



*The Reformation*  
**Messenger**

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



**“For thus saith the  
LORD, Behold, I will  
extend peace to her  
like a river, and the  
glory of the Gentiles  
like a flowing  
stream.” Isaiah 66:12**

**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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# HUMAN EFFORT IN SALVATION

Many professed Christians leave the perfecting of their characters to God. They pray daily that God would make them holy and perfect, but they themselves do nothing for it; years go by and they are not yet sinless and perfect. Why not? Did God not hear their prayers, and why did He not answer them and make them perfect and holy?

Does God not want His children to be sinless? And is He not omnipotent, with the result that nothing is impossible with Him?

Could God not have sent an angel to the tree of knowledge to stop Adam and Eve from eating the forbidden fruit, and by so doing avoid sin from entering into the world?

David prayed to God, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long? Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake." Psalm 6:2-4.

This was a sincere prayer, "Save me, for I am weak." Save me from sin. But, what happened one day? "And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. . . . And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her." 2 Samuel 11:2, 4.

Why did God not save David from this sin? David had prayed to God to save him from sin because he was weak. When the temptation came upon David sudden-

ly, why did God not save him from it?

Peter loved Jesus. He said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." Luke 22:33. But a few hours later he denied Him three times. "And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not." Luke 22:57. Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him, but gave him no power to overcome this temptation to sin.

Paul writes, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Romans 7:19.

Most likely, Paul prayed to God every day since he was a child, asking help to overcome sin; yet Paul persecuted the church of God, committing sins without realizing it. Is this a condition of a person who is saved? No, certainly not.

Millions of prayers are pronounced every day, "Lord, save me from sin." "Help me not to sin anymore." Yet the next day they continue to sin again.

Why does God not carry out their prayers? The reason for it is that many professed Christians leave their salvation to God, and they themselves do nothing.

But the Bible is clear, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Philippians 2:12. "And having done all, to stand." Ephesians 6:13.

The Bible did not say, "having **believed** all," but, "having **done** all," then we can stand when tempted to sin, and in the judgment of God.

"Let no man present the idea that man has little or

nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. . . . We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch, pray, lest we shall be overcome by the wily foe.” —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 381.

One of Satan’s great deceptions today is, “Do not try to save yourself, let God save you. Leave it in His hands. Works are not important. You are saved by faith alone.”

But the Spirit of Prophecy is clear. “We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easygoing, accommodating, crossless religion.” —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 382.

When our best efforts are made to obey the commandments of God, then Jesus will add His merit and power to it. But many make a great mistake by not putting out their best efforts. Their efforts are half-hearted and intermittent, and therefore they fail time and time again.

When the rich young man asked Jesus, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Jesus answered, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:16–17. Jesus did not say, “If thou wilt enter into life, only believe.”

What saved Peter? “And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.” Luke 22:62. He was desperate and that saved him. What saved Paul? He said, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24. He also realized his helpless condition.

David didn’t take his sin lightly either. He said, “There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.” Psalm 38:3–4

This desperate hatred towards their sins and their hunger and thirst for righteousness saved these men from the power of sin.

After learning his lesson, Paul is now counseling others, “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Hebrews 12:4. They have been striving, but not unto blood. For this reason sin remained in their lives

and characters.

We are to pray without ceasing. Sister White writes, “No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 530.

We need to read the Bible every day, attend church meetings weekly, involve ourselves in soul-saving work, be faithful in tithes and offerings, be faithful in health reform, and also in dress reform. If one requirement is neglected, God will not help us to resist temptation.

Jesus said, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Matthew 26:41.

Even after many years in the truth, we must continue to watch constantly, and pray without ceasing.

“I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God’s approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look would settle upon them. . . . Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels left these and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones.” —*Early Writings*, pp. 269–270.

In the end of his life, Paul said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:7.

The life of Paul was fighting a war against temptation and sin, and he was victorious. How did he do it? He said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13. He also said, “I die daily.” 1 Corinthians 15:31.

“The strongest evidence of man’s fall from a higher state is the fact that it costs so much to return. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, hour by hour. In one moment, by a hasty, unguarded act, we may place ourselves in the power of evil; but it requires more than a moment to break the

fetters and attain to a holier life. The purpose may be formed, the work begun; but its accomplishment will require toil, time, perseverance, patience, and sacrifice." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 452.

"The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his: Christ's perfect obedience is imputed to him. But he must cooperate with divine power, and put forth his human effort to subdue sin, and stand complete in Christ." —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 429–430.

Drastic efforts are needed, as Jesus said, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: . . . And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." Matthew 5:29–30. Jesus did not say, "Only believe." No, we must put out a real fight against sin.

When we become desperate, and fight unto blood against sin, putting out every fiber in our being against sin, then God will add His power to it, and the victory becomes possible.

This is the message of Christ's righteousness, and, according to Sister White, only a few understand how it works — others fail and thus lose salvation. We may feel as strong as Peter, but fail when tested.

God's power is always available when human effort is put out to the utmost. So terrible is the power of sin, and so embedded in us that we must put out our greatest effort, and add to it the power of God, and of Jesus, and also the help of the Holy Spirit and of the angels; our church brothers and sisters also contribute to the victory over sin. Then sin can be overcome and the perfect image of Jesus will be seen in us. AMEN.

**Timo Martin**

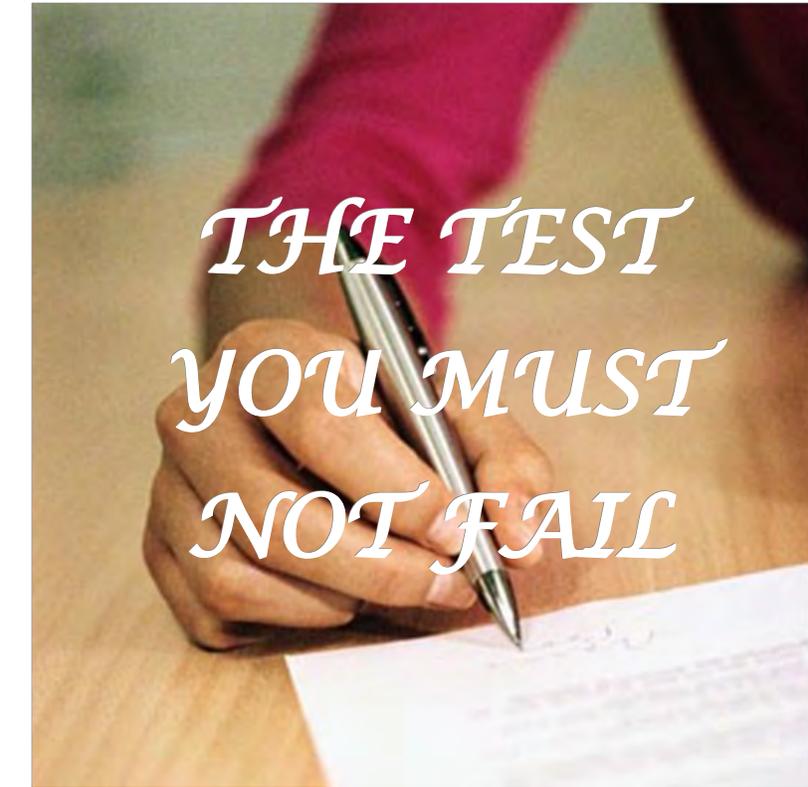
## PEACE LIKE A RIVER

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isaiah 48:18.

"For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream." Isaiah 66:12.

"Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love, and while you meditate upon His self-denial, His infinite sacrifice made in our behalf in order that we should believe in Him, your heart will be filled with holy joy, calm peace, and indescribable love. As we talk of Jesus, as we call upon Him in prayer, our confidence that He is our personal, loving Saviour will strengthen, and His character will appear more and more lovely. . . . We may enjoy rich feasts of love, and as we fully believe that we are His by adoption, we may have a foretaste of heaven. Wait upon the Lord in faith. The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. We have a nearness to Him, and can hold sweet communion with Him.

distinct views of His tenderness and compassion, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. We feel indeed an abiding Christ in the soul. . . . Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. We have a realizing sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it, it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence, we can call God our Father. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. His Spirit makes us like Jesus Christ in temper, and disposition, and we represent Christ to others. When Christ is abiding in the soul the fact cannot be hid; for He is like a well of water springing up into everlasting life. We can but represent the likeness of Christ in our character, and our words, our deportment, produces in others a deep, abiding, increasing love for Jesus, and we make manifest . . . that we are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 311



# THE TEST YOU MUST NOT FAIL

**“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer.” –Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 363**

Most of us have gone through school and done some study at some point in our lives. Often after a course of study there comes the test, or examination, at the end. If a student has prepared earnestly and done some prudent studying, they will likely pass. Some aim for 100%, others hope to barely pass with a 50%, and some do not care. There will always be some who fail. Those who do not pass will have to repeat the course and hope that next time they will do better. During the course of study, there are little tests and quizzes along the way. If one fails on one, they can redeem themselves on the next. It is the final examination that is key to passing or failing the course. It requires much study to pass this exam.

Does God have a course of study? Yes, He does, and we are currently taking that course. What will the end result be? Will we pass or fail? When we first sinned, we failed. Now we have been given a second chance to pass. If we fail at the end of this course, there is no third chance to restudy and try again. In our spiritual life, we go through little tests and trials. We hope to pass them all, but occasionally, when we take our eyes off Christ, we make missteps and fail. We pick ourselves up and go on, with the intention of passing the next one. “For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.” Proverbs 24:16. We must start passing these

little tests all the time if we want to be ready for the final exam.

Adam and Eve had a test in the Garden of Eden. They failed the test and opened the floodgates of woe on this earth. They were given a second chance and we hope they passed in the end after a lifetime of trials and struggles.

Christ passed the test where Adam failed (Romans 5:14).

## DAILY TESTS

Daily we are facing tests and there are a few things that we are tested on which we may not think of as tests.

“We claim to be Christians, waiting for the second appearing of our Lord in the clouds of heaven. Then what shall we do with **our time, our understanding, our possessions**, which are not ours, but are entrusted to us to test our honesty? Let us bring them to Jesus. Let us use our treasures for the advancement of His cause.” – *Review and Herald*, April 9, 1901 (emphasis mine)

The three points mentioned – time, understanding, possessions – are three areas which we will all be tested on. How do we use our time? What do we do with our understanding of the truths for this time? Do we hide the light under a bushel or share it with everyone we meet? And finally, how do we use our possessions? Keep them for ourselves or share with those in need?

“We shall be brought into straight places in our work. Trials will come. **God will test the strength of our faith.** He will prove us to see if we will trust Him under difficulties.” – *Review and Herald*, October 12, 1886 (emphasis mine)

## DO YOUR OWN STUDY

When you study for an exam, it will not benefit you if your friend or relative studies for you. You must study for yourself.

“We must study the truth for ourselves. No man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who he is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject one to another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us, in order to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individ-

ually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 109–110

“The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Every one must stand the test for himself.” – *Last Day Events*, p. 260

## **TWO GROUPS**

In the classroom there will always be two groups – those who pass, and those who fail. It is the same in God’s church. There are members who will pass the final exam and receive salvation. There are those in the church who are not earnestly studying today, and they will fail the final exam.

In the church two parties will develop. A separation will take place. It is prophesied to happen. “A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God’s people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.” – *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 114

We read more identifying characteristics of the two groups in the following verse: “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken.” Matthew 24:44–49

There are two servants here – both in the same church. One is faithful and the other is mingling with the drunken and joining with the world. There is the faithful servant that gives meat in due season and the evil servant that says in his heart, the Lord delays His coming. Then he begins to smite his fellow servant.

“Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will

sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.” Amos 9:8–9

This prophecy is talking about the shaking when the house of Israel shall be split into two. The promise is that not one genuine grain will fall upon the earth.

## **WHO WILL PASS THE TEST?**

When you have written a test or exam, often you can likely predict the outcome. If you have studied well and were confident with the answers you wrote, you have a fairly good idea that you passed. If you did not study and you did not know many answers, but just guessed at the answer or left some blank, it is likely that you did not pass.

In the spiritual life it is sometimes the opposite. We have the example of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke 18:10–14). Those that will be lost seem to have the most confidence in their abilities. The Pharisee prided himself that he fasted twice a week and paid his tithes. We read: “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:22–23

The wicked will always reflect on their work, focusing on the good things they have done. Their religion is based on works. A person whose religion is focusing on works will be overzealous about the small details of the truth. While it is good to be particular about the details, by themselves, these do not earn us salvation. A works-religion can even be doing missionary work. Preaching the gospel can be works if you perceive that your actions alone give you credit before God.

What is it that distinguishes the two classes? From the example of the Publican, we see that he had no confidence in his works. They were all tainted with sin, as far as he could see. Jesus said that faith is thinking that anything you do is unprofitable. Although true faith does work, the works that faith works does not take credit to itself but to God. “Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good.” – *The Great Controversy*, pp. 618–619

Those who will fail are those who are focused on their

works and commend themselves to God. They see only the good that they have done in their lives. They see nothing wrong. They say “Lord, haven’t we done all these good things?” And those who pass are the people of God who look at their lives and do not see anything good. The wicked look at their lives and see how much good they’ve done. The righteous feel more lost than the people that are actually lost. “They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 619

Although the faithful perform good works, they still view themselves as unprofitable. The wicked say, we have done all these good deeds, let us in. In contrast, faith is to do something and think nothing of it. To do God’s work with all your heart and think in your mind, you’re an unprofitable servant and that God owes you nothing. Because He doesn’t. That is the faith you need.

#### HOW MANY PASS THE TEST?

The test is not difficult if the study has been done, however, only a few want to make the earnest efforts necessary to pass the exam. “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” Romans 9:27. Many, however, will go into the broad road. “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:13–14

Few only find the narrow gate (God’s church) and of these few there are also two classes – those that find the gate, and those that enter in. Even fewer will enter in. There are those who seek to enter in but cannot. “Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” Luke 13:23–24

Many wanted to enter in but the Bible says that they could not enter in. Many of the professors of religion tried to enter in but they could not.

Then will arrive the time when it is too late, “When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door.” Luke 13:25. The shut door is the close of probation. At that time, many of the professors of religion can no longer get in.

#### THE MEANS OF FAITH AND PRAYER

In order to be prepared for the great exam there are two important means provided for us to use.

The first one: “The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 621

You will need a faith that can endure weariness. The world teaches that faith is the power of positive thinking, but no power of positive thinking is ever going to help you in the time of Jacob’s trouble. Literally everything is against you. There will not even be a glimmer of hope. In the Christian world, some teach that faith is some clever exercise of the mind to believe the impossible. True faith is “a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 621

The second means we use is what Jesus used. “His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God’s promises, as He did, and be as earnest and persevering as He was, will succeed as He succeeded.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 621

We need to have persevering prayer in order to succeed.

#### IMPORTANCE OF PASSING THE DAILY TESTS

The smaller, daily, tests and quizzes in class have always served the purpose of preparing for the larger exam in education or school. This is true also in our spiritual life.

“The very trials that test our faith most severely, and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are designed to lead us nearer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at His feet, and receive the peace He will give us in exchange.” –*Gospel Workers*, p. 372

God will test our faith to see if it is genuine. “**These experiences that test faith are for our benefit.** By them it is made manifest whether our faith is true and sincere, resting on the word of God alone, or whether depending on circumstances, it is uncertain and changeable. Faith is strengthened by exercise.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 231 (emphasis mine)

“When we are placed in trying positions, and find things about us that we do not like, that try our patience, and test our faith, we are not to sink down in despondency, but to take a firmer hold upon God, and

prove that we are not setting our affection on things on the earth, but on things above; that we are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Jesus is to be the beginning and the end, the first and the last. He is to be our strength in every time of trial." –*Our High Calling*, p.339

### WHEN IS THE FINAL EXAM?

It is important to have an idea as to when the final exam is so that we can make earnest preparation. This exam is soon. Although we don't know the exact date, we know it is soon and we must be ready.

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 81

### NOW IS THE TIME TO PREPARE

We know that the time for the exam is very near. Therefore we need to prepare now. "Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in peril by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void His law. When God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? **Now is the time for God's people to show themselves true to principle.** When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching." –*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 201 (emphasis mine)

"Now is your time to seek a preparation and readiness for the fearful test which is before us – that holiness without which no man shall see God. Let none say, My

way is hid from the Lord; God taketh no knowledge of my ways. Now it may be it is not too late. Now it may be you can repent." –*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 447

### THE FINAL TRIAL: JACOB'S TROUBLE

Jacob's trouble is the final test for God's people; the final exam. Who of you would ever go to a test unprepared? If you were unprepared, you would fail. This test we cannot afford to fail. "The faithful discharge of today's duties is the best preparation for tomorrow's trials." –*Ministry of Healing*, p. 481



"Jacob's experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ's second coming." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201

Jacob wrestled with Jesus. He initially thought Jesus was an enemy who was coming to destroy him.

"Satan endeavored to force upon him a sense of his guilt, in order to discourage him, and break his hold upon God. When in his distress Jacob laid hold of the Angel, and made supplication with tears, the heavenly Messenger, in order to try his faith, also reminded him of his sin, and endeavored to escape from him." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 201

As if Jacob did not feel condemned already in his mind, here we read that Jesus also reminded him of his sin. It appeared that not only his brother and the devil, but it also appeared that even God reminded him of his sin. Is this what we will go through in the time of Jacob's trouble? The world, the devil, our family remind us of our sins and it appears that even Jesus reminds us. How will you survive in such a time? What a black day. "Who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:17  
Jacob did not give up, "But Jacob would not be turned away. He had learned that God is merciful." –*Patriarchs*

*and Prophets*, p. 201

We read that Jesus not only reminded him of his sin but He also appeared to leave as the day was breaking. "He said, Let me go, for the day breaketh." Genesis 32:26. If you were wrestling with God and He said, let me go away, what would you do? It would be shattering.

"Such will be the experience of God's people in their final struggle with the powers of evil. God will test their faith, their perseverance, their confidence in His power to deliver them." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 202

Only "he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart" (Psalm 24:4) will be able to stand.

Those that do not stand the test, and fail the exam will hear the sad words, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20

### CONCLUSION

The time of test is almost here. Who will pass? "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Revelation 3:21. To pass, you will have had to reach this point in your Christian experience, "Everyone who by faith obeys God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived **before his transgression.**" —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 146 (emphasis mine)

This is only possible by looking to Jesus. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Hebrews 12:2–3

If we do not look to Jesus, we will faint in our minds. We will not attain that perfection mentioned. The power of positive thinking does not work without Jesus, for it is only a small part of the work. Our part is to stay our minds upon the promises of God when we are severely tested. We know the story of Jesus in Gethsemane where He said, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Matthew 26:39. Here is the time of Jacob's trouble that Jesus experienced. He has been through it.

We read of His experience at Calvary, "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli,

lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46

Although Jesus felt separated from the Father, He committed His spirit and soul to His Father. He had implicit trust in His Father. "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth." Psalm 31:5. This is the prayer of Jesus. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Job 13:15. Jesus, while on the cross, commits Himself to God because He had good thoughts about God. He "committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter 2:23

"Blessed be the LORD: for He hath shewed me His marvellous kindness in a strong city. For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before Thine eyes: nevertheless Thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto Thee." Psalm 31:21–22. Although we may at times say in our haste that the Lord is not there, we can take heart because He is.

"When you surrender yourself entirely to God, when you fall all broken upon Jesus, you will be rewarded by a victory the joy of which you have never yet realized. As you review the past with a clear vision, you will see that at the very time when life seemed to you only a perplexity and a burden, Jesus Himself was near you, seeking to lead you into the light. Your Father was by your side, bending over you with unutterable love, afflicting you for your good, as the refiner purifies the precious ore. When you have thought yourself forsaken, He has been near you to comfort and sustain. We seldom view Jesus as He is, and are never so ready to receive His help as He is to help us." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 220–221. "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD." Psalms 31:24

Let us love God whether we feel His love or not. Faith is not a feeling. He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.

May God help us to make the earnest preparations today so that we will be prepared for the great time of test that is in the not too distant future. This is a test we must not fail.

Amen

**Wendy Eaton**

# TRUST IN THE LORD



I know of many professed Christians who are just eaten up with worry, doubts, fears, anger, resentment – all of these negative things – and how sad it is.

Let us just consider a couple of them. (But perhaps all of these negative things are interrelated.) What would you say the other side of worry is? “After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” Genesis 15:1. Fear?

Perhaps, for someone it is fearing that either they, or one of their loved ones, are going to come to some type of loss, and thus, they worry. But what can worry accomplish? Or maybe it is anger – anger is just the other side of fear. Anger is only for someone that has run out of words, as the saying goes. But I really think the other side of worry is actually complaining. “That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.” Psalm 144:14–15. They are always complaining about what someone has said about them, or done something to them, whether real or imagined.

Why does all of this have to go on? Why are we always so confrontational, so adversarial? Why do we harbour a complaining spirit? To me, it is interesting when, in the Bible, God contrasts happiness with complaining. Happiness is a form of courage also; it is when we decide NOT to complain, even though we feel that we have just cause to complain.

Then there are some people who thrive on constantly dwelling upon the faults of others – whether real or imagined. They seem to set themselves up as martyrs, always complaining of others who are against them – whether this is real or imagined, as well. Self is really at the root of all of our problems. All of these problems stem from not having a good relationship with our God, and therefore, we can’t have a good relationship with ourselves. Now, of course, our experience shows that the reality of man’s situation is that we all have fears. Job said, “For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.” Job 3:25–26

But his friend Eliphaz tells him something quite helpful. “Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.” Job 5:17–18. This is what we must trust in when we are afflicted. We must trust our case into the hands of God. Do you feel that you always have to guard yourself from mortification and insult? Maybe you are worried about this?

Many times E. G. White was attacked by those enemies of truth who didn’t like what she was teaching. How much time did E. G. White spend in self-justification? Or even explaining herself to others that were demanding an explanation?

Not very much time at all, for she said, if she would do that, she would be constantly answering the accusa-

tions and demands for an explanation, rather than doing the work that God had appointed her to do.

“Duty of All to Respect Self.--We must have a better and deeper teaching than man can give us. There must be a deep conviction in our own souls that forms and ceremonies are as nothing without Christ. He is the Alpha and Omega. Truth is the only panoply for the covering of any soul. Our convictions need daily to be reinforced by humble, sincere prayer and reading of the Word. While we each have an individuality, while we each should hold our convictions firmly, we must hold them as God's truth and in the strength which God imparts. If we do not, they will be wrung from our grasp.”  
—*Daughters of God*, p. 144

We have to hold our convictions firmly, in God's strength, or they will be wrung from our grasp!

Now in contrast to this: **“We need to be self-reliant;** it is the duty of all to respect self; but we are to remember that we are God's property, that we are bought with a price, body, soul, and spirit. We must guard the living machinery, and keep it in the very best condition, that we may glorify God. It is to be daily oiled by His grace, to run at His touch, without friction. To trust in ourselves, to become boastful as if we had created and redeemed ourselves, is to dishonor God. Human wisdom, aside from God, will prove itself to be foolishness, and will bring confusion and perplexity. We need to have on the whole armor of God. The holy influence of a Saviour's loving protection is our sure defense. There is but One who can prove a safeguard against the schemes of Satan.” *Daughters of God*, p. 144 (emphasis mine)

Perhaps what is motivating this spirit of complaining and worry is actually guilt. Some are always under a horrible cloud of condemnation and guilt and what are we to do with this feeling? **“This feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross of Calvary.** The sense of sinfulness has poisoned the springs of life and of true happiness. Now



Jesus says, ‘Lay it all on Me; I will take your sins. I will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect, for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen; your remorse for sin I will remove.’” —*Daughters of God*, p. 144 (emphasis mine)

#### A LETTER OF ENCOURAGEMENT

“WRITTEN TO MARTHA BOURDEAU, A WOMAN AFFLICTED WITH FEELINGS OF SELF-DOUBT, DESPONDENCY, WORTHLESSNESS, AND DISCOURAGEMENT. [MARTHA BOURDEAU WAS THE YOUNGER SISTER OF GEORGE I. BUTLER, A PROMINENT LEADER IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH. SHE WAS FIRST MARRIED TO WILLIAM ANDREWS, BROTHER OF J.M. ANDREWS. THEY HAD THREE CHILDREN, AMONG WHOM WAS EDITH ANDREWS, WHO WOULD SOON DIE OF TUBERCULOSIS. A.C. BOURDEAU WENT TO EUROPE IN 1884, AND MARTHA, NOW A WIDOW, MARRIED HIM. THEY LABORED TOGETHER IN ITALY.]

“Dear Sister Martha: We came here [Tramelan, Switzerland] last Friday, and the Lord has given me some precious tokens for good. I spoke with much freedom to our brothers and sisters from Malachi 4:6. The Lord spoke to hearts. Abel Guenin, who has been discouraged for a long time and had taken no part in the meetings, broke down and confessed his wrong, his indifference, and his discouragements. Said he would no longer remain in the place he was then in. He would come into harmony with the church and do his duty in the fear of God. The tears ran down his face while he talked. His mother, [who] has taken no part with the church and has been much prejudiced against anyone from America, spoke for the first time. She bore a good testimony.

“A young man, a baker employed by Oscar Roth, made a humble confession. The Spirit of the Lord was indeed in our meeting. A sweet melting power was there. After meeting, we had a praying season in Brother Roth's house for the son of Brother Guenin. I prayed while Brother John Vuilleumier interpreted. The blessing of

the Lord came in and the young man with tears running down his face shook hands with his sisters and confessed his wrongs. It was a precious season indeed. . . .

“My mind goes to you, Martha, in Torre Pellice [Italy], and I believe that yourself and husband should attend the meeting of the conference. We want to see you, and we want to see you trusting fully in the precious Saviour. He loves you; He gave His life for you because He valued your soul. I had a dream not long since. I was going through a garden, and you were by my side. You kept saying, ‘Look at this unsightly shrub, this deformed tree, that poor stunted rosebush. This makes me feel bad, for they seem to represent my life and the relation I stand in before God.’ I thought a stately form walked just before us, and he said, ‘Gather the roses and the lilies and the pinks, and leave the thistles and unsightly shrubs, and bruise not the soul that Christ has in His choice keeping.’

“I awoke; I slept again and the same dream was repeated. And I awoke and slept and the third time it was repeated. Now I want you to consider this and put away your distrust, your worrying, your fears. Look away from yourself to Jesus; look away from your husband to Jesus. God has spoken to you words of encouragement; grasp them, act upon them, walk by faith, and not by sight. ‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’ Hebrews 11:1.” – *Daughters of God*, pp. 145–146

What is another word for faith? Trust, abiding confidence. “Jesus holds His hand beneath you. Jesus will not suffer the enemy to overcome you. Jesus will give you the victory. He has the virtue; He has the righteousness. You may look to yourself to find it and may well despair in doing this because it is not there. Jesus has it. It is yours by faith because you love God and keep His commandments.

“Do not listen to Satan's lies, but recount God's promises. Gather the roses and the lilies and the pinks. Talk of the promises of God. Talk faith. Trust in God, for He is your only hope. He is my only hope. I have tremendous battles with Satan's temptations to discouragements, but I will not yield an inch. I will not give Satan an advantage over my body or my mind.

“If you look to yourself, you will see only weakness. There is no Saviour there. You will find Jesus away from yourself. You must look and live; [look] to Him who be-

came sin for us, that we might be cleansed from sin and receive of Christ's righteousness.

“Now, Martha, do not look to yourself but away to Jesus. Talk of His love, talk of His goodness, talk of His power, for He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear. But in Christ is our righteousness. Jesus makes up our deficiencies because He sees we cannot do it ourselves. While praying for you I see a soft light encompassing a hand stretched out to save you. God's words are our credentials. We stand upon them. We love the truth. We love Jesus. Feelings are no evidence of God's displeasure.

“Your life is precious in the sight of God. He has a work for you to do. It is not unfolded to you now, but just walk on trustingly without a single word, because this would grieve the dear Jesus and show that you were afraid to trust Him. Lay your hand in His; He is reaching over the battlements of heaven [for it] to be laid confidently in His. Oh, what love, what tender love has Jesus manifested in our behalf. The Bible promises are the pinks and the roses and the lilies in the garden of the Lord.

“Oh, how many walk a dark path, looking to the objectionable, unlovely things on either side of them, when a step higher are the flowers. They think they have no right to say they are children of God and lay hold on the promises set before them in the gospel, because they do not have the evidence of their acceptance with God. They go through painful struggles, afflicting their souls, as did Martin Luther to cast himself upon Christ's righteousness.” – *Daughters of God*, pp. 146–147

“Memory's hall should be hung with sacred pictures, with views of Jesus, with lessons of His truth, with revealings of His matchless charms. If memory's hall were thus furnished, we would not look upon our lot as intolerable. **We would not talk of the faults of others.** Our souls would be full of Jesus and His love. We would not desire to dictate to the Lord the way that He should lead. We would love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. When the joy of the Lord is in the soul, you will not be able to repress it; you will want to tell others of the treasure you have found; you will speak of Jesus and His matchless charms. We should devote all to Him. Our minds should be educated to dwell upon those things that will glorify God; and if our mental powers are dedicated to God, our talents will improve, and we shall have more and more ability to render to

the Master. We shall become channels of light to others." –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 123 (emphasis mine)

Do you see how talking about the faults of others is related to all of this? What actually motivates the speaking of the faults of others?

Well, two things really, but it really comes down to one thing. As the reading says, we feel so bad about ourselves that we have to put others down, in order to exalt self and feel a little bit better about ourselves. (The other thing that I thought of at first was that we perceive others as better than us, so we have to bring them down a few notches, but as I say, it really comes down to one thing – that we feel so bad about ourselves.)

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?’ Matt. 6:25.

“While you do your best, weary not your body and mind with the cares of this life. Do not spoil your religious experience by worry, but trust the Lord to work for you and to do for you what you cannot do for yourself. The life is more than meat. . . .

“There is much needless worrying, much trouble of mind, over things that cannot be helped. The Lord would have His children put their trust fully in Him. Our Lord is a just and righteous God; His children should acknowledge His goodness and His justice in the large and small things of life. Those who cherish the spirit of worry and complaint are refusing to recognize His guiding hand.

“Needless anxiety is a foolish thing, and it hinders us from standing in a true position before God. When the Holy Spirit comes into the soul, there will be no desire to complain and murmur because we do not have everything we want. Rather, we will thank God from a full heart for the blessings that we have. . . .

“There is one blessing that all may have who seek for it in the right way. It is the Holy Spirit of God, and this is a blessing that brings all other blessings in its train. If we will come to God as little children, asking for His grace and power and salvation, not for our own uplifting, but that we may bring blessing to those around us, our petitions will not be denied. Then let us study the Word

of God that we may know how to take hold of His promises and claim them as our own. Then we shall be happy.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 113

How can we be happy? By taking hold of the promises of God and claiming them as our own.

“Christ came to earth and gave His life that we might have eternal salvation. He wants to encircle each of us with the atmosphere of heaven, that we may give to the world an example that will honor the religion of Christ. . . . In this life we are to be controlled by the spirit that rules in the heavenly courts. Righteousness and truth are to go before us. And the glory of the Lord will be the reward of all who serve Him acceptably. They obtain Christ’s righteousness.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 113

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Romans 15:4, 13

This is the experience that God wants for every one of us. He wants us to take all of our burdens and leave them at the foot of the cross; to acknowledge all of His goodness, even if we do have difficulties, and praise and thank Him, even in the midst of those difficulties. Then we can be happy and truly preparing for heaven. Amen

*Jerry Eaton*

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# JOURNEY OF LOVE

**“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.” Genesis 24:63–64**

## ABRAHAM OUR FATHER

Marriages and funerals bring about changes in families. They were common news among the inhabitants of the villages in Abraham’s time, and are, as well, today. At the age of 127, Sarah, Abraham’s wife, passed away, leaving Abraham bowed in grief. His love for her had been genuine and tender. She was to him “the princess.” During both the dark and happy hours, she had been a steadying source of strength and a supporting prop for his faith. So “as one generation passes away another generation comes.”

The Bible is a book of such stories – love stories. We all like to hear love stories. The Bible has many such true love stories. Actually, the entire Word of God is a “love letter” to the human race.

One of the greatest love stories is of Abraham and his descendants. Abraham is the father of our faith, the father of the chosen people, the keeper of God’s law for future generations. Abraham was called the Friend of God (James 2:23). He lived 1900 years before Christ. Abraham’s faith, although not always perfect, was, nevertheless, accounted righteous, tested and manifested by works in faith, in unquestioning obedience (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 153). He was an example in faith to succeeding generations and is referred to also as “Abraham our father” (James 2:21, 23; Matthew 3:9; Romans 4; Galatians 3). He is a beautiful illustration of justification and true faith for us today (Hebrews 11:8–19).

## DESCENDANCY

Who then are the descendants of Abraham? Well, firstly, in descendancy, it is important for many Christians to understand that their descendancy can influence their course of action, conduct, destiny, and even success or failure in life; both spiritual and carnal.

Many are judged and classified by their descendancy. In fact, descendancy from Abraham was proved, not by name and lineage, which can be stony and cursed, but by those who were under the control of the Holy Spirit (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 438); by likeness of character with Abraham. Traits of the old heredity must be overcome and not bear the fruits of a corrupt tree or a miserable character (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 562).

Descendancy depends, therefore, upon a spiritual relationship! “I will put my law in their inward parts; and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Jeremiah 31:33. Also, “If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31–32. The Pharisees didn’t understand this since they were in the worst kind of bondage, ruled by the “spirit of evil” (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 466–67). Again, who are the descendants, then, of Abraham? All accepting God by faith become his descendants (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 476), and guardians of the Truth (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 687; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 140–41). It is Satan’s efforts, therefore, to exterminate them (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 335).

## MARRIED LIFE

Abraham took great care of Isaac, who was a good son, to find him a marriage partner from among his kindred. He was determined that his heir find a wife from his

own people instead of from the Canaanites, who were degenerating into great wickedness. He knew by revelation that they were destined to ruin, and therefore he would not allow his son to marry one of them, lest they should be a snare to his soul, or at least a blot to his name. He did not want Isaac to leave the land of Canaan to go himself to his kindred, not even for the purpose of choosing a wife, lest he should be tempted to settle there. This caution is given and repeated (Genesis 24:6, 8); "Bring not my son thither again" whatever comes of it. Let him rather be without a wife than expose himself to that temptation.

Here is a message, furthermore, for parents. Parents, in the guidance of their children, should carefully consider the welfare of their souls, and their advancement in the journey heavenward. Those who, through grace, have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, and have brought up their children accordingly, should take heed of allowing anything by which they may be again entangled therein (2 Peter 2:20). As children ought not to marry without their parents' consent, so parents ought to encourage them not to marry without their consent.

Abraham, admittedly, was well advanced in years (120 years) (Hebrew "entered into days")(Genesis 24:1). Abraham took this action, knowing that he himself was likely to leave the world soon, for he was well-stricken in age and it would be to his satisfaction to see his son settled down before he died.

Also it was high time to think of marriage now for Isaac; his son was 40 years old and unmarried. At that time it was customary to marry at thirty, or sooner (Genesis 11:14, 18, 22, 24). Yet he made no haste to marry, even though he was the person from whom the promised seed was to come. In fact, he was 60 years old when his sons were born! (Genesis 25:26). After he was married he had no child for twenty years. Although the accomplishment of God's promise is always sure, yet it is often slow and seems to be crossed and contradicted by Providence. This is so that the faith of believers may be tried, their patience exercised, and mercies long waited for may be the more welcome when they do come.

Abraham made this call for his good servant to search for a bride and also to comfort Isaac after his mother's death. He would be the one divinely appointed to succeed him as the keeper of the Law and the father of the

chosen people. Abraham left a good estate behind him, for the Lord had blessed him in all things.

### SEEKING THE BRIDE

The faithful servant of Abraham, Eliezer, who made a covenant with Abraham, sought the bride for Isaac among his kindred with a particular prayer, "Send me good speed this day." Genesis 24:12 (emphasis mine). Those that would have good speed must pray for it. The servant acknowledges God first by prayer and petitions for prosperity and good success in this affair (Proverbs 3:6).

As the children of good parents, so are the servants of good masters; they have peculiar encouragement in the prayers they offer to God for prosperity and success. The diligent servant did not go to seek a wife at the playhouse or park, but to the well of water, expecting to find one there well employed. It seems that when she went to the well for water it was not because she did not have servants at her command, but because she took pleasure



in works of humble industry. God's providence extends itself to the smallest occurrences and serves its own purposes by them.

Moreover, Rebekah minded her own business at the well – not diverted or curious by the camels but of doing good – she not only gave the servant drink but,

which was more than could be expected, she offered her services to give his camels drink! It is good to take all opportunities to show a humble, courteous, charitable, disposition, because at some time or other, it may turn more to our honour and benefit than we think; some hereby have entertained angels (Hebrews 13:2). Our Saviour has promised a reward for a cup of cold water (Matthew 10:42).

You see, our times are in God's hand – not only events themselves, but the timing of them! Our wisdom in all our affairs is to follow providence and it is folly to force it to our ways – His will should be our rule. He guides His people with His eye (Psalm 32:8), and leads them in a plain path (Psalm 27:11). The answer to the servant's

prayer was speedy – “before he had done speaking.” Genesis 24:15. See Isaiah 65:24.

### PITCHER OF WATER

The gifts of silver, gold, and beautiful clothes were bestowed upon Rebekah, and precious gifts were also given to her mother and brother (Genesis 24:47, 53). This was a custom of the time. Gifts were also given to members of the bride’s family. These gifts are something a bride will never forget (Jeremiah 2:32). The earrings and bracelets she sometimes wore did not make her think herself above the labours of a virtuous woman (Proverbs 31:13), who works willingly with her hands; nor the services of a child, who, while under age, differs nothing from a servant (Galatians 4:1).

Providence wonderfully directs those that, by faith and prayer, seek direction from heaven in the choice of suitable yoke-fellows. Happy marriages, those that are made in the fear of God are made in heaven. God is to be acknowledged in providing suitable yoke-fellows, especially ones who are of the same religion.

Rebekah, clearly, was very beautiful, intelligent, of a ready courtesy, kind-hearted, active, energetic in nature, industrious, healthful, and a virgin. What a degenerate age we live in, in which appear all the characteristics of pride, luxury, and laziness, the opposite of Rebekah’s character.

Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for his son, and in finding Rebekah, she willingly left home and took a long journey to go marry Isaac. Rebekah, in fact, beautifully illustrates the Church, the virgin of Christ (Genesis 24:16; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25–32). The Church is the bride, the Lamb’s wife (Revelation 21:9). Christ is the bridegroom, and the minister’s work is to encourage souls to follow Jesus. Ministers, like Abraham’s servant, the friends of the bridegroom (John 3:29), must lay out themselves with the utmost wisdom and care to serve their Master’s interest herein (Acts 13:4; 16:6–7; Romans 8:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14:14–17). God sent His angel before him and gave him success. God’s way is always the right way (Psalm 107:7), and those are well led whom He leads.

### A NEW LIFE

Rebekah consented to begin the journey immediately. She was stepping out in faith, as Abraham had done years before. It was a momentous decision for a girl to make – a new home a long way off, probably never to

see her family again. A new life in Canaan was to be her reward. A similar reward awaits the true believers.

Now that she was going to be a wife, the relatives prayed that she might be a mother both of a numerous and of a victorious progeny. God’s promise was most likely told them, namely, that God would multiply Abraham’s seed as the stars of heaven, and that they should possess the gate of their enemies (Genesis 22:17).

Isaac, indeed, is a symbol of Christ’s sacrifice and “child of a miracle” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 18; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 151). Isaac was a “quiet, peace-loving shepherd” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177), and “gentle and yielding in disposition” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 171). Although Isaac was deceived by Jacob and envied and despised by Ishmael, he was a faithful believer in God, respected his father’s judgment and loved and revered the God of his father (*The Great Controversy*, p. 616; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 146; *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 82, 86).

Rebekah, although she has not seen Isaac, she still loves him through the testimony of the servant (1 Peter 1:7–8). Isaac, the bridegroom, consequently goes out to meet and receive his bride; to take his bride for himself.

### CAMEL JOURNEY

Let us for a moment return to that remarkable, incredible time again in the Old Testament, and try to picture that long camel journey of Rebekah’s with the wedding party of ten burdened camels, heavily laden with precious gifts and the bride, homeward bound, to be met by the bridegroom, Isaac.

“Christ . . . Spoke . . . with Isaac as he went out to pray in the fields.” *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 290–91. While Isaac was out in the field praying he saw the camels in the distance, carrying his bride. At the same time Rebekah saw Isaac afar off also, and we read, “And Rebekah lifted up her eyes and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself.” Genesis 24:64–65

How immeasurably rich, how inexpressibly precious is this wonderful tender scene. Rebekah’s long traveling days were done – over. Her long camel journey through the dark wilderness was over and, as was customary,

she covered her face before she met the man who would become her husband, in keeping with accepted rules of etiquette. A betrothed woman remained veiled until the marriage was consummated. Only then might her husband look upon her face. Isaac loved her and was comforted (Genesis 24:66–67)



### MUTUAL LOVE

Love came naturally, bringing joy and comfort to Isaac's heart. It was fitting that the lonely soul should find a woman who was lovely and lovable. It was especially good that the young woman, so far from home, was blessed with a husband who truly loved her. She became his wife, and he loved her; there was all the reason in the world why he should, for so ought men to love their wives even as themselves. The duty of the relation is then done, and the comfort of the relation is then enjoyed, when mutual love governs; there the Lord commands the blessing.

The parents now, Isaac and Rebekah, having been childless for 20 years, bore twins, Jacob and Esau, who were prayed for (Genesis 25:20–21). Though God promised to multiply his family, Jacob prayed for its increase; God's promises must not supersede, but encourage our prayers, and be improved as the ground of our faith. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1), to pray without ceasing, and knock 'til the door be opened. He prayed for his wife. God heard his prayer and was entreated of him. Children are the gift of God. Those that continue instant in prayer, as Isaac did, shall find, at last, that they did not seek in vain (Isaiah 45:19).

Ah! Yet, Isaac, the man of faith was joined in marriage

to a woman he did not know. Isaac, also, revealed something of his human weakness in Gerar, when he let fear betray him into lying about his wife, Rebekah; just as Abraham had done on two occasions, Isaac sought to pass his wife off as his sister. Yet God was leading, and would use even these individuals to work out His will for His people . . . and He did!

### ABRAHAM'S CROWN OF GLORY

Meanwhile, Abraham lived 35 years after the marriage of Isaac, and all that is recorded concerning him during the time lies here in a few verses: Abraham took another wife, Keturah, after the death of Sarah. He buried Sarah, and found a marriage partner for Isaac. It was not good for him to be alone. He therefore married Keturah. Marriage is not forbidden to those of old age.

After the birth of these sons he set his house in order. With prudence and justice he made Isaac his heir, which included the promise of the land of Canaan.

Abraham lived to 175 years, just 100 years after he came to Canaan! He died finally – in a good old age; as God had promised him. It was the crown of his glory of old age.

He was buried by his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael; the last office of respect they paid their good father. There was some distance formerly between Isaac and Ishmael, but it seems either that Abraham had himself brought them together while he lived, or at least that his death reconciled them. Death gathers us to our people; for those that are our people while we live, whether the people of God or the children of this world, are the people to whom death will gather us. The blessing of Abraham did not die with him, but survived to all the children of the promise.

### HEAVEN BOUND!

We today, as believers and followers, have almost reached a similar point in our long journey. For nearly 6000 years the Holy Spirit has been here preparing the Bride (the Church) and guiding her on her way home. Soon, we believe very soon, we will lift up our eyes (in a similar fashion as Isaac lifted up his eyes to meet his bride), and lo and behold, Jesus our Lover, our Saviour, our Lord, will break through the clouds to meet us. And we (like Rebekah getting off her camel), will leave our earthly homes and dwellings and rise to meet Him in the air with glorified bodies (1 Thessalonians 4:13–17).

There was a rich nobleman in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, who was a very distinguished gentleman – generous, kind, and sympathetic. But, he died suddenly from some unknown cause to the dismay of his court and his people. His court jester went and announced the sad news to his staff of servants. They replied, “Oh what a pity, but he’s safely now at peace in heaven.”

“No,” quietly said the loyal servant. Astonished, the other servants said, “But how can you have the audacity to say that? How do you know?” The servant plainly answered, “Well, my master was very thorough in any journeys he planned. He spent much time – days and weeks – preparing for any journey and told me all of his plans in intimate details. For such a momentous event, he never once mentioned heaven to me or talked about it, planning, preparing, or even his desires to ascend to heaven to reside there with God. So, my friends, I know he is not there!”

#### **DUST TO DUST**

The court jester’s story is very interesting – a moral message for man! But, the essence of the nobleman’s story is “preparing” for the journey to heaven! For we know that at death man returns to dust; the living soul MINUS the breath of God equals dust! Paul wrote, “But, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14. Jesus said, Lazarus sleeps. He is dead (John 11:11–14). The resurrection is man’s only hope! (1 Corinthians 15:35–38; 51–53; John 5:28, 29; Revelation 22:12; 2 Timothy 1:10; Psalm 13:3; Matthew 27:52; Revelation 16:14; Deuteronomy 18:9–12).

#### **DISPENSE TICKET**

The book of Revelation tells us most assuredly, in detail, that Heaven is a real place – not an imaginary place. It is a place with no tears, no sorrow, no darkness, no death, no sin, no pain, and no disappointments. The foundations will be walls of precious stones with the colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet):

Diamond (brilliant), emerald (green), jasper (greenish-yellow), sapphire (azure), topaz (yellow), amethyst (rose-red), beryl (sea-green), chrysolite (yellow), sardonyx (red-white), sard (red), chalcedony (green-blue), chrysoprase (golden-green), and hyacinth

(violet).

The streets will be of gold; the walls will have 12 gates, and each gate a magnificent pearl. The Heavenly City is a gloriously stirring city – enthralled in wonderment!

If you sometimes wonder if and how you will get to Heaven, trust in His promises, claim His promises. What does Jesus promise? “I go to prepare a place for you. . . I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:2–3

Assuredly, whatever your condition, circumstances, age, position, status, level, or color is, if you’re a believer and have met the conditions of salvation – confession, repentance, obedience, faithfulness, charitable-ness – then the hope of Heaven is yours, for hope is everything! Someday soon, we who have been redeemed by Jesus, will see God’s glory shine in the Heavenly Jerusalem (1 John 3:2).

Finally, indeed, we’ll see the face of our risen and glorified Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 3:2). That will be the greatest joy of all!! For “they shall see His face” (Revelation 22:4) and live with Him forever.

Prepare us, Oh Lord, for that **JOURNEY OF LOVE!** A hearty Amen!

*John Theodorou*  
**U.S.A.**

“The yoke is placed upon the oxen to aid them in drawing the load, to lighten the burden. So with the yoke of Christ. When our will is swallowed up in the will of God, and we use His gifts to bless others, we shall find life’s burden light. He who walks in the way of God’s commandments is walking in company with Christ, and in His love the heart is at rest. When Moses prayed, ‘Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee,’ the Lord answered him, ‘My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.’ And through the prophets the message was given, ‘Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls’ (Exodus 33:13, 14; Jeremiah 6:16). And He says, ‘O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.’ Isaiah 48:18.” –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 330–331



# THE LITTLE SISTERS

"You were not here yesterday," said the gentle teacher of the little village school, as she placed her hand kindly on the curly head of one of her pupils. It was recess time but the little girl had not gone out to frolic away the ten minutes, she had not even left her seat, but sat absorbed in a seemingly vain attempt to make herself a mistress of an example in long division.

Her face and neck crimsoned at the remark of her teacher, but looking up, she seemed somewhat reassured by the kind glance that met her, and answered:

"No, ma'am, I was not, but sister Nelly was."

"I remember there was a little girl that called herself Nelly Gray, who came in yesterday, but I did not know she was your sister. But why did you not come? You seem to love to study very much."

"It was not because I didn't want to," was the earnest answer, and then she paused and the deep flush tinged her fair brow; but she continued after a moment of painful embarrassment, "Mother cannot spare both of us conveniently, and so we are going to take turns. I'm going to school one day, and sister the next, and tonight I'm going to teach Nelly all I have learned today, and tomorrow night she will teach me all she learns while here. It is the only way we can think of getting along, and we want to study very much, so that sometime we will be able to teach school ourselves, and take care of mother, because she has to work very hard to take care of us."

The teacher asked no more questions but sat down beside her, and in a moment explained the rule over which she was puzzling her young brain, so that the

hard example was easily finished.

"You would better go out and take the air a few moments; you have studied hard today," said the teacher, as the little girl put aside the slate.

"I would rather not. I might tear my dress. I will stand by the window and watch the rest."

The dress was nothing but a cheap calico, but it was neatly made and never had been washed. While looking at it, she remembered that during the whole previous two weeks, she had never seen her wear but that one dress. "She is a thoughtful little girl," said she to herself, "and does not want to make herself any trouble. I wish I had more such scholars."

The next morning Mary was absent, but her sister occupied her seat. There was something so interesting in the two little sisters, the one eleven, and the other eighteen months younger, agreeing to attend school by turns, that the teacher noticed them very closely.

They were pretty faced children, of delicate forms, the elder with dark eyes and chestnut curls, the other like the sky of June, her white neck covered by a wealth of golden ringlets. The teacher noticed in both girls the same close attention to their studies, and as Mary stayed indoors during recess, so did Nelly; and upon speaking to her as she had done to her sister, she received the same answer, "I might tear my dress."

The reply caused Miss Smith to notice the dress of her sister. She saw at once that it was of the same piece as Mary's, in fact, she had become certain that it was the same dress. It did not fit so nicely on Nelly, and it was

too long for her, and she was evidently ill at ease when she noticed her teacher looking at the bright pink flowers that were so thickly set on the white background.

The discovery was one that could not but interest the teacher. Though short of means herself, that same night she purchased a dress of the same dress material for little Nelly, and made arrangements with the merchant to send it to her in such a way that the donor need never be known.

Very bright and happy looked Mary Gray on Friday morning, as she entered the school at an early hour. She waited only to put her books in neat order in her desk, before she approached the teacher, and whispering in a voice that laughed in spite of her efforts to make it low and deferential.

“After this week sister Nelly is coming to school every day, and oh, I am so glad!”

“That is very good news,” replied the teacher kindly. “Nelly is fond of her books, I see, and I am glad that she will have an opportunity to study them every day.”

Then she continued, a little good-natured mischievous look in her eyes, “But can your mother spare you both conveniently?”

“Oh, yes, ma’am, yes ma’am, she can now. Something happened that she did not expect, and she is glad to have us come as we are to do so.” She hesitated a moment, but her young heart was filled to the brim with joy, and when a child is happy, it is as natural to tell the cause as it is for a bird to warble when the sun shines. So out of the fullness of her heart she spoke and told the teacher this little story:

She and her sister were the only children of a poor widow, whose health was so delicate that it was almost impossible to support herself and her daughters. She was obliged to keep them out of school all winter, as they had no suitable clothes to wear, but she told them that if they could earn enough to buy each of them a new dress, by doing odd chores for the neighbours, they might go in the spring.

Very earnestly had the girls improved their stray chances, and very carefully hoarded their copper coins. They nearly saved enough to buy a dress, when Nelly was taken sick, and as the mother had no money beforehand, poor Nelly’s money had to be used for medicine.

“Oh, I did feel so bad when school opened and Nelly could not go, because she had no dress,” said Mary. “I told mother I wouldn’t go either, but she said it would be better, for I could teach sister some, and it would be better than no schooling.

“I stood it for two weeks, but Nelly’s little face seemed all the time looking at me on the way to school, and I couldn’t be happy a bit, so I finally thought of a way by which we could both go. I told mother I would come

one day, and the next I would lend Nelly my dress and she might come; that’s the way we have done it this week. But last night somebody sent sister a dress just like mine, and now she can come too.

“Oh, if I knew who it was, I would get down on my knees and thank them, and so would Nelly. But we don’t know, and so we’ve done all we could for them – we’ve prayed for them – and oh, Miss Smith., we are all so glad now. Aren’t you too?”

“Indeed I am,” was the emphatic answer.

The following Monday, little Nelly, in the new pink dress, entered the schoolroom with her sister. Her face was as radiant as a rose in sunshine, and approaching the teacher’s table, she exclaimed:

“I am coming to school every day, and oh, I am so glad!”

The teacher felt as she had never before, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. No millionaire, when he saw his name in public print, lauded for his thousand dollar charities, was ever so happy as the poor school teacher who wore her gloves half a summer longer than she ought, and thereby saved enough to buy that little fatherless girl a calico dress.



In a hidden oasis in the most remote landscape of the desert, was the old man Eliahu, on his knees next to some date palms. His neighbour,

Hakim, the wealthy merchant, stopped at the oasis to water his camels and saw Eliahu sweating, while he appeared to dig in the sand. "How are you old man? Peace be with you." "And with you," answered Eliahu, without leaving his work. "What are you doing here, in this temperature, working with that shovel?" "Planting," answered the old man. "What are you planting here, Eliahu?" "Dates," answered the old man, pointing to the palm. "Dates!" answered his neighbour, and closed his eyes as he listened to the craziest thing. "Hot weather has damaged your brain, dear friend. Come, leave that work and let's go to the store for a drink." "No, I must finish sowing, and then if you want, we will drink." "Tell me, friend, how old are you?" "I don't know, sixty, seventy, eighty, I don't know. . . . I have forgotten it. But, what does it matter?" "Look, friend, dates take more than fifty years to grow and only then it will be in the condition to give fruits. I'm not wishing you ill will and you know it. I hope you can live to a hundred years, but you know that you can hardly reap what you are sowing now. Leave that and come with me." "Hakim, I ate the dates that others planted, others who didn't dream to try them. I'm sowing today so that other people can eat dates tomorrow. And if I do this only in honour of this unknown person, it is worthy to finish my work." "You have given me a great lesson, Eliahu; let me pay you for this teaching," said Hakim, placing in the hands of the old man a leather bag full of coins. "I thank you. You see, sometimes this happens: you predicted that I wouldn't reap what I was sowing. It seemed true. Although, look, I haven't finished sowing and I reap a bag of coins and the gratitude of a friend." "Your wisdom amazes me, old man. This is the second lesson that you are giving me today, and maybe it is more important than the first one. Let me, therefore, pay you also for this lesson with another bag of coins." "And, sometimes this happens:" continued the old man, extending his hand to touch the two bags, "Sow – not thinking to reap – but before I finish sowing, I reap not once but twice." "Enough, old man, stop talking. If you keep teaching me things I won't have enough to pay you."

This simple story illustrates the importance of sowing

## "Abundant life"

*Public Meetings, Calgary*

and reaping. The wise king, Solomon, illustrated this truth in the following way: "Ship your grain across the sea; after many days you may

receive a return." Ecclesiastes 11:1, NIV. From this short Bible verse comes the so-called "investment law." The New International Reader's Version says: "Put your money into trade across the ocean. After a while you will earn something from it." This is the same law that the Master taught, talking about the planting of the grain, although He added another interesting ingredient: the quality of the land.

Wise Solomon knew very well how to apply this "investment law"; the king sent ships to the sea and after three years they came back, full of wealth. In this way he multiplied his property (1 Kings 10:22); he literally cast his bread upon the waters.

Chapter 11 of Ecclesiastes is full of advice that helps us to be knowledgeable in money matters, without forgetting that we are only administrators of the possessions that the Lord has given to us. The Spirit of Prophecy states: "We are but stewards, and on the discharge of our obligation to God and man depend both the welfare of our fellow beings and our own destiny for this life and for the life to come." –*Education*, p. 139

However, "investment law" is so vast that it doesn't apply only to financial or commercial issues, as mentioned in the case of King Solomon; but it is a principle, applicable to all the areas of the human being: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, etc. If you invest time in your relationship with God, if you pray and read your Bible, you will be applying investment law in your spiritual life; if you dedicate time, money and effort in your educational goals, you will be investing in your intellectual life; if you take time to spend with your wife, children, parents, and family in general, you will be investing in your relationships, in your emotional state. A balanced implementation of the "investment law" in all areas makes us healthy and growing Christians as stated in Ephesians 4:13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

How does this "investment law" relate to the public

meetings held in Calgary? We have been sowing in Calgary; we have been applying the “investment law.” We have had the pleasant company of many sowers and spiritual investors. The Lord has given us a wonderful time in the work of sowing through the meetings entitled “Abundant life.”

This entire project began to be developed several months ago with the support of the Canadian Field, the small local church and the interested people who also contributed with their grains of sand for this event. With the publicity spread and the date almost upon us, the people we invited arrived. Brother Morris Lowe and his wife, Sister Sharon Lowe, were the first to arrive at the Calgary airport on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011. A few minutes later we saw Brother Henry Dering through the international arrival gate. Everybody was happy. With my wife and my son we welcomed them to the city of the Stampede.



That same afternoon, after the arrival of the brethren to Calgary, we went directly to the radio station. We thank God that we were allowed 30 minutes on the air. We opened the program as usual and as soon as we made the introduction to the program for that day, Brother Dering announced the content of his meetings. He was very practical and simple, and at the end of his talk, we received two phone calls on air from listeners who had questions about **home**; it was very exciting. The second part of the program was conducted by Brother Morris who told us about chronic diseases and what to do for healing. He also told us about the content of his meetings. Our time on the radio, in the company of Julio who is the official host of the program, was very pleasant.

But, it didn't finish there. When we finished our program, we were invited by the host of the following pro-

gram, who gave us time to talk about the themes for the meetings. We also talked about a very interesting topic: what happens after death? The talk was very interesting, with questions from the speaker and answers from the minister about this theme which intrigues so many people. The truth was expressed with clear, simple words so that any listener could understand.

This took place on the first day after the arrival of the brethren to Calgary.

During the meetings on Friday the 27<sup>th</sup>, Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup>, there was a nervous atmosphere as is natural in these types of activities, with the desire for excellence in every detail of the meetings.

Everything was ready. The meeting room was beautiful; soft music encouraged the participants to elevate their hearts, and all the responsible people were in their respective places. We then prayed, asking the Lord to bless the meetings for the benefit of the salvation of souls. Interested people arrived one by one, until the meeting room was filled. It was beautiful to see the interested people willing to receive the word of truth in their hearts.

Every act, every intervention, every theme, every gift was a blessing during the three nights. Health themes were the responsibility of Brother Morris Lowe, and were very useful. Each night he talked about a different theme: hypertension, diets and diseases, alcohol and chronic diseases. Brother Dering had three spiritual themes of interest: how to save your marriage, one minute after death, and the story of Jesus, all told with great enthusiasm.



But the most touching thing happened during the last meeting. After prayer by Brother Morris, before the start of the third meeting, and during the call made by Brother Dering to those present, most of the partici-



pants raised their hands and stood, as a sign that they wished to accept Jesus into their hearts. This scene was very touching because we saw God's power acting in the hearts of those that made a decision for the truth. The most solemn moment of the evening

was when we all prayed together, led by Brother Dering. We prayed for the souls who made decisions and wanted to follow the way of the Lord.

All of the evenings were really wonderful. Now we have the work of continuing to invest: investing time and effort so that these souls would continue to walk in the way of the Lord and become firmly established through the study of the Bible and the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, brothers and sisters, we ask for your support in prayers for this field of work. We invite you to join us in prayer and fasting every Wednesday

for the needs of the newly converted people.

Dear brethren in the Lord, never consider the effort too great for Christ's sake, never forget the sacrifice that our Lord Jesus made, because it was the biggest sacrifice; He INVESTED in us and His blood is the price paid for our redemption. . . . Invest in and sow seeds in the souls that don't know the Lord. Give everything for the One who loved us first, because at the right time we will reap fruit for His glory.

Finally, we want to express our deepest gratitude, mainly to our Captain, Lord Jesus, His Holy Spirit and the angels from heaven that helped us in our spiritual endeavours. Also we want to thank the



Canadian Field Committee who supported this project. We also thank the brethren from the local church who cooperated in every detail of the meetings, and of course, Brother Henry Dering, Brother Morris Lowe and Sister Sharon Lowe who contributed their talents for God's glory. May the Lord bless you richly.

**Elder Hernandez**



# BIBLE SEMINAR IN INDIA - 2011

By the grace of the Lord, the members and Bible workers received joyful news from our General Conference. They were willing to send Pastor Larry Watts, who is the North American Regional Leader and a member of the General Conference ministerial department, to conduct a seminar and youth conference in India.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, 2011, Pastor Larry Watts arrived in India. That very same day he started the Bible seminar with the wonderful words from the testimonies of Sister E. G. White:

“We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary, should be our constant study.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 520

He explained this very clearly and in a simple way, with many pictures. Our brethren easily understood his teaching, because the pictures helped to illustrate his presentation. It is a very good teaching method. Once again we reviewed the topic of the Day of Atonement and what happens in the outer court, the holy place, and the most holy place. The work of the heavenly High Priest, our Saviour Jesus Christ, is amazing in saving those who follow Him faithfully.

During May 2–7, 2011, we learned lessons on the following topics:

1. Biblical Archaeology – Noah’s Ark
2. The Day of Atonement
3. Hermeneutics
4. What will happen soon to give a revelation of God to mankind

When Brother Larry explained Biblical archaeology, we were shown pictures of Noah's ark and Mount Ararat. We were taught how God destroyed the wicked people and cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the life of Israel in Egypt, and the crossing of the Red Sea. Many interesting lessons were taught to us by our Brother, Larry Watts. Although he was very sick, he taught us wonderfully. We are very thankful to him and the General Conference leaders for this wonderful opportunity.

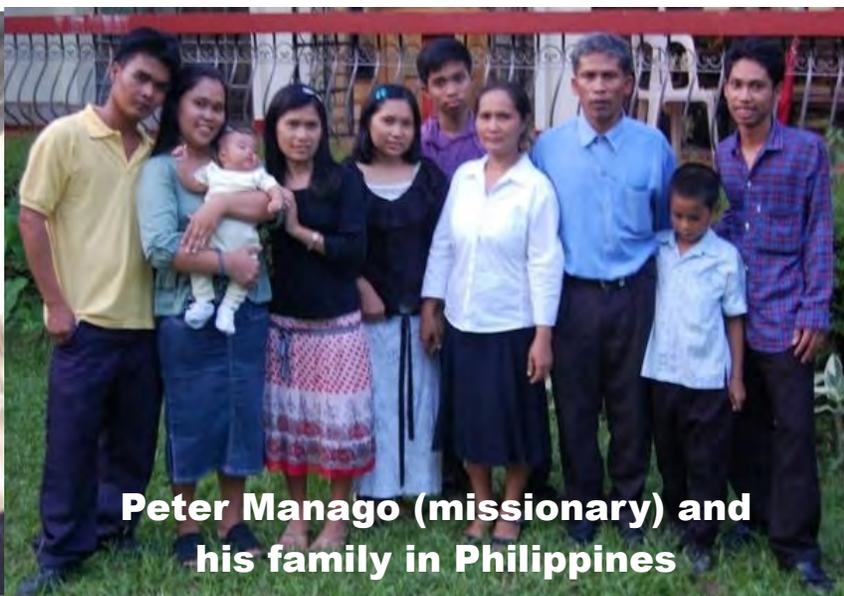
On the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2011, he visited other places in the state of Meghalaya, 3000 km from us. He then returned to conduct a marriage ceremony for one of the members in another state called Karnataka. Afterwards we departed to our homes full of joy and blessings, and with these Bible words "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." Psalm 40:16. Amen.

**S. Raj Israel  
India**





**Young people who attended the Bible Seminar in India**



**Peter Manago (missionary) and his family in Philippines**



**Believers in Legazpi Church, Philippines**



By the grace of the Lord, we will have a spiritual retreat in the Revelstoke, B.C., area. It will start on Friday, August 19, at 7:00 pm, and will end on Sunday, August 21, at 12:00 noon.

The main topic of our retreat is Jesus and how we can develop a lasting relationship with Him in light of the present time in which we live.

For more information, email Brother Oscar Oviedo at: [gatoscar\\_2001@yahoo.com](mailto:gatoscar_2001@yahoo.com)

## *American Union Conference*

**August 24 to 27, 2011.** Cohutta Springs Campground in Crandall, Georgia. A youth retreat is being planned for several days prior to the conference.

For more details see: <http://www.sda1914.org/page.cl/>



## BAPTISM IN INDONESIA



Baptism of Brother Mardi Tompodung and his wife, Sister Syane Anis, and Sister Anita Kanalung, from the Pinaling Church. Brother Tompodung with his wife, came from the SDA church. Sister Anita came from the '51 group, her parents joined our church five years ago. She has been paralyzed for two years.



## BELIEVERS IN PHILIPPINES (biennial meeting)

# **The River of Life**

**Come, anxious learner, from the mart and field,  
And see the treasures that the heavens yield.**

**Earth has her treasures in the darkened mine;  
Gold and rare jewels midst the gravel shine.**

**By eye of faith see yonder gliding stream, —  
The prophet's vision and the poet's dream.**

**See! From the throne its sparkling water flows,  
And all is life and gladness where it goes.**

**God's creatures daily gathering at its brink,  
Bathe in its floods, and of its waters drink**

**There youth and beauty are of each a part;  
For life and healing from its waters start.**

**No darksome glades along its marge are found,  
Nor saline marshes poisoning all the ground;**

**But gentle breezes o'er its bosom blow;  
And life's triumphant wheresoe'er they go.**

**The peace of God – a ray of heaven's beam —  
Is always present in this living stream;**

**And all the blessings of our Lord are sent  
To those of faith whose sorrowing hearts repent.**

**Frank L. Bennett**