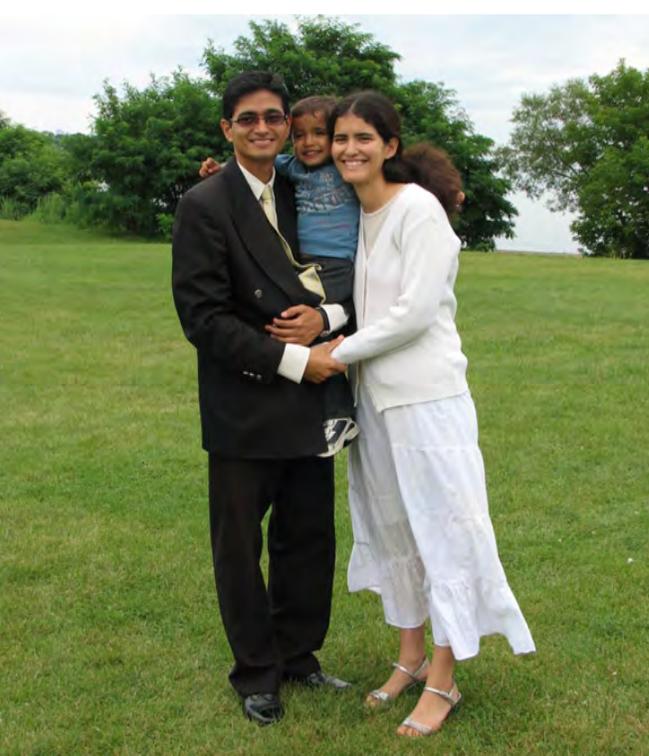


**INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE
MOSBACH
GERMANY
DECEMBER 26
TO JANUARY 2.**

**REPORT AND
MORE PHOTOS
IN NEXT ISSUE**



Central Canadian Region Conference (Dec 24-26, 2010)



**NEW
MISSIONARIES IN
CANADA:**

(Left) Elder Hernandez with wife Raquel and son, Eldercito.

(Right) Nicholas Anca with wife Alina and sons, Edward & Patrick



This I know



**I do not know what next may come
Across my pilgrim's way;
I do not know tomorrow's road,
Nor see beyond today.
But this I know—my Saviour knows
The path I cannot see;
And I can trust his wounded hand
To guide and care for me.**

**I do not know what may befall,
Of sunshine or of rain;
I do not know what may be mine,
Of pleasure and of pain;
But this I know—my Saviour knows,
Still I can trust His love to give
What will be best for me.**

**I do not know what may await,
Or what the morrow brings;
But with the glad salute of faith,
I hail its opening wings:
For this I know—that in my Lord
Shall all my needs be met;
And I can trust the heart of Him
Who has not failed me yet.**