



The Reformation
Messenger 

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 9, SEPTEMBER 2013

EGYPT

PAGE 10

God desired to take His people apart from the world and prepare them to receive His word. From Egypt He led them to Mount Sinai, where He revealed to them His glory.” – Testimonies for the Church vol. 6, p. 9

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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Messenger

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Goodness

Are there many good people among us who are not good according to the world's standard, but according to God's standard? About ancient Israel, God said, "For My people is foolish, they have not known Me, they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge." Jeremiah 4:22

Then, as we come forward more than six hundred years, their condition had not changed. Paul writes, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Romans 3:12

Now in the time of the end, we have a testimony from Ellen G. White, "The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 217

Can we pray to God asking Him to hear our prayer because we are so good? David prayed to God, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness sake, O Lord." Psalm 25:7

David did not ask the Lord to remember him for his own goodness, but for the goodness of the Lord.

Paul writes clearly, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Romans 7:18–19

This shows man's helpless condition, and the reason why there are so few good people. He writes further,

"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Romans 7:22–23

There is a war being fought within ourselves, and our destiny depends on which one wins the war—the mind or the flesh.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Galatians 5:17

David said, "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97

But most of the people do not love the law, they obey it only for the fear of punishment, and that is only superficial obedience.

Most of the people are selfish. A selfish person is not a good person. He is friendly with the people who benefit him, but their friendship is soon broken if someone tries to take advantage of him. Their eyes are open constantly to see opportunities for gaining benefits to themselves. Even the church services must be entertaining and interesting or they rather stay home.

Marriages are soon broken if they do not cater to his or her liking. Paul writes of the professed Christians in the last days. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural

affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; **from such turn away.**" 2 Timothy 3:1-5. [emphasis mine]

Paul said, "from such turn away." Even God turns away from such professing Christians. "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols." Amos 5:21-23

Religion without true goodness is abomination to God. Those self-righteous Pharisees who seemed so holy from the outside, were called children of the devil by Jesus because goodness was lacking. Their Sabbath keeping, tithe paying, and other outward ceremonies did not make up for their lack of true goodness.

Even the men of God, patriarchs and prophets, are not perfect examples for us, only Jesus is.

Paul, who was the faithful apostle to the Gentiles, lost his temper when punished falsely. "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" Acts 23:1-3

On the contrary when Jesus was accused and punished falsely, He did not open His mouth. He silently accepted all the abuse that was done to Him.

Moses had learned the lesson of true goodness. When Aaron and Miriam accused him falsely, he did not defend himself with even one word. "Their accusations were borne by Moses in uncomplaining silence." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 384

The thief on the cross beside Jesus said to the other thief, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man has done nothing amiss." Luke 23:40-41

Whenever something bad happens to us we need to say the same, "we suffer justly, we deserve this punishment." Yet we do not suffer punishment for our sins, but rather a discipline, as a loving father disciplines his son for his good.

We read in Ezra, "Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve." Ezra 9:13

David writes, "He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Psalm 103:10

This shows the goodness of our God. "He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of The Lord." Psalm 33:5. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psalm 34:8

In order to be the children of God, we need to be good as He is good. "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:45

There is no justice in the world, but with Christ, there is justice and mercy. If there would be justice only we all would be dead, for the wages of sin is death, but we live and even have an expectation of eternal life because of mercy.

Therefore should we ever complain if we are lacking something, because what we have is more than we deserve; especially when we see that every difficulty and trial is for our own good, for our character development?

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

King Jeroboam wanted to kill the prophet of God who prophesied against him, and when God punished the king that his hand withered, the prophet prayed for the king and his hand was restored.

"And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him." 1 Kings 13:4

Then the prophet of God prayed for him that his hand was restored to him again. This is true goodness, to pray for the enemy, who was about to kill him.

Job had a terrible experience, and his three friends turned to be his enemies, accusing and blaming him of wrong doings. But God forgave them when Job prayed for them.

Isaac showed true goodness when, after digging a well of water with hard work, the herdsmen of Gerar came and

said, "this is our well." Isaac just moved on and dug another well, but the herdsmen of Gerar came again and said, "this is also our well." Instead of fighting for it he moved and dug a third well.

From this story of Isaac we learn that a good person does not fight for his rights. Paul writes, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

Jesus said, "And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have your cloak also." Matthew 5:40

Is this a standard of goodness? If our rights are abused, if we are taken advantage of by others, let them do it, and give them more even. Maybe now we understand why there are so few good people are in our world who come up to the standard of heaven.

"True goodness is accounted of heaven as true greatness." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 305

"He [God] prizes goodness and faithfulness more than the greatness of the work accomplished." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 511

"Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable." –*Child Guidance*, p. 395

"Love, courtesy, self-sacrifice—these are never lost. When God's chosen ones are changed from mortality to immortality, their words and deeds of goodness will be made manifest, and will be preserved through the eternal ages. No act of unselfish service, however small or simple, is ever lost. Through the merits of Christ's imputed righteousness, the fragrance of such words and deeds is forever preserved." –*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 270

"That which we do to others, whether it be good or evil, will surely react upon ourselves, in blessing or in cursing. Whatever we give, we shall receive again. The earthly blessings which we impart to others may be, and often are, repaid in kind. What we give does, in time of need, often come back to us in fourfold measure in the coin of the realm. But, besides this, all gifts are repaid, even in this life, in the fuller inflowing of His love, which is the sum of all heaven's glory and its treasure. And evil imparted also returns again." –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 136

"Those who, so far as it is possible, engage in the work of doing good to others by giving practical demonstration of their interest in them are not only relieving the ills of human life in helping them bear their burdens, but are at the same time contributing largely to their own health of soul and body. Doing good is a work that benefits both giver and receiver. If you forget self in your interest for others, you gain a victory over your infirmities. The satisfaction you will realize in doing good will aid you greatly in the recovery of the healthy tone of the imagination. The pleasure of doing good animates the mind and vibrates through the whole body." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 534

The world is destitute of true goodness because parents have failed to teach their children true goodness by their words and examples.

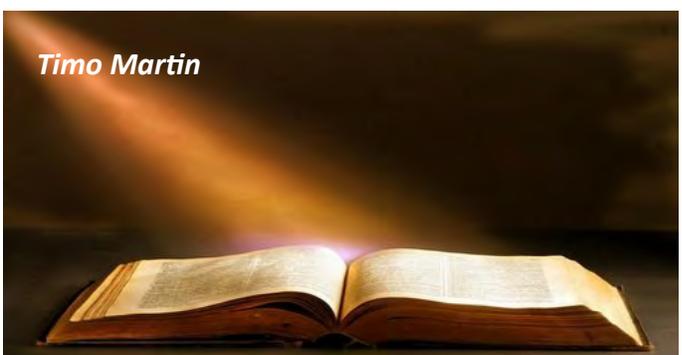
Only those who have learned and practiced the true goodness will hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matthew 25:21

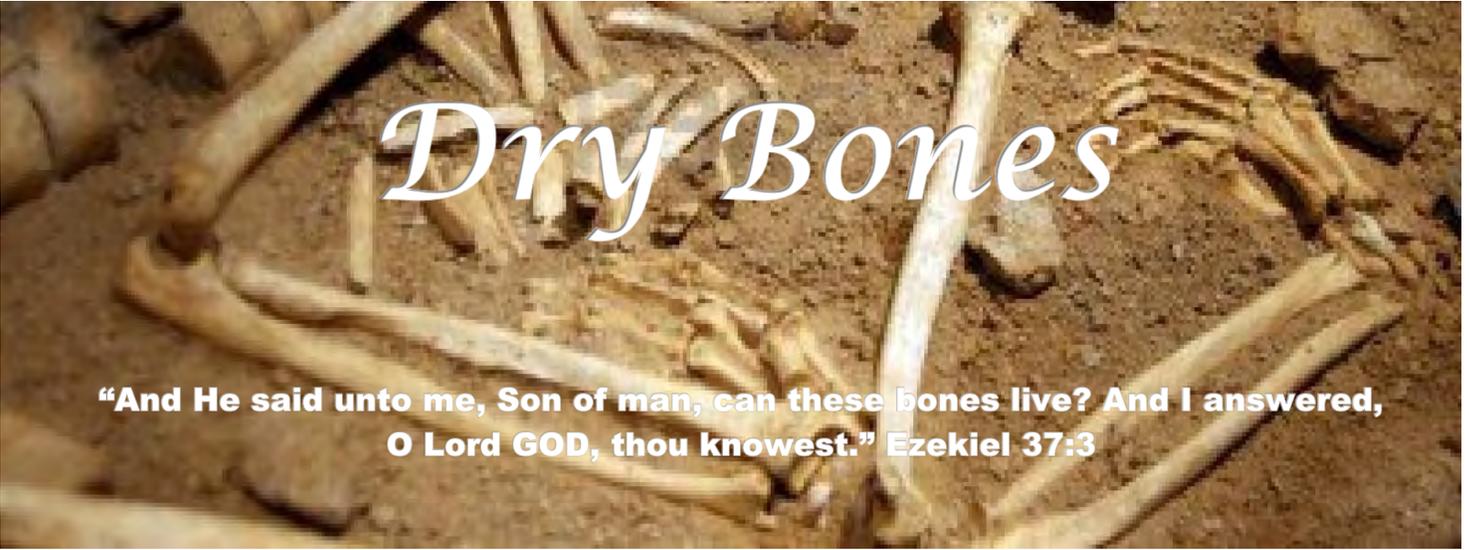
When you learn to practice true goodness you will be like God is, you will be like Jesus, going about doing good.

Goodness is the goal that Christ puts before us, however, goodness does not come naturally to us, ("there is none good no not one" Romans 3:12). Only when we obtain the righteousness of Christ and are hid in Him is it possible for this fruit of the Spirit to be realized. Through being a partaker of the divine nature the "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" Philippians 4:13 becomes the outflow and goodness will follow in its train

If we will know true goodness and be truly good, we will make a good missionary, not preaching with words only, but also by your example. You will make a good husband or wife and a good example to your children.

May The Lord help us to learn the lesson of goodness while we have the opportunity and the time. Soon it will be too late. Amen.





Dry Bones

“And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.” Ezekiel 37:3

TWO THINGS

God had assured His people, the Jewish exiles (Judah and Jerusalem), that He would gather the House of Israel, even all of it and would bring them out of Babylonian captivity, and return them to their own land. But there were two things that rendered this very unlikely: -

1) That they were so dispersed among their enemies, so destitute of all helps and advantages which might favour their return, and so dispirited, likewise, in their own minds. Upon all these accounts they are here, in vision, compared to a valley full of the dry bones of dead men, which should be brought together and raised to life;

2) That they were so divided amongst themselves, too much of the old enmity between Judah and Ephraim remaining—even in their captivity.

DEAD MEN’S BONES

The prophet, Ezekiel (meaning: *God will strengthen*), a man of stern integrity and strong purpose, was made to take an exact view of this deplorable condition—of these dead bones. Ezekiel was the voice of the Lord to “the whole house of Israel.” By a divine power he was in vision, carried out and set in the midst of a valley, where God then talked with him, and it was full of bones, of dead men’s bones, not piled up on a heap, as in a “charnel-house” (a vault for bones of the dead—still in effect in Greece due to lack of grave sites), but scattered upon the face of the ground, as if some bloody battle had been fought here, and the slain left unburied till all the flesh was devoured or putrefied, and nothing left but the bones, and those disjointed from one another and wildly dispersed in scattered heaps.

He passed by them round about, and he observed not only that they were very many (for there are multitudes gone to the congregation of the dead), but that, lo, they were very dry, having been long exposed to the beating sun and cruel winds. The bones that have been mois-

tened with marrow (Job 21:24), when they have been any while dead, lose all their moisture, and are dry as dust. The body is now fenced with bones (Job 10:11), but then they will themselves be defenseless. The Jews in Babylon were like those dead and dry bones, unlikely ever to come together, to be so much as a mounted, upright skeleton, less likely to be formed into a body, and least of all to be a living body. However, they lay unburied in the open valley—under the eye of heaven—for there is still hope in their end—even dead men’s bones!

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

A dry bone is proof of extinct life, for bones are made only in a living organism!

“Bones are rigid organs that constitute part of the endoskeleton of vertebrates. They support and protect the various organs of the body, produce red and white blood cells and store minerals. Bones come in a variety of shapes and have a complex internal and external structure, are lightweight yet strong and hard, and serve multiple functions. One type of tissue that makes up bone is the mineralized osseous tissue (bone tissue), that gives it rigidity and a coral-like three dimensional internal structure. This inorganic bone mineral is formed from carbonated hydroxyapatite ($\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH})_2$). Other types of bone tissue found in bones include marrow, endosteum, periosteum, nerves, blood vessels and cartilage. At birth, there are over 270 bones in an infant human’s body, but many of these fuse together as the child grows, leaving a total of 206 separate bones in an adult!” (*Wikipedia*, The Free Encyclopedia, (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bone))

“The chemical and physical properties depend on species, age, and type of bone. The nonliving intercellular material of bone consists of an organic component called collagen, a fibrous protein. Organic material com-

prises 50 per cent of the volume and 30 percent of the dry weight of the intercellular composite, with minerals making up the remainder. The major minerals of the intercellular composite are calcium and phosphate. Carbonate is also present in two phases; calcium carbonate and carbonate apatite. The tensile strength of bone depends on the intimate association of mineral with collagen which exhibits many of the same properties of fibreglass and bamboo.

“Compact (cortical) bone has a tensile strength in the range of 10,000–20,000 pounds per square inch and compressive strengths of 20,000–30,000 pounds per square inch—values of which are on the same order of aluminum or mild steel, but bone has the advantage of being considerably lighter.” —*Encyclopedia Britannica*, (www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/72869/bone/41882/Chemical-composition-and-physical-properties)

Israel, as a nation, was once a living, vibrant organism, full of the life of God. Ah! But Israel sinned, and then came decay with disintegration, and intolerable dryness; until now Israel has become like a valley of dry bones scattered over the earth. Man, created in the image of God, was a living organism filled with the life of God, but man sinned, and then came decay with disintegration which has made the world a valley of bones—void of life, function, or usefulness.

“God has no use for lazy men in His cause; He wants thoughtful, kind, affectionate earnest workers. Active exertion will do our preachers good. Indolence is proof of depravity. Every faculty of the mind, every bone of the body, every muscle of the limbs, shows that God designed these faculties to be used, not to remain inactive.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 411

Now there is no process known to science by which a dry bone can be suddenly changed into a vital, living organism. When, therefore, God asked the prophet, “Can these bones live?” the prophet was compelled to refer the question back to God for an answer. O Lord God, Thou and Thou alone knowest. If these bones are never made to live, Thou wilt have to tell us how (Ezekiel 37:3). Can philosophy or politics restore a captive nation—to reach and put life into these dry bones? No! Says, the prophet Ezekiel. I know not how it shall be done, but Thou and Thou alone knowest (Ezekiel 37:3).

God will, hereby, answer the question as to how dry bones of all ages may be made to live: -

PREPARATION OF A PROPHET

In the first place, those commissioned to raise dry bones

must have a special preparation. This preparation is twofold.

One must see a vision of God and receive the touch of God. In the first chapter of Ezekiel’s prophecy we are told that he saw visions of God! He saw wings with human hands under them; a vision of the divine and human—the wing everywhere symbolizes divinity and the hand, humanity—the divine controlling the human, for the wings moved the hands. He saw winged creatures with the face of a man symbolizing intelligence, the face of a lion symbolizing courage, the face of an ox symbolizing patience, and the face of an eagle symbolizing aspiration, all under control of the divine wings.

The need of every prophet of God is that his intelligence, courage, patience and aspiration shall be linked with God and be completely controlled by Him (Ezekiel 1:1-28; 10:1-22). These visions of Ezekiel on the banks of the Chebar show how closely heaven is connected with events on earth (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p.751; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 464). These are wonderful representations and symbols given to Ezekiel (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 752); “the book of Ezekiel is deeply instructive.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 395

Consequently, in these visions Ezekiel feels the touch of God. “The hand of the LORD was upon me.” Ezekiel 37:1. The hand of the Lord symbolizes His power, and to be under His hand is to be endued with His power. The spirit of God is in every Christian for life, but every Christian is not under God’s hand for power. The prophet responds to the touch of God and goes where He leads. “The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones.” Ezekiel 37:1. He was willing to be led by the Lord’s hand into the valley of dry bones. The temptation is for us to seek the garden with its flowers rather than the valley with its dead bones.

The prophet also responds when God’s hand sets him down in the midst of the bones. Dwelling with the bones is more trying than just going to them on a temporary mission, as most do. To have bones for neighbours and companions may not be pleasant. We have a taste for the company of living people. But unless we are ready to respond to the hand of God which would lead us to the bones and make us dwell among them, we are not prepared for the work of raising them to life again.

The work cannot be done at a distance. The millions who throng the streets, crowd the theatres, discos, drink and revel, shunning the church as they would the

"pest house" (a shelter or hospital for those infected with pestilential or contagious diseases), cannot be reached by the pastor in his study, making eloquent sermons for his cultured congregation, nor by the Christians who meet in halls, homes, conferences, and churches, for fellowship and Bible study. Thank God for the men and women who gladly respond to the hand of God, leading them to the most sinful and hopeless! Ezekiel is told to prophesy to the bones the promise of life (Ezekiel 36:4–5).

THE TEST OF FAITH

Three things severely tested the prophet's faith:

1) The bones were very many. The valley was white with them! To reach them all by personal effort was impossible. And yet the multitude of the bones did not cause the faith of the prophet to fail, for his eyes were upon God and he believed that God was equal to such a task. As we look at millions unreached by the Gospel we may be appalled, but the eye of faith sees God, still equal to the great work of reaching and saving. No difficulty can surpass His resources.

2) The bones were very dry. There was no sign of life. Their dryness was positive proof of death. We are apt to classify people as either hopeful or hopeless. We are hopeful for the child raised in the Christian family and taught in Bible school classes. We are hopeful for the amiable woman, cultured and refined, who takes an interest in church affairs. But the poor, addicted, shiftless one, the hardened criminal, the outcast harlot, and the blatant anarchist, we are apt to regard as hopeless dry bones, if we take our eyes from our God of infinite power and love. If Ezekiel had kept looking at the great number of very dry bones, he might have said, "There is no use trying to raise them to life." But though Ezekiel was willing to face the facts and would not deny the difficulties, he did not look to the bones for assurance of faith. He trusted God who made the men whose bones were

before him and who could, by the fiat or decree of His will, remake them. To the man whose faith is in God alone the hopeless becomes hopeful—the dry become vibrant!

3) The prophet was told to do a very foolish thing. It is foolish to speak to a deaf man, more foolish to speak to a dead man, and it is the climax of folly to speak to a bone so lifeless and formless as not to be classified as man at all. Ah! But Ezekiel was willing to appear a fool to the worldly wise. And it is by the foolishness of preaching that men are to be saved! Ezekiel was ordered to preach—he must preach, but to pray also, which he did—by grace (Ezekiel 37:4, 7, 9–10).

THE MEANS USED

The man of God spoke the word of God in the power of the Spirit of God. Ezekiel was a man of God in that he was right with God and completely under God's control. It is well to be a man of learning, a man of position, a man of means, a man of eloquence, but it is a thousand times better to be a man of



God!

But the word of God must be spoken by the man of God. The prophet spoke to the bones exactly what God told him. In 2 Timothy 3:16–17 we have the purpose of the Scriptures; "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The man of God has the whole Bible from which to draw equipment for every good work.



But he must be a man of prayer, depending upon the Spirit of God to use the Word. The prophet was commanded to call upon the breath of God to breathe upon the valley of bones, and, while he spoke God's word, God's invisible power moved upon the valley of bones.

Every worker in the valley of bones needs these qualifications! He must be a man of God, a man of the Bible

and a man of prayer. He must keep right with God and speak the word of God, while he trusts the Spirit of God. No valley of bones can resist a man of this kind!

THE PROCESS

The prophet spoke directly to the bones. There was no manipulation—no bleaching—no assembling. There was no preparing the bones to receive God’s word. He did not try by human wisdom to articulate the bones into their respective joints, nor suture the cranial bones, and cover them with artificial flesh, before he spoke to them and called upon God to move upon them. He knew that bones have no power to receive or retain life. And yet while he spoke, there was a rustling, appalling noise; bone came to his respected bone. The shaking was bone-noise. It was the frightful rattle of death and not the voice of life. Thus dry bones often move and make a deathly noise under the breath of God. How awesome! (Ezekiel 37:4–6).

When a husband for whom his wife has been praying begins to be especially mean and cruel, I expect him to be converted soon. You see, it is the bones touched by the breath of God and the noise is made by the resistance of his evil heart. When a man for whom I have been praying gets mad, swears and blasphemes when I speak to him about his soul or spiritual things, I confidently and silently expect to see him converted soon—or at least have hope in him. The bones, those piteous bones, are moving under the breath of God and the rattling is made by the resistance of his will! Understand?

What every dry bone of the valley needs, first of all, is a touch of the breath of God. Knowledge of Greek, Latin, French, German, Mandarin, success, music, mathematics and science leaves spiritual dry bones just as they were. It is the lack of the knowledge of God that

makes them dry, dry, dry—and nothing but the knowledge of God can restore them to life!

THE PURPOSE OF THE VISION

“Ye shall know that I am the Lord.” Twice this purpose is given. “Israel herself shall know that I am the Lord, when they shall see that I have raised the valley of scattered bones in an army of living men.” There “stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” (Ezekiel 37:10). Not a great mob like the bones in terrified confusion, but an organized army! Incredible!

An army carries with it the idea of organization, discipline, loyalty, and obedience to orders and leadership under a commanding general. The scattered dry bones of Israel shall become again, a living, national organism (Ezekiel 37:21–23), and the effect of this transformation, their conversion, (Ezekiel 37:13), their being filled with the Spirit (Ezekiel 37:4), shall be to make other nations acknowledge the Lord.

The best books on the evidences of Christianity are “the living epistles known and read of all men,” who were once moral and spiritual dry bones, but who are now alive and battling in the army of Christ.

One live Lazarus is worth forty sermons on the resurrection. Let not the number, nor the dryness of the bones appall us. With the vision of God before us and the touch of God upon us, let us speak to these **DRY BONES** by the Word of God while we trust the God of omnipotent power to give them life, and we shall not be disappointed!

Amen <>< <>< <><

John Theodorou
U.S.A.

“We are never alone. Whether we choose Him or not, we have a companion. Remember that wherever you are, whatever you do, God is there. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His attention. To your every word or deed you have a witness—the holy, sin-hating God. Before you speak or act, always think of this. As a Christian, you are a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. Say no word, do no act, that shall bring dishonor upon ‘that worthy name by the which ye are called.’ James 2:7

“Study carefully the divine-human character, and constantly inquire, ‘What would Jesus do were He in my place?’ This should be the measurement of our duty.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 490–491

*Making
Inroads Into
The Arabic
World*



In the month of June, 2013, I had the privilege of travelling to Egypt with Brother Idel Suarez Jr. and his family, as well as with Brother Larry Watts. The trip had a two-fold purpose. It was for the purpose of both education and missionary work. The educational portion of the trip taught us that even in the history of a heathen nation, a nation that represents bondage to sin in the Bible, there can still be seen evidences of the Bible and of Biblical characters. The missionary portion of the trip revealed to us clearly that there is a fierce battle being waged between Jesus and Satan in this world and only those who desire the truth so much that they are willing to risk all, and possibly be rejected and persecuted by family and friends, will find the truth.

EDUCATIONAL

TEMPLES: There are many temples located in the city of Luxor, which is about 650 km south of Cairo, the capital city of Egypt.

One of the most noteworthy temples is the temple of Hatshepsut. The historical figure of Hatshepsut is believed to



be the Egyptian mother of Moses, and in many of the temples, including her own, they have defaced her. After her death they scratched out her face on the images of her on the walls,

indicating that they strongly disliked her. One of the reasons they did not like her is likely because she became Pharaoh and they did not like female pharaohs. All throughout the Egyptian mythology seen on the walls of the temples, there is indication that the Egyptian people

at least knew of the Bible or had heard stories of the Bible. For example, the four cherubims can be seen in certain places. Also, in one temple the tree of life, or what appears to be a mixture of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, can be viewed.

During our time in Luxor, we also had the wonderful opportunity of seeing the world famous tomb of King Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings.



His tomb was not as luxurious or as large as many of the others tombs, due to the fact that he died suddenly at a young age; nonetheless this tomb is still rich in history.

Also of interest with the tombs in the Valley of the Kings was that we were told that a king would reserve a tomb for himself and be placed there after he died. However, in certain cases, another king would come along later and remove the original king out of that tomb and use it for himself, or move the first king to the back of the tomb.



It is very interesting that the tombs were built by slaves, and it is very possible that the Israelite slaves were used to build some of them. At the completion of the building of a tomb, all the slaves who were involved in the building of it were killed. This was done to ensure that the secret location of a tomb was never revealed. In this way it was hoped that robbers would not

come and steal all the relics from the tomb after the king died.

Unfortunately, in almost all cases, the location of the tombs were discovered by robbers and most of the relics were removed before archaeologists got to them. The one exception was the tomb of King Tuntankhamun, which was completely intact when discovered by an Englishman named Howard Carter in 1922.

In some of the paintings on the temple walls there can be seen slaves of a Jewish appearance, which were almost certainly the Israelite slaves before the Exodus.

PYRAMIDS: One day during the seminar, which was conducted for the benefit of six interested Arab souls, we took a few hours in the morning to see the pyramids. It was quite exciting that our hotel was located just across the road from the pyramids and we had a beautiful view of them, which was especially stunning at sunrise and sunset. Each night, a light and sound show was conducted in English, Spanish and Arabic telling the history of the pyramids. It is interesting that out of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the pyramids are the only surviving one. It is almost certain that the pyramids were there in the time of Moses, and it is even likely that they were there in the time of Joseph.

During our time in the pyramid area, Brother Suarez, his children, Brother Watts and I decided to enter one of the large pyramids. Just before we entered the pyramid the man accepting the tickets requested that we give him our cameras for safe keeping until we came out since no photos were permitted in the pyramid. However, we had reason to believe that if we gave our cameras to this man we would never see them again as he was not wearing an official badge and he was seemingly self-employed. This was not the only time in Egypt in which we had to be very careful with our personal belongings and with any money we may have had on us. We took special care because there is a certain desperation in the people of this country due to a lack of tourism in recent years and an oppressed economy. Since the revolution of 2011 the rate of unemployment has gone up, and tourism has declined. We had to be very careful as there were people on every side ready to take advantage of unsuspecting tourists, and in a similar way the devil is around us constantly waiting to take advantage of us in a weak moment. We had to learn to be careful, firm, wise as serpents and truly kind and harmless as doves. By the grace of God, we were able to do this.



As we entered the large pyramid there was only a very small place in which we could walk. We had to crouch because the ceiling was so low. Sister Linda felt claustrophobic with this situation so we temporarily left her behind, but later she gathered her courage and joined us inside. We next entered an area with a higher ceiling and flat ground and from there we went upwards. Again, as we went upwards, there was a very low ceiling, however, it was necessary to go through this in order to get to the actual room with the tomb. The pyramids were much more simple tombs than the tombs in Luxor. There were no hieroglyphics on the walls and even the coffins or Sarcophagi, as the Egyptians call them, were smaller and not as fancy.

Due to unforeseen circumstances in the morning, Brother Watts and I came back to the pyramids later on in the day to view the large pyramid which we had not seen earlier. Although we had been told it was only possible to get to the pyramids by horse back or camel because they were

12 to 15 km away, it took us only 10 minutes to walk to the large pyramid. This was one example of Egyptian tourism workers altering the facts in order to obtain the business of unsuspecting tourists. While at the large pyramid, we took a few photos at different points, however we did not stay as long as we wanted to because a woman kept begging us for money for 15 to 20 minutes. In the end, we had no choice but to flee the pyramid on foot because the woman was relentless so we simply jogged away from her. I was able to give her a little money, but she wanted more, however it was not possible

for me to help everyone who was begging because I did not have the means.

MISSIONARY WORK

One day while in Luxor eating at a restaurant with the Suarez family, we happened to get into a discussion with a man and a woman who were eating together. After only a few minutes of discussion and getting to know each other, the man invited us to his house the next day to have lunch with him and his family. We took him up on his offer gladly and the next day, while at his house eating lunch, it came out through conversation that there were various members in his family who were experiencing health challenges. Brother Suarez explained that he is a doctor, and that he had medical equipment in Egypt which would help him to test things like cholesterol levels and blood sugar levels, etc. A few days later we returned to this man's

house and performed these medical tests on four or five members of his family who had health concerns and were unsure how to manage these health concerns or how to ultimately overcome them. By performing these medical tests, we were able to see that there were several diabetics in the family and people with various other health



issues such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Brother and Sister Suarez were able to recommend the best foods to deal with each person's unique health challenges and, in addition,

they highly recommended that these people become vegetarian and most likely their problems would clear up promptly. This was a shock to this man and his whole family because, in their culture, it is extremely uncommon for anyone to be a vegetarian. Every Egyptian we came across had an intense love for flesh foods. However, when we explained the benefits of a vegetarian diet, and the fact that they would live longer and happier lives, free of disease, they happily told us they would consider our proposition. This man and his family were very thankful for the health services that had been provided for them.

The main purpose of our trip to Egypt was to meet with six Arab souls who all come from Muslim backgrounds and live in Muslim families. In certain parts of the Arabic world, it is strongly discouraged for an individual to become a Christian and if they do end up making this choice, they could face the death sentence from either the government or from their family. So, in these countries, to study the Bible and to seek Christ is a very risky mission and could put one's life in peril. However, all six of these individuals had a real desire to learn the deep truths of the Bible. In Egypt it is perfectly okay for a Christian who is born into a Christian family to convert to the Islamic religion, however, for a Muslim to convert to Christianity is forbidden. These six interested Arabic souls risked their lives for the opportunity to hear the truth.

Each day during the seminar the interested souls were more than happy to study for eight to nine hours. They had many pertinent questions which revealed their burning desire to find the truth. Although four out of the six spoke little to no English, we were blessed that one Arabic brother spoke fluent English and so for six long days he translated everything. During the course of our studies we

addressed the Ceremonial Law, the Old Testament Sanctuary, and the Law of God—emphasizing the importance of the Sabbath. We also addressed the claim of some other Christian churches regarding the Law of God, stating that it was nailed to the cross. By the aid of the Holy Spirit, Brother Suarez was able to show that it was the Ceremonial Law that was nailed to the cross. We also looked at several Bible verses which Sunday keeping Christians use to attack the Sabbath and sanctify Sunday. By reading them in context, it became clear that their theories are erroneous. In addition, we studied tithes and family in the context of our seven areas of stewardship: (1) Spirit, (2) Soul, (3) Body, (4) Family (including church family), (5) Social/governmental responsibilities, (6) Environment (taking care of the earth), and (7) God's Authority and Government. Due to the depth of the studies that were presented and the many questions from the Arab souls, as well as the translation, we did not have the time to study prophecy at all. Therefore, it was not possible to baptize them at this time; however, there is another planned trip to meet with them again in October of this year. Several of the interested Arabic souls were curious as to whether I was planning to come in October and were strongly encouraging me to come and assist in the seminar again.

For Sabbath, we opened the Sabbath together on Friday night and held hands as we often do. For several of the Arabic souls, who had only recently learned about the Sabbath from our studies, this was the first Sabbath they kept. It seemed as if they enjoyed the opportunity to rest and come apart on the Sabbath day. Throughout the Sabbath we received various studies, such as the Biblical dress and the benefits of vegetarianism, brought to us by Brother Suarez. I had the opportunity and privilege of leading the new lesson, and by God's grace, I was able to share on the deep love of Jesus for each human soul. Two of the younger interested souls specifically thanked me afterwards and told me that the lesson I had given was a great encouragement to them—praise God.

At the hotel where we stayed there was a large pool, and each day many people, due to the scorching heat, were in the pool. One of the Arabic souls asked if it was ok for us to swim on Sabbath, however, Brother Suarez stated that this would be doing our own pleasure on Sabbath. Thankfully, this soul accepted the explanation and had no problem abiding by this.

On the final morning that we were with them, we bade them farewell. For many of us it was an emotional goodbye because over the course of the seminar we really felt united together in Christian love.

On one of our final days in Egypt, we (Brother Suarez, his family and I) went to the world famous Alabaster Mosque. I got some great pictures of the mosque on the outside

from various angles, but unfortunately I never had the privilege of going inside. Brother Suarez and his family did go inside; however I missed out because on the way to the entrance of the Mosque I got into a discussion with several Muslim women, and this discussion took nearly an hour



of my time. By the time our discussion was finished the Alabaster Mosque was closed. These women really did their utmost to convert me to the Islamic religion; they were very

impressed by how much I knew about the Islamic Religion and they automatically assumed I was an interested soul, seeking for the truth of Mohammed. As our conversation progressed they asked me if I adhered to any religion or if I was a Christian, and without hesitation I said, “yes, I most certainly am a Christian.” However, they still treated me as an individual seeking for the truth of their religion. For some time I was willing to oblige and willing to hear all of the things they had to share. I listened politely. When they asked me if I was searching for truth, I explained that I believed that I had already found the truth in the Bible; however, I considered myself to be a truth-seeker and would never stop searching for more light within the Bible. At this point in our conversation there was a shift and it became less them trying to convert me, and more a mutual sharing with each other of our faiths.

Although they presented all manner of doubts about the Bible by saying that it has been changed over the years, I thank the Lord for the ability to find an answer to their arguments. They also



came up with many reasons as to why they do not believe that Jesus was divine and how He could not possibly be the Son of God, however, when I needed certain Bible verses the Holy Spirit brought them to my mind and I shared them with the women. I was able to give an answer for all of their doubts about Christ’s divinity from the Bible. By the end of the conversation they explained that they were very impressed with my knowledge of religion, specifically my knowledge of the Bible, and they had never expected I knew half of what I did when they began their discussion with me. They also repeated a few times that they could really see that I was a sincere and honest soul

and that I had a lot of love inside of me for others, and they believed that God would lead me to the truth because I was sincere. I can only thank the Lord for them seeing Christ in me because I know that it is all Christ and none of me. I mentioned to them that God had already led me to the truth and that the Bible is a beautiful book and if they were to give it a chance it would have a profound impact on their lives. In the end I hesitantly went to shake one of their hands, knowing that this may be against their religion and sure enough they rejected my handshake saying that in their religion women were to be viewed as queens. I explained to them that I respected that and I wished more nominal Christian girls would carry themselves as queens, in the sense of having self-respect and conducting themselves in a manner that would draw respect from others. This is not to say that women in the Christian faith should start to wear the Hijab, or dress in the way that Muslim women do, however, I firmly believe that certain members of the Christian world can learn something from the Islamic world about having a more modest deportment.

At the end they all requested my email address so they could send me information which supposedly would prove their point of view. As of yet I have not received anything. I pray that some of them will contact me so that I can share more of the love of Christ with them.

Although our church has not entered far into the Arab world we have entered at least seven Arab dominated countries with ongoing preparations to enter Gambia, Chad, Iraq, and others. It was therefore very encouraging to be able to have the privilege of touching a few lives with the love of Christ and to have the opportunity of spreading the gospel in this part of the world.

The interested believers we came into contact with are up against all the wily darts that Satan can muster. We take for granted the reading of our Bible, however every time they open up their Bible they are at risk of being caught and persecuted—even to death. This is an indication of how earnest and sincere their desire is to find the truth. We were able to give several tablets away to these Arabic souls and in this way they can have greater access to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, in a more discreet manner. They need all of our prayers as they begin this journey with Jesus, which will hopefully last a lifetime. Although the obstacles they face may be fierce, if they truly learn to trust fully in God He will remove every obstacle from their way and clear a smooth path to the foot of the cross. Let us keep them in our prayers as we continue to meet with them and share more of the wonderful truths of the Bible with them. Amen.

Richard Eaton



The Canadian Field Conference commenced on August 2nd, 2013 and continued until August 4th.

The theme of the conference was, “The Family of God.” In celebration of the importance of the family unit, we were privileged to have Brother Petkov and Sister Orce in attendance. Sister Orce is the leader of the General Conference Family Department and she presented some timely workshops in support of the family unit.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2

Brother John Bescec opened the conference on Friday evening and gave an address regarding the textbook for family success—The Bible. All true wisdom comes from the Bible and the success of the family unit depends on the adherence of the family members to its principles. In the Bible the Apostle Paul encourages Timothy to “continue thou in the things which thou has learned.” 2 Timothy 3:14. The word, “continue,” means to “abide” to “stay” and to live out your Christian life. The Bible should dictate our morals. We all have had wrong practices and habits and in the Bible we are shown where our errors lie. In the training and disciplining of our children, there is no better source for direction than the Bible. The Bible is our instruction manual—like an owner’s manual. Satan wants to destroy families, but God, through His Word in the Bible, shows us where true success lies. May God help us to search the Word of God to find those hidden gems for successful happy living.

After this initial introduction, the studies became more specific. Brother Oscar Oviedo presented a study entitled, “Man’s Role in the Family.” “For the husband is

the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church.” Ephesians 5:23. Firstly, man has been given spiritual authority in his family as Christ’s authority over



the church. "We love Him, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19. The question was asked, "Husbands, do your wives love you because you love them or because you demand their respect and love?" The first role of man is to exercise this type of authority—based on love.

The second role of man is, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." Ephesians 5:28. Man's love for his wife should be as the care he gives his own body. He should nourish and cherish his wife. For a successful marriage the husband must make an attempt to understand his wife. To stop and listen. Sometimes that is all that they want—your attention—a listening ear. "Giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel." 2 Peter 3:7. Rather than weaker, you could use the word, "more precious" vessel. Wives are first class people, not second class. If men love their wives they will learn to anticipate her needs and before she asks for something—they will do it.

The third role is for man to be responsible. If man is the head of the household, he is accountable in the same

manner that a CEO is responsible as the head of a company, or a church leader is head of the church. He is responsible as one who has to give an account to God. One of his responsibilities is to encourage the family to use their talents for God. The wife is the help-meet. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Timothy 5:8. The man is the high priest of his home, being aware of the needs of the family. In closing, Brother Oviedo made an appeal for all men to ask themselves if they are fulfilling the role that God has called them to perform.

SABBATH, AUGUST 3

Sabbath morning dawned bright and sunny. After a lively Sabbath School, Brother Petkov spoke the Divine Service entitled, "The Heavenly Family." "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Psalm 27:10. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31. "God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family



might become one with the heavenly family.” --*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1082

We have a heavenly family that is waiting for us. God is making space for us in heaven. “Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 327. The moment you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour, you are no longer an orphan. You have a large heavenly family consisting of millions of angels and people on other worlds. In order to foster the family relationship, it requires time. We have a biological family on this earth and also a spiritual family, both of which we must foster and cooperate with, even when we have our differences. To foster any relationship, communication is required. In this electronic age we find communication reduced to technology, but technology cannot replace reality. We were encouraged to foster the families that we have been given and take comfort from the fact that we have a large heavenly family that we should also foster. We are not orphans.

The afternoon was filled with song, memory verses and speeches by the future of the church—the children and young people. The Lord loves to hear the sincere praises of the little children. They presented some biblical characters and the lessons we can learn from them in relation to the family. The children shared with us the lessons from the sons of Jacob. The youth shared with us different family relationships such as Isaac and Abraham, Paul and his spiritual son, Timothy, and Hannah and Samuel.

The final meeting of the afternoon was a health meeting by Sister Raquel Orce who presented the subject of our mental attitude towards food. She covered areas such as: 1) Time. We should be eating at regular and appropriate times. 2) Need. It is important as to why, how and when we eat. If we have eaten until we are satisfied and a cake comes along, do we feel we need to eat it also? We need to eat slowly and recognize when we are full. 3) Measure. Eat only what you need. Control your portions. 4) Environment. Do you eat in a good environment? Or do you read at meals or eat while stressed? If you are reading bad news your digestion can slow down. Eating should be done in a stress-free environment. 5) Selection. Foods should be chosen that are nutritious such as whole grains. 6) Practice Self-control. Pray, and think. Consider diligently what you will eat. 7) Thankfulness. Thank God for your food.

After dinner, we all had an opportunity to share praise and thankfulness to the Lord in the Testimony meeting.

The final service of the day was conducted by Sister Raquel Orce who spoke about “Woman’s Role in the

Family.” She directed us to Proverbs 31:10–31. This is a poem in the Bible dedicated to women. “Who has seen a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” v. 10. This is not any type of woman spoken about here—it is a virtuous woman. The following verses explain what a true virtuous woman is like. It speaks of her personal relationship to her husband and the understanding she has of him and his perceptions of her. “The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.” v. 11. It is a relationship full of confidence. It is not a passive, dependant, relationship. It is an equal and healthy relationship. They collaborate together.

She also has influence on her children. “Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.” v. 28. Her husband and children admire and respect her. But it all starts from principles. She is not a reactive woman—one who only acts when circumstances present themselves—when there is a need. She is proactive. Her actions are done, not because a need has arisen, but her actions create another action. In v. 13–15 we can see how she plans ahead of time and foresees the results and prepares for those results. Her husband trusts her and her children praise her.

This is the type of woman that exceeds the expectations of her husband—a virtuous woman. She is above average and not just as the regular pattern of women, but beyond expectation. What she does, she does well. She thinks and works today so that she can influence the events of tomorrow. “She considereth a field, and buyeth it.” v. 16. She is a woman without limitations. She works with her hands, has skills as a merchant. She is socially capable of making things happen. She does things without being asked.

In Romans 16, the Apostle Paul commends, and thanks, various people for their help in the church and several women, such as Phebe, are mentioned. God has a place in His service for virtuous women, “for her price is far above rubies.” All women are capable of being this virtuous woman, with the help of God.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4

Sunday morning found us at the shores of Lake Ontario, witnessing the baptism of dear sister Abigail Garcia, who has decided to follow her Lord and Saviour by making a public confession of her faith in baptism.

Brother Jerry Eaton continued by welcoming in Sister Abigail into the family of God. She has now been adopted into this spiritual family by faith. Rightly related to Christ, we are related to one another. We to foster this relationship and not let pride get in the way because it is pride that destroys the family relationship. Sister Abigail

is now a new babe in Christ and in order for a baby to feel safe, they need parents to be united. In the church we must also foster this unity. Although there are many different types of people, (this is God's plan), His miracle of unity in diversity can exist. We can balance our strengths with others' weaknesses and help and support one another. Above all, in the family of God, we need to believe in one another and not give up on one another.

Children are a gift from God, and they have a very important role in the family. Brother Nicholas Anca shared with us their role. When God created man and woman He told them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. It is not an easy task to raise children in this day and age and we need wisdom from God. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord." Psalm 127:3. They are a heritage, not a property. We are responsible for their physical as well as spiritual well-being. Children should be taught well as spiritual well-being. Children should be taught the golden rule of life—the Ten Commandments. They represent God's character found in heaven and this is what we want to instil in our children. We then need to pray for our children and not give up. God's plan for us is to work first in the family, secondly with our neighbours and then with the world. The guidance of our children requires discipline with love. We are to give gentle guidance to correct habits, so that children learn to obey through love. We need to continually pray for our children and ask for wisdom to guide them in the ways of righteousness.

After lunch, we heard from Brother Elder Hernandez about our relationship with our extended family, our in-laws. A good example is given in the book of Ruth, where we find the close relationship of Naomi and Ruth as in-laws. Brother Hernandez gave us some good counsels on how to effectively preserve our relationship and relate positively to our in-laws. 1) A man is to leave his parents to live with his wife (Genesis 2:24). He needs to begin his own household and not remain with his parents but to break the connection with the parents. 2) For fathers and mothers—when your children get married, do not try to know every detail of their lives. They have their own concerns and need to deal with their own problems. 3) Do not be nosy. For parents-in-law, do not give your opinion about their decisions unless they ask you. Keep silent except in case of emergency. 4) Do not ask to borrow money from in-laws. There is a risk that when they loan, they will

manipulate your decisions in life. If you do loan, do not ask what they did with the money. 5) Learn to listen and respect the advice given, but don't feel guilty if you do not follow their advice. You can respect the persons giving the advice but are not obliged to follow the advice. Following these simple guidelines can bring peace and happiness in your relationship with your in-laws.

And finally, Brother Petkov brought our closing meeting, by addressing the subject of "Victorious Families." The biggest problem threatening our biological and spiritual families is the world. We need to protect our families. The world is not suitable to us since we are pacifists. One important principle to remember is that people are not the originators of problems. They are often victims, with the devil being the originator. Brother Petkov directed our attention back to the original address, of the importance of Bible study being the key to victorious families. God will teach us to learn to live with each other. A key point he brought out is that of the importance of work. The 4th commandment not only tells us to rest on the Sabbath, but also to work the other six days. In the United States, there is what they call the "American Dream." That is to have wealth and not have to work. But we need to stop dreaming and start working. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32

The family is the building block of society. With healthy families, we have a healthy society; a healthy society in the secular world and a healthy society in the church. May God help us to follow the biblical counsels for ourselves, our spouses, our children and extended families in order to maintain this unity and strength in God's church and then be an influence to the world. Amen.



Brother Petkov and Sister Orce

(See more pictures on inside back page)



Trees

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

The tree of knowledge of Good and Evil could also be called the *Tree of Death*, in contrast to the *Tree of Life*. It could also be called that because the wages of sin is death. Where did the tree of knowledge of good and evil come from?

“And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2:9

So, where did the tree of knowledge of good and evil come from? God created it. What was its purpose while on the newly created Earth?

“Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. At the very beginning of man's existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48

Here we see that God's purpose in putting this tree in the garden was to test the faith and will of the newly created man. But God did not put it there without a warning. In Genesis 2:17 He said, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day

that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” In Genesis 2:16 God said that they could eat freely of every tree of the garden but yet still Adam and Eve listened to Satan and sinned. They had such a variety of trees to choose to eat from. God said that all the trees were theirs except one which belonged to Him. It took just one tree, one fruit and one bite to bring the downfall of mankind.

God has created many other worlds inhabited by other beings. These unfallen worlds are not tainted by sin, however, they were tested just like mankind on this earth was tested. God gives everyone the choice of being good or evil.

“The inhabitants of the place were of all sizes; they were noble, majestic, and lovely. They bore the express image of Jesus, and their countenances beamed with holy joy, expressive of the freedom and happiness of the place. I asked one of them why they were so much more lovely than those on the earth. The reply was, “We have lived in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and have not fallen by disobedience, like those on the earth.” Then I saw two trees, one looked much like the tree of life in the city. The fruit of both looked beautiful, but of one they could not eat. They had power to eat of both, but were forbidden to eat of one. Then my attending angel said to me, “None in this place have tasted of the forbidden tree; but if they should eat, they would fall.” —*Early Writings*, p. 40

In the new worlds that will be created there will be a tree of knowledge of good and evil but none of those new beings who are created will touch it. When God sees that they are faithful to Him He will take the tree away. Although man has fallen into sin we can still be holy by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. It is my wish and prayer that we may ask Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins so that we may be perfect and go to the new earth where we will never be tempted to eat the forbidden fruit again.

Michael C. Newby

GOPHER WOOD

Gopher wood is only mentioned once in the Bible, in Genesis 6:14. "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch."

God told Noah to build an ark to save them from the flood that God would send to destroy the earth, because the people were sinning too much.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Genesis 6:5. God saw the wickedness of man and wanted to wash the world clean of it. He told Noah to make an ark of cypress/gopher wood.

Sister White writes that gopher wood could be untouched by decay for hundreds of years. The race of men then living were of very great stature, and possessed wonderful strength. The trees were vastly larger and far surpassing in beauty and perfect proportions than anything mortals can now look upon. The wood of these trees was of fine grain and hard substance—in this respect more like stone. It required much more time and labour, even by that powerful race, to prepare the timber for building, than is required in this degenerate age to prepare trees that are now growing upon the earth, even with the present weaker strength men now possess (*From Eternity Past*, p. 51, 53).

"Every piece of timber was closely fitted, and every seam covered with pitch. All that men could do was done to make the work perfect; yet, after all, God alone could preserve the building upon the angry, heaving billows, by His miraculous power." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 64

Did you know that Methuselah and his sons aided Noah in the building of the ark and then God laid them to rest before the flood came? Then the flood came. Noah remained in the ark for forty days and forty nights. On the last day, the water dried up and land appeared once again. Noah then got off the boat, praised and thanked God for guiding them through the flood. Amen.

Stephen Newby



THE TREE OF LIFE

What is the tree of life?

"And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Genesis 2:9

There were two special trees in the Garden of Eden—one was the tree of life, and the other was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God said man had become like one of us, knowing good and evil. God did not want Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of life because they had eaten from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

What happened afterwards?

"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." Genesis 3:24

God sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden so that they would not be sinners forever.

If we obey what will happen?

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Revelation 2:7

The tree of life is in heaven; if we obey, we will eat of the fruit of the tree of life.

What does the tree of life look like?

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him." Revelation 22:1–3

The tree of life is on the two sides of the river. It bears twelve types of fruit and every month it gives a new fruit. The leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. This is my wish and prayer. Amen.

Sarah Newby

The Seven Trumpets



"And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets." Revelation 8:2

In chapters 8 and 9 of the book of Revelation, the Lord portrays another most interesting viewpoint of His plan in history. These trumpets retrace to a great extent the period already covered by the seven churches and the seven seals. They show that God's messages to His people throughout time were combined with justice and mercy in punishing evil. It is God who sends seven judgments upon apostate Christians—those who were the persecutors of God's true people. The trumpets describe the principal political and military events during the Christian era directed against the western and eastern Roman Empire. Though they are in the past, still they hold great significance, as they clearly show how God is in control of all the events of this world. Let us see how these prophesied events, which are described to us in strange-sounding symbolic language, were fulfilled. To understand how these events took place, we must look at history.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." Revelation 8:7. Thus is symbolized the first trumpet or judgment which fell upon the western part of the Roman Empire, the portion that rejected God and His love. It was an invasion by the Goths, a barbarian tribe from the frozen regions of the North, under the leadership of Alaric. This is the reason the symbol of hail was used in the prophecy. This barbaric incursion occurred about the close of the fourth century and onward. The invaders overran Mac-

edonia, Thrace, Greece, and then crossed the Alps and pillaged and set fire to the city of Rome in A.D. 410.

"Many cities were cruelly oppressed, or destroyed. Many thousands were inhumanly massacred. The consuming flames of war spread over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul.

"Alaric again stretched his ravages over Italy. During four years the Goths ravaged and reigned over it without control. And in the pillage and fire of Rome, the streets of the city were filled with dead bodies. . . ." — Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 477–478

How terrible was the retribution of God upon sinners who had rejected His love! It seemed as if almost every living thing was to be destroyed. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." Revelation 8:8–9

The next act of invasion which broke up the Roman Empire was by Genseric and his Vandals. This symbolism reveals a warfare at sea rather than upon land. By establishing his headquarters on the north African coast around Carthage, he was able to dominate the Mediterranean with a navy of pirates, pillaging the coasts of Spain, Italy and Greece and preying upon Roman commerce. Our word "vandalism" gives us an idea of what his actions were like. The "third part" mentioned in the verses above refers to the division of the Roman Empire after Constantine's death among his three sons. In our prophecy we deal with the third of the Roman Empire given to Constans, mainly Africa and

Italy. A desperate attempt by the Romans to wipe out the Vandals only saw Genseric reestablish himself as the sovereign of the seas. His ships of war and barges filled with combustible material set on fire and destroyed the Roman fleet of 1,113 ships and over 100,000 men. It was a literal fulfillment of the burning mountain being cast into the sea as the Roman fleet went up in flames.

The judgments of God were not finished yet. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." Revelation 8:10–11

In the interpretation of these Scripture verses, the star called Wormwood is a symbol of Attila and his Huns who invaded the Roman Empire. He appeared suddenly like a blazing star and then vanished like a star whose light was quenched in the waters. The areas that he made "bitter" or devastated were the regions of the Alps and those portions of the empire whence the rivers flow down into Italy. "It was the boast of Attila that the grass never grew on the spot which his horse had trod. 'The scourge of God' was a name that he appropriated to himself, and inserted among his royal titles. He was 'the scourge of his enemies, and the terror of the world.'" —*Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 485

Even this great devastation did not bring the people to repentance toward God. Therefore, He permitted an additional calamity to befall them. "And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." Revelation 8:12

In the sixth century the Heruli, another barbarian tribe under Odoacer, dethroned the last emperor and extinguished the imperial glory of the Western Empire. The symbols "sun, moon and stars" denote the great luminaries of the Roman government—its emperors, sena-

tors and consuls that were brought to extinction. Fearful were the calamities brought about by the barbaric invasions, but they were light as compared with what was to follow.

The next three trumpets are called woes because of the more terrible events to take place under their sounding. The Muslim world—the Saracens and the Turks—became a scourge of the apostate Roman Catholic Church which had usurped the remains of the Roman Empire. The fifth angel sounded and out of the wilderness of Arabia the followers of Mohammed arose like smoke out of a pit to torment the Eastern Empire especially. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." Revelation 9:1–2



They were commanded to torment those who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads. In other words, their attacks were to be directed only against unrighteous men. They hurt the apostate Catholic Church which was destroying the people of God. Abu-Bakr, Mohammed's successor, said to his soldiers: "You will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave

their skulls, and give them no quarter, till they either turn Mahometans or pay 'tribute.'" —*Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 498

On July 27, 1299, Othman I, the traditional founder of the Ottoman Empire, made his first assault on the Greek division of the Eastern Roman Empire. One hundred and fifty years later the Greek empire was still independent and was not conquered, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 9:5, that they should be tormented for five months. This time period was fulfilled exactly. Five months at 30 days each = 150 days. Because in Bible prophecy one day = one year (see Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6), this torment was to last 150 years. This woe depicted trouble but not total destruction.

Much could be said regarding the literal fulfillment of the other aspects of this prophecy, but space does not allow. Since, however, even these great and terrible happenings were not heeded by the people, additional troubles had to come to bring the prophecies to a complete fulfillment. The prophecies of God's Word will always be completed. Note the words of God: "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men." Revelation 9:13-15. Here is another specific time prophecy—1 hour, 1 day, 1 month, 1 year. Under the second woe (the sixth trumpet), the Lord used the Turks to punish the apostate Christian world. A new mode of warfare was introduced—gunpowder, firearms and cannon—that was used by the Turks in their warfare against the Eastern Empire. "It was to 'the fire and the smoke and the sulphur,' to the artillery and firearms of Mahomet, that the killing of the third part of men, i.e., the capture of Constantinople, and by consequence the destruction of the Greek Empire, was owing." —*Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 510

The time period of this prophecy was not understood until the year 1838, when Josiah Litch published a complete explanation of Revelation 9. From his calculations of the Biblical prophecy, he predicted that the Ottoman Empire would lose its independence "in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August." —Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 334. Just a few days before the event, he even predicted the exact day on which this would take place.

His calculations were based on the following figures: The 150 years of the previous woe began on July 27, 1299, and extended to July 27, 1449. At this time the prophetic period of "an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year" began. When we apply again the prophetic yardstick of one day = one year, we come to the following conclusions:

1 hour = 15 days
 1 day = 1 year
 1 month of 30 days = 30 years
 1 year of 360 days = 360 years

 Total = 391 years and 15 days

With the starting point of July 27, 1449, this time period would extend to August 11, 1840. On that very day the Turkish Sultan put his affairs into the hands of the great powers—England, Russia, Austria and Prussia; and thus Ottoman independence was gone. The time set for the fulfillment of this prophecy by Josiah Litch was watched with great interest by thousands. When it was fulfilled, much strength was given to the Advent Message which Josiah Litch helped to preach.

The line of trumpets seems to be interrupted by another event—a great proclamation of God described as an angel coming down from heaven to earth. His message is proclaimed to all parts of the earth; "and he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth." Revelation 10:2. This message is to go even to the furthest island of the sea. In this way every person on earth will be left without excuse.

No more prophetic time is to be given. "There should be time no longer." We are living on borrowed time. Very soon the mystery of God will be finished, the seven last plagues will fall, and Jesus will come. Probationary time for each person on earth will be over. Are you ready for the final judgment? Amen.

Henry Dering

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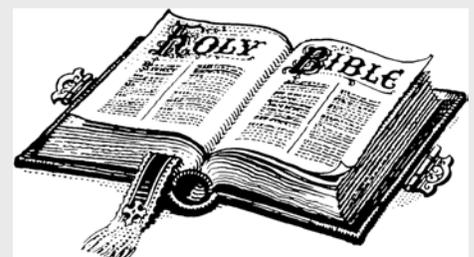
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The House of God



I would like to start this message with a short story from my life when I first started walking with God. I had been taught in my childhood by my Mom that when I go to church it is not a common place—go there and we meet God, and, believe me, I still have this noble thought and I teach people to have the same reverence when we go to the place where God is. I realize the reverence that such a great and Holy God should be approached with. The reason we go to church is to worship our Creator; He is not a common person but He is the Great God of the Universe and He should be worshiped in truth and spirit with the utmost reverence.

I remember how it was the first time I approached someone from the local church in Romania, because I was born in a “Christian country.” When I asked my friend and brother in Christ, George, how should I come to the church or what I should wear, the first impression I had was the reverence of people in that church. Everyone there was waiting silently in reverence to start the worship and let Christ speak to each heart willing to receive the blessings God has in store for us. Let us not forget that we have been created by God, in His own image and likeness, just as the Bible in the first pages describes—male and female God created them with the purpose to worship Him and have fellowship; so do we on this earth and will continue doing through all eternity if we will be a faithful, persevering follower of Christ. So, do you know how much this impressed me, with the attitude of my brothers and sisters there?

So, my brother and sister—friend in Christ, we can read in Genesis 28 how God blessed the fugitive who had sinned against God and against his brother and father. He thought that God had forsaken him—running to escape for his life, wandering far away he from his dear

ones. There in the wilderness God revealed Himself to the needy and poor Jacob, as a merciful God, full of compassion for sinners, not ready to punish but to give the opportunity to come back to Him. Instead of receiving what he deserved, Jacob amazingly discovered what a wonderful Saviour we have.

Allow me to say something regarding this elevated thought—is there something in your life too great for Jesus to forgive? Is there something you might think is unpardonable? Have you been separated from your Saviour, Jesus too long a time because of your repeated sin? There is good news, my friend. We have such a wonderful, compassionate Saviour that even if we have fallen into sin He still loves us with the same interest. Listen to this wonderful invitation in the book of John 7:37–38, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.” Those are the words of Jesus. Do you believe in Jesus? Is Jesus your personal Saviour? He is offering what you are looking for. Do you know why? Because Jesus Christ is patient and kind. Because Jesus Christ does not boast, He is not easily angered, He forgives all wrongs and He always protects, hopes, perseveres—Jesus Christ never fails, and you and I do not have to guess about Jesus because He proved His love for each and every one of us on the cross.

Let us read in Genesis 28:16–17, “And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

It has been said that, as human beings we need to worship something because man was created for such a

purpose, to worship God, and have fellowship with one another. What we worship. . . well, that is a different matter, though it is one fraught with exceedingly important consequences especially in the last days when two groups of worshipers are made manifest—those who worship the Creator and those who worship the beast and his image. The story of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4) show two kinds of worshipers who appear after sin came into the world. One is accepted by God and one is not. One’s worship is based on salvation by faith and the other’s is based on works of the human flesh. One type of worship is focused solely on God—on His power, glory and grace. The other focuses on humanity and on self. When we worship our Creator, what should be our attitude? Especially in the house of God. Let us see what the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy have to say about this issue so important in order to bring a true and reverent worship to the Majesty of Heaven.

“And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.” Exodus 2:23–25

“The time for Israel’s deliverance had come. But God’s purpose was to be accomplished in a manner to pour contempt on human pride. The deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd, with only a rod in his hand; but God would make that rod the symbol of His power. Leading his flocks one day near Horeb, ‘the mountain of God,’ Moses saw a bush in flames, branches, foliage, and trunk, all burning, yet seeming not to be consumed. He drew near to view the wonderful sight when a voice from out of the flame called him by name. With trembling lips he answered, ‘Here am I.’ He was warned not to approach irreverently: ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ It was He who, as the Angel of the covenant, had revealed Himself to the fathers in ages past. ‘And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.’

“Humility and reverence should characterize the deportment of all who come into the presence of God. In the name of Jesus we may come before Him with confidence, but we must not approach Him with the boldness of presumption, as though He were on a level with ourselves. There are those who address the great and all-powerful and holy God, who dwelleth in light unap-

proachable, as they would address an equal, or even an inferior. There are those who conduct themselves in His house as they would not presume to do in the audience chamber of an earthly ruler. These should remember that they are in His sight whom seraphim adore, before whom angels veil their faces. **God is greatly to be revered**; all who truly realize His presence will bow in humility before Him, and, like Jacob beholding the vision of God, they will cry out, ‘How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 251–252 [emphasis mine]

We see, my friends, the message of encouragement and assurance that God gave Jacob through a dream. What was Jacob’s response and what should be our response also?

This is the first mention in Genesis of “the house of God” (Genesis 28:17). Though for Jacob it was only a pillar of stone, Bethel became a significant place in sacred history. Here Jacob worshiped the God of his fathers. Here he made a vow of faithfulness to Him. And here, like Abraham, he promised to return to God a tithe—a tenth of his material blessings—as an act of worship.

Notice Jacob’s sense of fear and awe because of the presence of God. He must have understood better than ever before the greatness of God in contrast to himself, and thus the Bible records his attitude of fear, reverence, and awe. The next thing he does is worship. Here, too, we see a principle regarding the kind of attitude we should have in worship, an attitude that is revealed in Revelation 14:7, in the call to “fear God.”

Worship is not about approaching God as you would some buddy or pal. Our attitude should be that of a sinner in dire need of grace, falling before our Maker with a sense of need, fear, and gratefulness that God, the Creator of the universe, would love us and do so much in order to redeem us. How much awe, reverence, and fear do you have when you worship the Lord? Or is your heart hard, cold, and ungrateful? If the latter, how can you change?

Jacob’s vow at Bethel “was the outflow of a heart filled with gratitude for the assurance of God’s love and mercy. Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favour granted him demanded a return. So does every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. The Christian should often review his past life and recall with gratitude the precious deliverances that God has wrought for him. . . . He should recognize all of them as evidences of the watchcare of

heavenly angels. In view of these innumerable blessings he should often ask, with subdued and grateful heart, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?' Psalm 116:12." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 187

There are many reasons why God requires from us this way of approaching Him. Maybe in your life, as a Christian, you have seen many costumes in your local church. Years and years went by and no change in wrong habits or attitudes in worshiping the Creator. Maybe, as a leader, you have sensed the holiness and sacredness we must have, but only a few times you have done something to correct that wrong habit. I suggest to you, my dear brother or sister, change that attitude if you see something that dishonours God while He is being worshiped. We cannot come before an earthly king, president of a country, Ambassador or Consul, in a common way. We prepare ourselves for that meeting. How much more should we think of God and the place where we meet Him?

Unfortunately, I see as the Lord brings me to different countries that reverence is missing more and more as we approach the end of time. Do you know why? Satan likes gossips, irreverence in the sanctuary—noise, at times sleeping, children running about and uncontrolled by their parents, who may sit there looking at them and not disciplining them, sometimes an irreverent spirit—and many other things we may think are of less importance, but, please, believe me, they are not of less importance before God.



What was the reason a war started in heaven? What was the issue, over? Worship. Absolutely, yes, this was the reason for Lucifer's fall. He wanted to be worshiped and, do you know, he still wants to get as much as he can. He wants absolute control over the minds and hearts of people. Jesus Christ, the true Witness in the book of Revelation, says something that should catch our attention. There is described a category of people who bring worship to Satan. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Revelation 3:9. I have read something very important in the Spirit of Prophecy and I would like to share it with you:

"I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I gazed on Jesus' countenance and admired His lovely person. The Father's person I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him. I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said He had, but I could not behold it, for said He, 'If you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist.' Before the throne I saw the Advent people—the church and the world. I saw two companies, one bowed down before the throne, **deeply interested**, while the other stood **uninterested** and **careless**. Those who were bowed before the throne would offer up their prayers and look to Jesus; then He would look to His Father, and appear to be pleading with Him. A light would come from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the praying company. Then I saw an exceeding bright light come from the Father to the Son, and from the Son it waved over the people before the throne. But few would receive this great light. Many came out from under it and immediately resisted it; others were careless and did not cherish the light, and it moved off from them. Some cherished it, and went and bowed down with the little praying company. This company all received the light and rejoiced in it, and their countenances shone with its glory.

"I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, 'Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.' Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. On the hem of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, 'My Father,

give us Thy Spirit.’ Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace. I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, ‘Father, give us Thy Spirit.’ Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God’s children. —*Early Writings*, p. 54–56 [emphasis mine]

You see, my friend if we do not worship God in the right way, then we worship Satan. Jesus said, he who is not with Me is against Me. Paul, through the Holy Spirit, settled it clearly as to who is a true Jew and who is not. “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Romans 2:28–29. Then Paul goes further to say “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed shall be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Romans 9:6–8. Then in Galatians 3:29, Paul said, “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

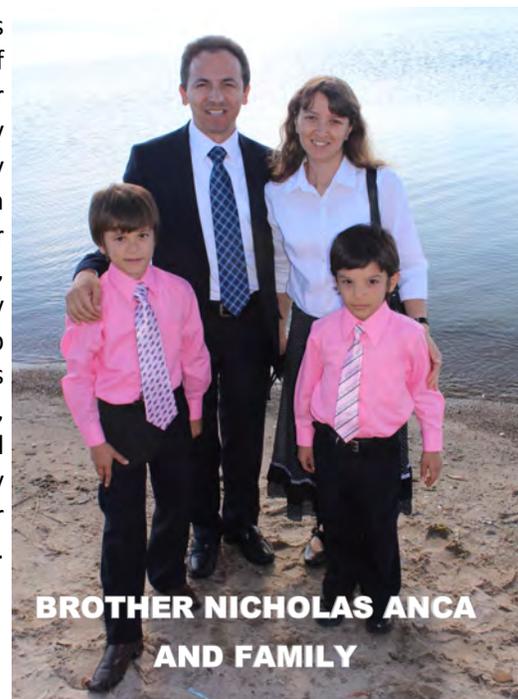
Ellen G. White, God’s servant, wrote in *Testimonies for Ministers*, p. 16 “Satan has a large confederacy, his church. Christ calls them the synagogue of Satan because the members are the children of sin. The members of Satan’s church have been constantly working to cast off the divine law, and confuse the distinction between good and evil. Satan is working with great power in and through the children of disobedience to exalt treason and apostasy as truth and loyalty. And at this time the power of his satanic inspiration is moving the living agencies to carry out the great rebellion against God that commenced in heaven.” Revelation 14:8 and Revelation 18:1–2 clearly tell us that Babylon is fallen and is becoming a dwelling place for demons, a prison for every foul spirit. The present truth is to be proclaimed until the end of the world. Jesus is coming soon, my friend, and we must be ready to meet Him. You and I should make sure to be in the ark (church) when Jesus comes. Little time remains for our preparation for eter-

nity and how little attention we give to such an important event—the most important in one’s life. When Jesus comes, there is no more time for repentance or confession, for making us right with Christ. This requires time and preparation and today is that time. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

In Romans chapter five, the apostle Paul talks about the ultimate expression of divine love—Christ died for us while we were sinners. Then he writes these words, “And hope marketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Romans 5:5

I would like to invite you to go to a place where you can sit at Jesus’ feet. Just admit your need and join those who have found a place of security and peace in His presence. Christ’s love is your greatest resource of happiness. Have you experienced the love of Christ poured out in your heart just as Jacob felt it that night? I invite you to allow Him to make you a survivor—to make you one who is greatly loved and can love greatly. Please remember that no one is perfect. Only Jesus is and He demonstrated it in His life while here on this earth. He knows what disappointments are, He knows your grief, pain and sorrows—we all have our dark moments of doubt and despair and anger as Jacob experienced that night—but do not let them get you down. Tell Him what you are afraid of, tell Him about the mistakes you keep making over and over. He understands. He has been through blood, sweat and tears in this dark world. He knows all about it. Let us go to Him, just grab whatever faith you have and come to Jesus because He never turns His back on anyone who needs Him. The story of Jacob can be your story or mine. May God bless us richly as we come in faith to Him through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. May God help us to keep our eyes on Jesus and only on Jesus, this is my wish and prayer for you, my brother, my sister and my friend. Amen.

Nicholas Anca





SPECIAL MUSIC



VALERIE AND ERROL FLETCHER



**ABOVE:
LUNCH
TIME**

**LEFT:
BROTHER
CLYVE
RUSSEL
WITH
ABIGAIL
GARCIA**



**SISTER ROSARIO
(LEFT), WITH
SISTER LUCY**

“Egypt, in that age the greatest kingdom of the world, offered its highest position of honor to Moses. . . .

“But he did not accept the alluring temptation.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 98

“The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth.” – *Counsels to the Church*, p. 78