

The Reformation **Messenger**

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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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- Telephone: 905-876-2518
- E-mail: imsmessenger@yahoo.com
- Internet: www.imsmessenger.org
- Mail: RR #3, 7899 15 Side Road
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Consider the Lilies

"Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Luke 12:27

"As with life, so it is with growth. It is God who brings the bud to bloom and the flower to fruit. It is by His power that the seed develops, 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear' (Mark 4:28). And the prophet Hosea says of Israel, that 'he shall grow as the lily' (Hosea 14:5). 'They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine' (verse 7). And Jesus bids us 'consider the lilies how they grow' (Luke 12:27). The plants and flowers grow not by their own care or anxiety or effort, but by receiving that which God has furnished to minister to their life. The child cannot, by any anxiety or power of its own, add to its stature. No more can you, by anxiety or effort of yourself, secure spiritual growth. The plant, the child, grows by receiving from its surroundings that which ministers to its life—air, sunshine, and food. What these gifts of nature are to animal and plant, such is Christ to those who trust in Him.

"In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus." —*Lift Him Up*, p. 70

"As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 67–68

"Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth,

and all things therein, . . . and Thou preservest them all.' [Nehemiah 9:6.] As regards this world, God's work of creation is completed. For 'the works were finished from the foundation of the world.' [Hebrews 4:3.] But His energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy, that the pulse beats, and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom 'we live, and move, and have our being.' [Acts 17:28.] It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth produces her bounties, and continues her motion around the sun. The hand of God guides the planets, and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. He 'bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth.' [Isaiah 40:26.] It is through His power that vegetation flourishes, that the leaves appear, and the flowers bloom. He 'maketh grass to grow upon the mountains,' and by Him the valleys are made fruitful. All the beasts of the field seek their meat from God, [Psalm 147:8; 104:20, 21.] and every living creature, from the smallest insect up to man, is daily dependent upon His providential care. In the beautiful words of the psalmist, 'These wait all upon Thee. . . . That thou givest them they gather; Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good.' [Psalm 104:27, 28.] His word controls the elements, He covers the heavens with clouds, and prepares rain for the earth. 'He giveth snow like wool; He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.' 'When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures.' [Psalm 147:16; Jeremiah 10:13.]

"God is the foundation of everything. All true science is in harmony with His works; all true education leads to obedience to His government. Science opens new wonders to our view; she soars high, and explores new depths; but she brings nothing from her research that conflicts with divine revelation. Ignorance may seek to support false views of God by appeals to science; but the book of nature and the written word shed light upon each other. We are thus led to adore the Creator, and to have an intelligent trust in His word." —*Christian Education*, p. 195–196

Ellen G. White



To make our church work and all the activities in it successful we need unity in the church. A united church is a growing and living church. But this unity does not come automatically, we must work for it. God wants His church to be united, so that all the members are closely drawn together as one family. It is Satan who wants to divide the church into differing opinions and doctrines. Jesus had a burden for unity among His followers; He prayed for unity among them.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." John 17:20–23

The same unity which is between Jesus and His Father we need to have in our church. David writes, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalm 133:1

"It should be understood that perfect unity among the labourers is necessary to be successful accomplishment of the work of God." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 196

When we were building the church in Toronto, all the members were united in the building work, even visitors, and the children came to help on Sundays, and in five months the church building was finished. After this the unity in the church continued. We went canvassing on Sundays and every member came together to do missionary work, and soon the 20 members in the church were increased to 90 members. A divided church is a dying church, but a united church is a growing and a living church.

"Where is the spirituality of the church? Where are men and women full of faith and the Holy Spirit? My prayer is: purify the church, O God. . . God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means to keep the

church pure. . . The sieve is moving. Let us not say: stay Thy hand, O God. The church must be purged, and it will be." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 99–100

"For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Amos 9:9

There are conditions for unity; there are things that we must do.

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom." Proverbs 13:10

"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat." Proverbs 28:25

Pride destroys unity. It is pride that makes a person feel that he is better than others. Some can even be proud of their humility. The first case of pride we find in an angel of God in heaven, and that was with Lucifer.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Isaiah 14:12–14

What changed this lovely angel into a devil? It was pride, self-exaltation. Who can teach us true humility? Let us go to the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, to Jesus, and He will teach us. "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:29

Jesus stooped down to wash the feet of His disciples. This was work that His disciples were not willing to do; it was work that was too humiliating for them. Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5

Paul writes, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Philippians 2:3

This humility is the secret to unity among the brethren, and of true fellowship. But it is a lesson that is difficult to learn.

A humble person cannot be offended; no insult or abuse will hurt him. He actually feels that he deserves an even worse treatment, which is death. This is not a natural characteristic; we must learn it in the school of Christ. What was the greatness of Moses? Was it his training in the court of Pharaoh? No, that time God could not use him. He had to learn the lesson of humility, and it took 40 years to learn it, doing the humble work of caring for the sheep, until finally he became the meekest man on the earth.

Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles did not call himself good or faithful, but the chief of sinners. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Romans 7:18. He had a humble opinion of himself.

"It is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God; for Satan is constantly playing his temptations upon such a person, ever trying to fill him with pride and ambition; and when God would use him, in nine cases out of ten he becomes independent, self-sufficient, and feels capable of standing alone." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 367

How many excellent talents are wasted because of human pride, and an independent spirit? God cannot use them, therefore they must be removed from their positions by the shaking which the Lord said He will do among His people.

Then, what remains after the shaking? "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and

they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Zephaniah 3:12

The Lord's work will be finished by humble men and women, who can say with a sincere heart, "I must decrease, I am but a little child, I am the chief of sinners," and who has the mind of Jesus, so humble, meek and lowly. When the Early Rain was poured upon the early church, in what condition were they? "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1

The Aramaic Bible says, "They were assembled as one." That means they were united. This kind of unity will be in the church before the Latter Rain will be poured out. To have unity in the church we need love—love to God and to one another. Without love we can never be united. And how do we get this kind of love? Only at Calvary—watching Jesus suffering and dying for sinners.

The disciples of Jesus did not truly love Him above the love they had for themselves, until they saw and understood that He died for their sins. Until then they loved themselves, arguing who is the greatest among them.

God is testing our love. Every day is a new test. Our thoughts are tested, our words, and our actions also. Without love our unity is gone. Sister White compares our love to an exotic flower, very sensitive. Without care and attention it will wither and die.

We sing a hymn, "Work for the Night is Coming." What kind of work does this mean? Certainly the work of saving souls. It is easy to tell others what to do; then they will receive the golden crown in heaven, which we may lose.

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men." Isaiah 29:13

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Galatians 5:6

Our faith is worthless without love. If we have humility, patience, and love, then we become unity makers.

If every member is a unity maker, then our churches will be successful in all their work, and we will be ready to receive the Latter Rain. Amen.

Timo Martin



**"I will sift the house of Israel among all nations,
like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the
least grain fall upon the earth" Amos 9:9**

All throughout history there have been separations amongst the faithful and unfaithful within the realm of religion. A shaking is the *leaving* of the church of God, whereas a call to come out is the calling to leave a fallen religious organization and come *into* God's church.

The first incident of division amongst the people of God on earth was in the time of Cain and Abel. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?" Genesis 4:3–6

Why was the sacrifice of Cain not acceptable to the Lord? To the human mind, it seems like a very subtle difference between bringing fruit or bringing a lamb. The fact that Cain brought an offering seems to be indicative of the fact that he was at least compliant and obedient on some level. Was it fair for God to ask Cain to bring an offering of a lamb when He knew that Cain's livelihood was constituted largely by the tilling of the ground?

We know very well the significance of the Lamb in the context of the plan of Salvation, and furthermore God is a God of specificity and order. If we want to be true followers of Him He expects us to obey Him in every detail, no matter how minute that detail may appear. Many shakings are caused by the presentation of deeper truth, given to God's people, and the refusal of some to live up to this greater light. This was the case of Cain, as he would not accept the plan of Salvation, which had been instituted by God as a way of escape for man.

By bringing an offering that was not specifically what God required, what was Cain essentially doing? By choosing to do something completely different in an attempt to attain

salvation, an individual is actually attempting to work for justification through their own works. Therefore, Cain was the first proponent of the concept of work righteousness; an error that has been with us down through the ages and has been repeated in a plethora of different historical contexts.

"And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." Genesis 4:15–16. In like manner, as other shakings recorded in the Bible and throughout history, this shaking ultimately involved a separation between God's true people, and those that would merely bring division and chaos, and would stain the purity of God's people through their ongoing presence.

God, in His wisdom, did not merely exterminate Cain, which would have saved Seth's descendants from the perpetual annoyance of dealing with Cain's descendants. The fruits of sin must be permitted to reach maturity in order for the character of the perpetrator and their descendants, to be made fully manifest. The scenario involving Cain was similar to the shaking in heaven which involved actual war and forceful separation, with God allowing Satan and his angels to continue living. Just as with Lucifer and his angels, Cain and his descendants were to be exhibits of the outworking of sin in rational beings. Cain and his descendants were to show the awful consequences of sin when it is allowed to grow in one's heart and take over the life. As sin and degradation worsened with each passing generation, the awful results of sin and Satan's model of government became increasingly more apparent to the Universe. Also, the contrast between Seth's descendants and Cain's descendants became more marked as sin undoubtedly led to the rapid degeneration of Cain's descendants, while Seth's descendants were preserved from many of the degenerative effects of sin.

THE FLOOD

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Genesis 6:11–13

There is a difference between the mighty crisis of the flood, and the shaking at the time of Cain and Abel. The principle difference being that at the time of Cain and Abel a separation ensued, but the flood involved a final judgement and the death of all the wicked. Another difference is that one shaking involved individuals being shaken out of the truth, while the other involved a call to come out from among them and be ye separate.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4

A disparity is seen between the time of Cain and Abel, and the time of the flood. The flood itself was more than just a crisis, or a call to come out from among them and be ye separate, it was a direct judgment from God. At this point God had given many generations for Cain's descendants to repent through the example and witness of Seth's descendants. Now God, in His mercy, gave them an additional 120 years as a grace period. It was a call to come out and be separate. Similar to other calls, it was associated with a message of truth.

A *shaking* is always associated with a message of truth (often greater truth). Those who choose not to live up to the greater truth, leave the church. Whereas, in *the call to come out* of apostasy, there may not be greater truth presented, but they are called to come out of their fallen organization and lifestyle of sin. Unfortunately, many reject the message of mercy, choosing rather to remain in their current state of sin and degradation. Turning their back on truth they go into deeper darkness and sin. Any future messages of mercy have little effect upon them, as they become increasingly less likely to listen.

Those who have not been living up to the light they currently have, and are living in a lukewarm state, are ultimately unable to live up to greater light when it is presented. Therefore, greater truth is merely a stumbling block and an inconvenience for them. The ones that accept the deeper truth are the ones that have been living up to the full light given to them, and are thirsting for more knowledge and truth. When it comes, they receive it gladly with open hearts, thinking of it as a great blessing.

"The world's Redeemer had many hearers, but few followers. Noah preached one hundred and twenty years to the people before the Flood, and yet there were few who appreciated this precious, probationary time. Save Noah and his family, not one was numbered with the believers and entered into the ark. Of all the inhabitants of the earth, only eight souls received the message; but that message condemned the world. The light was given in order that they might believe; their rejection of the light proved their ruin. Our message to the world will be a savor of life unto life to all who accept it, and of condemnation to all who reject it."

—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 36

Once the people of the earth in Noah's time received the call to come out of apostasy and be separate, and they refused to accept the message of truth, then God's judgement followed.

At the time of the flood, there was undoubtedly more than eight of Seth's descendants left on this earth. Sadly, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." Genesis 6:2. Through intermarriage and intermingling with Cain's descendants, Seth's descendants were corrupted. We can take to heart the lesson that if we attach ourselves to the material things of this world, or to the people of this world, then when a shaking comes our heart will be divided and we will be shaken out. God's original plan to ensure a separation between Cain's descendants and Seth's descendants was undermined when the sons of God sought out the daughters of men.

We must be very careful in our personal lives not to go against God's plan. If people are shaken out of God's truth, as many were in World War I, we must avoid making alliances with them or intermingling with them excessively. Our duty is to call them out, and while doing so, still maintain our separation from them! If we try to call them out, while being in their church, our words will have little influence on them. They will simply look at our actions and our words will be lost upon them.

Some believe that we should stay in the midst of the fallen churches, whose sins and follies we deplore, in the hope of reforming them from within. Such reasoning has a good deal of force in the first stages of decline. A strong protest may arrest error and stop the gangrene. As time advances, and the whole body becomes diseased; when the protests have been disregarded, and the arguments trampled underfoot; when the majority have clearly taken up their position against the truth—we have no alternative but to come out and be separate. The place from which we can exert the strongest influence for good is not from within, but from without. Lot lost all influence by living within Sodom; but Abraham, from the heights of Mamre, was able to exert a mighty influence for good.

EGYPT/ON BORDERS OF CANAAN

"As Moses rehearsed to Israel of the provisions of God for their deliverance, 'the people bowed the head and worshiped.' The glad hope of freedom, the awful knowledge of the impending judgment upon their oppressors, the cares, and labors incident to their speedy departure—all were for the time swallowed up in gratitude to their gracious Deliverer. Many of the Egyptians had been led to acknowledge the God of the Hebrews as the only true God, and these now begged to be permitted to find shelter in the homes of Israel when the destroying angel should pass through the land. They were gladly welcomed, and they pledged themselves henceforth to serve the God of Jacob and to go forth from Egypt with His people." —*Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 279

These Egyptians chose voluntarily to find shelter with the Israelites. In fact, they even begged them for shelter. What prompted them to make this move? Although there was not a specific call for them to come out and be separate, it is safe to say that the Egyptians saw all the plagues occurring, and many of them saw this as evidence of Yahweh being the one true God and chose to separate from the world. Some may previously have been impressed by the example of some of the faithful Israelites. Their example, combined with the evidence of God's power, prepared the people's minds and hearts to accept the truth. This is an example for us in detailing our responsibility in the last days. We are to call people to come out of Babylon, and not be partakers of her sins. Just as with the ten plagues of Egypt there will be powerful evidence of God's might and power in the outpouring of the Latter Rain. By letting the light of Jesus shine to the world through us, we can be calling people out strictly through our example; or, at the very least, we can be preparing people's hearts and minds to receive the final call to come out of Babylon when the Latter Rain is poured out. Although there will be mighty evidences of the power of the Holy Spirit in the Latter Rain, we have our part to play in touching people's hearts and minds with the love of Jesus right now, and ensuring that their hearts are ready to receive the Three Angels' messages and the truth of the Sabbath.

Once people do come out of Babylon it is our responsibility to do just as the Hebrews did and welcome them with open arms. We must welcome them just as the Father in the parable of the Prodigal Son welcomed back his son. It is our God-given duty to not only welcome them and educate them further about truth and necessity of baptism, but also to trust that their conversion is authentic.

"And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Isra-

el murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel." Numbers 14:1–5

"But God had promised the land to Israel. 'Let us go up at once and possess it,' urged Caleb; 'for we are well able to overcome it.' But the ten, interrupting him, pictured the obstacles in darker colors than at first. 'We be not able to go up against the people,' they declared; 'for they are stronger than we. . . . All the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.' These men, having entered upon a wrong course, stubbornly set themselves against Caleb and Joshua, against Moses, and against God." —*Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 388–389

In this passage we see quite clearly that a shaking is also associated with a conflict. Those who wish to stand faithful to God are brought into direct opposition with those who wish to actively

assassinate their characters, and also attack those that wish to adhere strictly to God's will. Little do they realize that by opposing those who desire nothing else than to live up to the truth, they are in fact, opposing God. The more they resist truth, the easier it will become to accept error. How many would fight against the true and faithful if they realized they were fighting against God Himself?

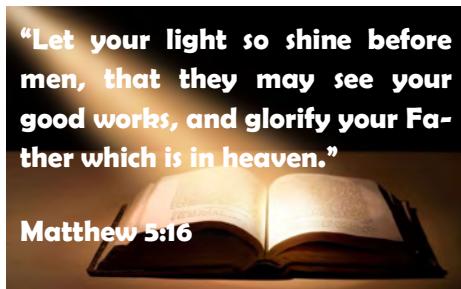
EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:36–38. Some of the Jews, who at the time of Jesus, had been crying "crucify Him," were baptized in the time of the Early Rain. They baptized 1,000's per day. Was this a call to come out and be separate, or was this a shaking?

The Israelite nation was being called out of their religious traditions into Christianity, but at this time they were still technically God's people, as the stoning of Stephen had not yet occurred. So, in some sense, it was a shaking as well,

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:16



because the Jewish people obviously had great truth, and were still technically God's people. It was a unique situation, because the only possibility for them to continue as God's people involved them joining an alternate religious belief system.

From this shaking, or call out to be separate, we learn that God often gives the most powerful revelation of Himself, and the Holy Spirit comes with the greatest force, before a final judgment. This is the God of mercy that He is! The Jewish people had Jesus for 33 ½ years and then they were gifted with the Early Rain, which were the two most powerful revelations of God and His character that the world had ever seen. They received this just before the most severe judgment from God their nation had ever received. This will be repeated at the end of the world when God will send the Latter Rain, the fullest outpouring of His Holy Spirit, right before the most severe and final judgment the world has ever seen! God is so merciful, He only pours out His wrath, unmixed with mercy, immediately subsequent to the outpouring of the fullest manifestation of His love and mercy that the world has ever experienced.

TIME OF CONSTANTINE

Many think in terms of religious tradition and an official church, whereas God thinks in terms of where the truth is upheld, and the people are being obedient to Him. In the time of Constantine, the true and faithful ones had to separate themselves from the established church traditions, and form little groups of believers. Was this a calling out, or a shaking? In the eyes of the world it was a heretical group of believers that simply chose to apostatize. However, in God's eyes, the true church was the small percentage that chose to come apart and be separate, because they heard God calling them out of their apostate religious traditions. That very small percentage of believers that left the Catholic/Universal church formed God's true church on earth, hunted and persecuted though it may have been. The apostasy that occurred in this case was more because of the acceptance of error than the rejection of truth; however, these two go hand in hand. The church at the time of Constantine had prepared itself for the acceptance of gross error and darkness by the rejection of the Sabbath truth over centuries. All throughout the Dark Ages God had a true church, whose believers were referred to as heretics, and they were hunted like animals, but "they loved not their lives even unto the death." Revelation 12:11

MILLERITE MOVEMENT / 1844

The Shaking at the time of the Millerite movement was a mighty shaking, but there was still a remnant that remained. This remnant was more suited for carrying forward the work than the unconverted masses, because even after the terrible disappointment they did not stop loving Jesus and being committed to the truth. This clearly indicated how deep and full their love for Jesus, and faith in Him real-

ly was.



How deep is our love for Jesus? Is our love for Jesus deep enough to go through sacrifice, disappointment, trial, persecution, and still say, "I will use every last ounce of my strength to work for Jesus!"

SHAKING OF 1914

Was the separation in 1914 a shaking or a call to come out and be separate? In some sense you have elements of both! You have a time of crisis with 98% of the membership supporting the war effort, so they are shaken, not out of the nominal church, but out of the purity of God's truth. Because these nominal Adventists have been shaken out of the purity of God's truth, you have the faithful ones coming apart and being separate, because they were called out by the Holy Spirit. They came apart to be separate, even though there was no religious organization for them to immediately become a part of, and they were extremely isolated from others of like faith. What great faith!

In regards to the Shaking of 1914, just like the example from the time of Constantine, the rejection of truth had prepared the way for the acceptance of error. This can be seen in the rejection of the Christ our Righteousness message in 1888. Also, in similar manner to the shaking when the Jews were cut off as God's people, it was necessary at this point for an Adventist individual to join a new religious organization in order to continue being a member of God's church.

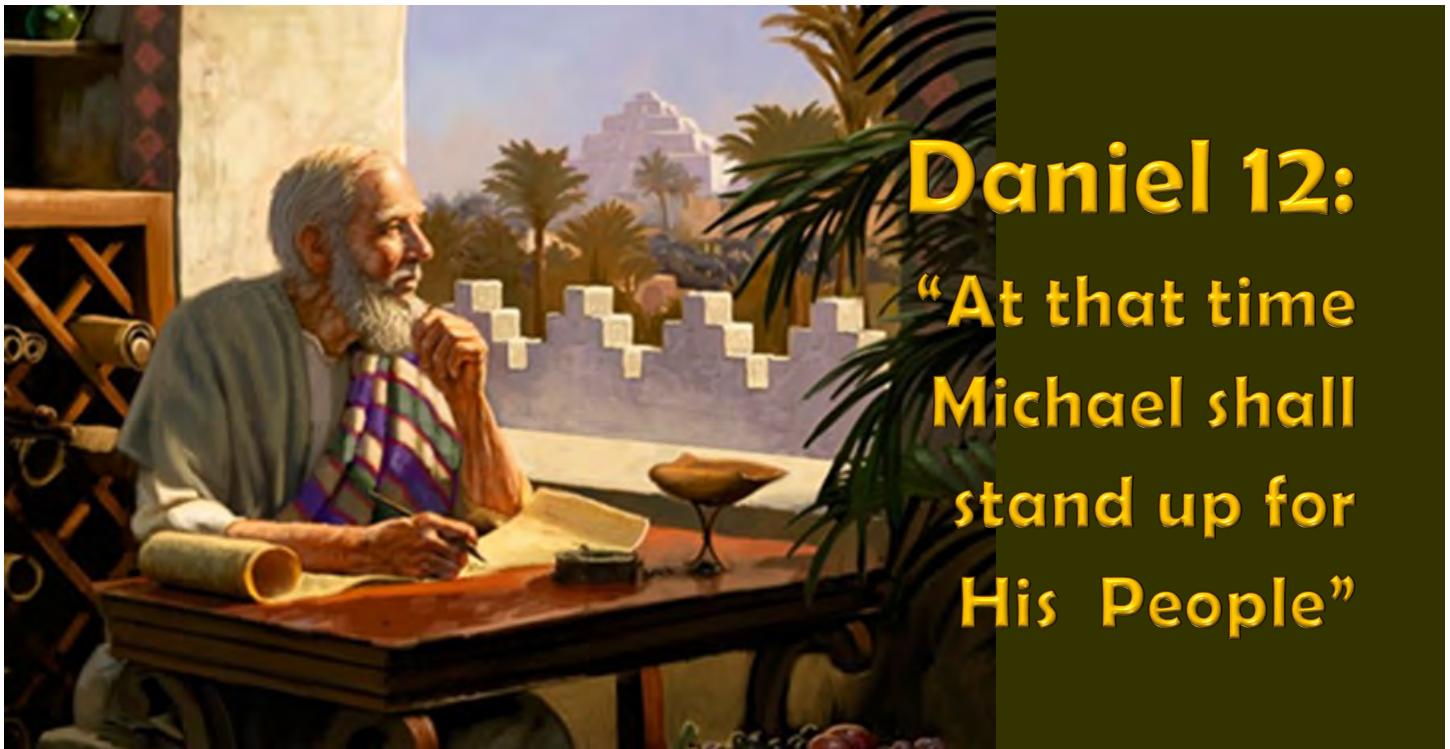
TODAY'S SHAKING

There will be a Shaking and a Call to come out at the End of the World. Many of the half-converted ones will be shaken out and their places will be filled by those who come in, having been called out of their fallen churches during the Latter Rain. There is only space in heaven for those who are fully converted.

The final shaking is necessary, because only those who have laid aside all sin and committed their hearts fully to Jesus will be ready for the final test (Jacob's Trouble, Seven Last Plagues). God wants a pure church, because being in a pure church provides an environment conducive to the individual attaining the standard of perfection, with the help of Christ.

It is my wish and prayer that we will be faithful during the final test that will come upon us! Amen!

Richard Eaton



Daniel chapter 12 is the final chapter in the book of Daniel and this book ends with victory. God's plan and purposes are shown to triumph! Satan and the armies of hell will be defeated. History is reaching its climax. Every person will soon have decided their eternal destiny. There is no way to hinder God's final plan for His people. Soon, the universe will be freed from the ravages that sin has caused. Soon, sinners will be destroyed. Sickness, trouble, and death will disappear and songs of joy will sound in the universe once more. Daniel chapter 12 reveals a door that opens to the new world. The coming of Christ is everything for Christians. What hope does atheism have when death takes away someone they love? Atheism provides no hope. The book of Daniel is filled with hope. Every prophecy in Daniel, no matter where it begins, ends with the coming of Christ.

There are five important events that take place in the 12th chapter of Daniel. Firstly, Michael shall stand up. Who is Michael? Who can it be if it is not the "One who is like God", since this is what the name "Michael" means. Michael is the Messiah, according to Daniel 9. Jesus came to this world to show us the Father. He said, "if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father, because I and my Father are One." Five times in the Scriptures (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7) we find the name "Michael" mentioned, which is one of the many names of Jesus recorded in the Scriptures. Clearly, the Bible interprets itself and God does not leave us in doubt regarding things which are already revealed and are good or profitable for our salvation.

"At that time shall Michael stand up." Daniel 12:1. If Mi-

chael is standing up, there must have been a time when Michael sat down. In Daniel 7 we do read of a time when He sat down. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . "Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him." Daniel 7:9–10, 13. God the Father invites Jesus to "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." Psalm 110:1. Michael sits with His Father, and the hosts of heaven at the beginning of the judgment which began on October 22, 1844. Michael, the Mighty Warrior, the Great Prince, has been mediating in the judgment for His people. The purpose of the judgment is not to condemn God's people. Michael "standeth for the children of thy people". As their names come up before God, Satan accuses them of the sins they have committed. He points to the errors of their life, but thank God that Jesus intercedes for His people in the judgment.

Daniel chapter 7 describes a majestic scene in the sky. There were thrones in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly sanctuary. The Ancient of Days (God the Father) and the Son of Man (Jesus) sat down and began the judgment. If "sitting on the throne" indicates that the judgment has begun (Daniel 7:9–10, 13), then "the standing" occurs when the judgment is over. In Daniel 12:1, Michael stands at the end of the judgment. So, at the time of the end, just

before the coming of Jesus, there will be an eternal judgment that reveals that God is just and fair and righteous in the way He has dealt with the controversy between good and evil.

Jesus will stand up very soon to put an end to death, sorrow, sickness, and sin. However, it is important to note that before this final end there will be a time of trouble such as never was. Should we be afraid? Yes, if we are living in sin; but for those who are becoming like Christ in character there is hope. The good news is that God will intervene and those whose names are written in the book of life will be delivered. Jesus will take them through this time of trouble, just as He did with the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, or with Daniel in the lion's den.

Another important point in this chapter is that there will be a special resurrection taking place prior to Jesus' appearing. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2. "All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. 'They also which pierced Him,' those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honour placed upon the loyal and obedient." – Heaven, p. 28

This chapter also mentions those who are doing the work that Jesus has entrusted them with; namely, preaching the Gospel, the great commission found in Matthew chapter 28 as well as the "Three Angels' Messages" found in Revelation chapter 14. It is written of these people: "but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Daniel 11:32. They are the ones that will shine like the stars. The Bible calls them "wise"; the original Hebrew word is "Maskilim". "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:3. If we want to be wise in God's eyes we need to know our God and do His will. The ones that the Bible calls wise are not just simply knowledgeable people. These people are special because they are transformed through the Holy Spirit into men and women after God's will.

Daniel chapter 12 makes another interesting point, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. Through inspiration, he predicted that, in the end, knowledge will increase. Although this prophecy can be applied in a general sense to the many scientific advances made recently and extremely complex technologies that exist today, it applies specifically to the Book of Daniel. Just before the coming of Christ, the book of Dan-

iel will be unsealed. These prophecies will be studied by tens of thousands of people who will prepare for the coming of Christ. Knowledge of the events leading up to the final days of this earth's history, including Satan's delusions, will be gained through prayerfully studying the prophetic Book of Daniel. Daniel's book is unsealed today. We are now living in the final days of this earth's history.

"And he said, go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Daniel 12:9. Gabriel tells Daniel that these words are to be closed up, but at the time of the end they will be revealed once more. The year 1798 AD marked the beginning of the time of the end mentioned in this verse. We are now living at the end of this time period, and Jesus will be coming very soon. This people "Maskilim" are not only wise concerning the Scriptures but they are wise in the way they conduct themselves. The Bible describes them in this manner. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Daniel 12:10. We need to be wise in our daily life, inviting Jesus through faith into our lives and to clothe us with His robe of righteousness. Not all people will understand the Book of Daniel, especially the prophecies regarding end time events. Only the wise will understand.

Now is the time of the end when the final events of this world's history are taking place. Now the judgment has nearly finished. Soon Michael will stand up. As He looks down on earth He can see the corruption. He sees the union of church and state. He also sees His people suffering. They have been loyal and faithful to Him. Just as the three young Hebrews who were cast into the fiery furnace and were protected by Jesus, personally, so also in the time of trouble the people of God will pass through fiery trials and will be protected by God. They will go unharmed, as living witnesses of His supreme power. This time of trouble differs from the world's time of trouble, and the people of God find security in Him.

Should we be afraid of these terrible events? (Psalm 91:1-8; 46:1-2). No we should not be afraid because Jesus will be with us through this storm. Psalm 91 and 46 should be the motto of our journey as we travel towards Heaven.

God allows trials in our lives to teach us lessons and purify our characters. Every weight we encounter brings us closer to Him. Problems prompt us to pray. They lead us to seek God on our knees. The trials that we encounter in life can either lead us to a profound trust in Him, or create hostility, anger, and resentment. Our growth in trials and our rapid development in the most difficult times of life depend on our constant belief in a loving heavenly Father who holds everything under His control. As He has guided the rise and fall of kingdoms over the centuries, so He can

guide us as well.

Since Daniel is talking about the time of the end, he includes two distinct time periods in this chapter to give us an idea as to when the time of the end will occur. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." Daniel 12:11–12. This is the explanation of the time periods.

In 508 AD, the resistance of the Arian kings against Roman Catholicism effectively came to an end, when Theodoric (king of the Ostrogoths) made peace with the first Clovis—the first "Christian"/Catholic king. This paved the way for the full establishment of the Papacy in 538 AD by the decree of the Roman Emperor, Justinian. The 1290 prophetic days (or years), which thus began in 508 AD, was exactly fulfilled and came to an end in 1798 AD with the imprisonment of Pope Pius VI by the French army.

The prophecy of 1335 days (years) also began in 508 AD, but it extended to 1843 AD which was the time of the preaching of the First Angel's Message and the Great Advent Movement. The text says, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." From 1844, we live in time of the end, in time of the judgment hour of God. Praise the Lord, for Jesus will come soon. Of all mankind throughout history, a special blessing is pronounced on those who live in this time period. If we are faithful until the end of our lives we will have the opportunity to reign with Jesus throughout all eternity.

After reviewing the prophecies in the book of Daniel in several articles, and their relevance to the time in which we are living, there should be a great interest for all Christians to study Daniel's prophecies in more depth.

Every prophecy points to the return of our Lord. Each one predicts the coming of Christ at the end of history. Daniel chapter 2 ends with the kingdom of Christ—the Rock—the stone that breaks down and destroys all the empires of this world. When we look in the world today, we see nations getting angry, showing their mighty arsenal of nuclear weaponry. It is now that we can look at the prophetic word of Daniel given 600 years before Christ and see how it is being fulfilled today.

Daniel 7 ends with the loving Father, who puts all things in order, in His final judgment upon the earth. The destiny of every person is being decided in this judgment. God's "Mercy and Justice" at the cross, are seen in the

judgment. Daniel 8 culminates with the final restoration of the truth at the return of Christ. The whole universe is clean. Sin is defeated. The truth of God triumphs. In Daniel 11 and 12, we read how the people of God, who are persecuted, defeated and oppressed, are freed.

Several of the chapters in Daniel focus on "the time of the end." The ones described here reveal faith, courage, and perseverance in the face of hardships and trials. His prophecies reveal the great prophetic events of God's plan, demonstrating that He is still in control.

The book of Daniel reveals a powerful Almighty God, all wise. His plans, His people and His purposes will ultimately triumph. We can look beyond the problems of life to the promises of His Word. By faith we can see a better country, where the trials of life come to an end. One day we will enter into the joy of His eternal presence and experience the happiness for which we were created.

Do you want to dedicate yourself to Christ, who has everyone in His hands? Do you want to give up everything that is not according to His will in your life? The book of Daniel climaxes with the resurrection of the righteous dead and the coming of Jesus. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25:9.

The second coming of Jesus is the most important event in the history of the world. It will be an awesome sight to behold. As lightning flashes out of the east and shines to the west, so His coming will cover the entire sky (Matthew 24:27). Every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7). Every ear will hear Him (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The earth will tremble with the glory of His coming (Revelation 6:14–15). The "wise" make the most intelligent choice in their lives. They do not live for themselves, but live to be a blessing for others for whom Christ died. They give their lives to share the love of God to others. Regardless of their occupation, they are sensitive to the needs of those around them.

Would you, right now, like to say to Jesus, "Jesus, I want to be ready when You come. I want to be caught up to meet You in the sky. I want to live with You forever"? May we all say, Amen! Come Lord Jesus! I want to be ready when Jesus comes. How about you? May God give us a new and fresh desire to follow Him wherever He goes is my wish and prayer. Amen!

Nicholas Anca



Gates of Blessing

It is Monday morning. Full of energy I leave the house, hop on my bike and head to school. I pedal hard while my mind is already at work. However, my thoughts are interrupted when I hear a familiar sound. It is neither the church nor the school bell but the warning bells of the nearby railroad crossing. I see some lights flashing as well as two white and red striped gates lowering. Slightly grumpy I get off my bike and wait in front of the closed gates. Impatiently, my eyes wander from left to the right. Here I am, grumbling to myself about the bad timing, having to wait for the entire train to pass and the gates opening again. Meanwhile, I look around me. There are frustrated drivers who have switched off the engines of their cars, walkers who have interrupted their morning stroll and other cyclists who are venting

about the loss of precious time. They all want to continue their journey as soon as possible.

I realize that waiting in front of the closed gates is

not a loss of time, but they are there to protect me from being hit by the speeding train. Most railroad crossings use warning devices such as the St. Andrew's cross, flashing lights, warning sounds and gates. Unfortunately, motorists and pedestrians often ignore these warnings. They either go around the lowered gates or they try to race to beat a train to the crossing—sometimes with fatal consequences.

Maybe you are at a personal railroad crossing in your life with closed gates and you are complaining about the bad timing. You wonder why God has placed them in your life, when He has clearly shown you the direction He wants you to go. Instead of quitting, pouting or throwing a fit, maybe you should consider that His purpose may simply be for you to stop, wait, to gather wisdom, get the lay of the land, look around, and move forward when it is the right time. He also wants to protect you from circumstances and events hitting you like a speeding train. Then you will realize that the closed gates are not gates of restriction/limitation but of blessing. Stop and consider God's wonders. (Job 37:14)

Manuela DiFranca



LOOKING FOR YOU . . .

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When we use the word “awake” it can be used as an adjective, describing the state of being alert and not asleep. Or it can also be used as a verb to encourage someone who is already asleep to wake up, rouse from sleep, rouse to action, and become active.

In a spiritual sense, it would be good if we were already awake, alert and active—not sleeping. In Matthew 25 the Church of God is described using a parable of ten virgins, all of who are asleep. When they are woken up at midnight, they all became alert, but not all were ready for action. Some were missing a vital ingredient that prevented them from being active, and that was oil. It was dark. It was midnight, and being without oil would mean they were without light and would be groping in darkness, not able to find their way. Although they are awake now and alert, they are lost.

How are you doing spiritually? Are you awake, alert and active in the work of the Lord? Or are you sleeping, as the ten virgins were? When the call of the Bridegroom does come at midnight, will you be found with the oil of the Holy Spirit or will you be lacking and find yourself without—groping in darkness, unable to find your way—without hope?

Stop! Think! Reflect! “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.” Haggai 1:7. “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” 2 Corinthians 13:5

“Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of His fury.” Isaiah 51:17. All throughout history there have been calls for God’s people to wake up. Here Isaiah is trying to arouse the Israelites from their drunken stupor, induced by the wine of God’s fury. The meting out of judgments is often likened to the pouring out of a cup of wrath. An earnest

call is extended to Jerusalem to arouse herself and come to her senses before it is forever too late. The prophets to the nation of Israel sent many warnings to try to rouse the nation to the danger they were in. “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.” Isaiah 52:1

As individuals, and as a nation, God purposed to furnish the people of Israel “with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 288. He purposed to make them an honour to His name and a blessing to the nations about them. The nation of Israel did not fulfil God’s purpose. They forgot the Lord, became spiritually sleepy and complacent, and were beginning to think and act like the heathen nations around them. Therefore, God sent message after message to help them to wake up.

Are we spiritually sleepy and complacent? Do we need to be awakened to the time in which we live and the necessary preparation we still need to make for salvation? We need to examine ourselves so that we are not only overcoming sins of commission but sins of omission also. This is where many will fail in the end. Although salvation is purely a gift from God in response to our faith and love, yet, if that faith and love does not prompt action it is not a genuine and living faith. “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27. The verse does not read that He shall reward every man according to his “faith”, but it says according to his “works.” This is faith in action. “There are sins of omission, as well as sins of commission, and all of us are influencing the course of others. A neglect when the work is laid before you, is as wrong as to per-

form some sinful action, for in neglecting your duty you fail to supply your link in the chain of God's great work." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, p. 297. Sleepy people are not working. They are either unaware of their surroundings or they are feeling too lethargic to do much. It is time to awake!

"My brethren and sisters, do you desire to break the spell that holds you? Would you arouse from this sluggishness that resembles the torpor of death? Go to work, whether you feel like it or not. Engage in personal effort to bring souls to Jesus and the knowledge of the truth. In such labor you will find both a stimulus and a tonic; it will both arouse and strengthen. By exercise your spiritual powers will become more vigorous, so that you can with better success work out your own salvation. The stupor of death is upon many who profess Christ. Make every effort to arouse them. Warn, entreat, exhort. Pray that the melting love of God may warm and soften their icebound natures. Though they may refuse to hear, your labor will not be lost. In the effort to bless others your own souls will be blessed." —*Counsels to the Church*, p. 59

Those who did listen and wake up were a great blessing for the cause of God. "Awake, awake, Deborah: utter a song: arise." Judges 5:12. Here a message is given to Deborah to rouse herself and summon the tribes to action. She did go and what a great victory there was for the nation of Israel.

However, the reality is that those who do not listen and do not do the work of the Lord go further away. "Those who profess to believe the truth, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding, and it will require time and strength on the part of the minister to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be laboring with all their might to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbors."

—*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1880

"Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Ephesians 5:14. As in every age, in the New Testament church there were spiritual sleepers in the church. The Apostle Paul gives the believers the exhortation to

arouse and awake. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." 1 Corinthians 15:34. The Greek word here used here for "awake" is "eknepho",

which literally means "to wake up from a deep sleep" and is often applied to those who awake sober after intoxication. Here a call is made to turn back from error to the right way of thinking and acting. It is a warning against the danger of feel spiritually complacent and apathetic. Christians need to be constantly on the alert against false teachings, spiritual sloth, and the darts of the enemy. "Satan is continually at work to rock our people to sleep in the cradle of carnal security." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 600

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

Romans 13:11–12. The preparation needed for the great day of God demands of Christians a wakeful vigilance. Is the Lord's coming closer now than when you first believed? It is high time for us all to be awake. Make sure you do not lose your first love as did the Ephesian believers (Revelation 2:4). The fact that time has continued longer than many expected does not mean that the Word of God has failed. There is a work to be done. Every individual believer must have a continuing sense of the shortness of the time and the imminence of the return of Christ. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night for those sleep in lukewarmness and self-indulgence (1 Thessalonians 5:3). It is high time to cast off the works of darkness—our sinful habits—and put on the armour of light, fighting the spiritual battle with weapons of light—the spiritual armour of God (Ephesians 6:12–17).



DISCIPLES SLEEPING

The disciples, although they loved their Lord, were found sleeping when He was praying at key moments on His sojourn on this earth. The first time it is recorded that they were sleeping was on the Mount of Transfiguration. Before the appearance of Moses and Elijah, Jesus was praying and the disciples fell asleep. "But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that

stood with Him." Luke 9:32. The second time it is recorded that they fell asleep was in the Garden of Gethsemane, a very crucial time in history when the plan of salvation hung in the balances. "And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" Matthew 26:40. Since they slept in the Garden when Jesus prayed, they were not prepared at all for the events of the next day. They deserted their Master. Yet God, in His mercy, still forgave them as they repented and they continued to faithfully do His work for the rest of their lives.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5:6. Although others may be asleep around us, we must awake. The word sleep here implies those that are indifferent to the nearness of the coming of Christ. It is a lethargy that keeps the Christian from being prepared for the final events. We are exhorted not to be influenced by others into spiritual sloth, but to be fully awake and to watch; being sober—temperate, steady, calm in spirit, in view of the great day that is coming.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:13. Peter, who was found sleeping in Gethsemane, is now wide awake and encouraging others also to be awake, to prepare their minds for diligent activity. The mind is a secret place where no one enters but the Lord. We are encouraged to gather up the loose reins of our thought processes and exercise the mind on the great truths of salvation revealed by the Spirit of Christ. "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

A GOD CLOSE BY

Sometimes it may seem that Jesus Himself is sleeping, "And He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake Him, and say unto him, Master,

carest Thou not that we perish?" Mark 4:38. Yet the truth is that He is a God close by. He is not far away. He sees everything that is said and done on this earth and He has never turned His ear from the cry of the penitent. If we feel He is far away, we need to search our own hearts. Ask ourselves, who moved? It was not Jesus because, "Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Hebrews 13:8. The truth is that, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." Isaiah 59:2

The call is made by the Lord: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7

"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:18–19

Awake to righteousness, the coming of the Lord is nigh at hand. My prayer is that you will not be found without oil, when the Bridegroom does come; that all sins will be repented of, and blotted out by the blood of the Lamb, and we can say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25:9. Amen.

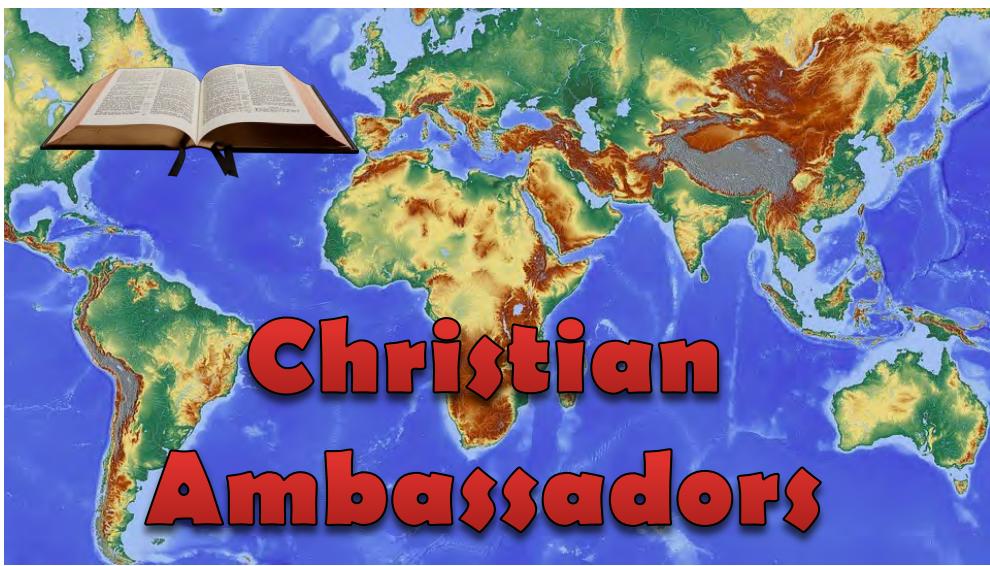
Wendy Eaton



"Even though you may not feel able to speak a word to those who are working on wrong principles, leave them. Your withdrawal and silence may do more than words. Nehemiah refused to associate with those who were untrue to principle, and he would not permit his workmen to associate with them. The love and fear of God were his safeguard. He lived and worked as in view of the unseen world. And David said, 'I have set the Lord always before me.'

"Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Thus, as did Moses, you will endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. But a cowardly and silent reserve before evil associates, while you listen to their devices, makes you one with them. . . .

"Have courage to do right. The Lord's promise is more valuable than gold and silver to all who are doers of His Word. Let all regard it as a great honor to be acknowledged by God as His children." —
The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 3, p. 1155



While traveling in foreign countries I have had occasion to visit the DR Congo Embassies or consulates. When I visited these places, DR Congo flags were flying on the limousines and I was excited to see, and to meet, government representatives from my homeland.

The Apostle Paul identified himself as an ambassador. He asked the Christians in Ephesus to pray for him saying: "that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." Ephesians 6:19–20

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

"We are ambassadors for Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:20. Every Christian has the great privilege of being an ambassador for Christ. This is the term that Paul employs in 2 Corinthians 5:20 to describe our privilege and responsibility in this world. There are two important matters that we must address before we can go on to understand our appointment as "ambassadors":

The first matter concerns our citizenship.

Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). We are citizens of the heavenly country although we are living temporarily as citizens of an earthly country. A certain Matthew Henry said, "This world is our passage, not our portion." Although temporarily citizens of earth, let us not forget that our permanent citizenship is out of this world! And why is our citizenship from heaven? Because we have been born into this same kingdom. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John 3:5–7. So then, we are born into the kingdom of God, we obtain our citizenship from heaven, and ultimately become ambassadors for Christ. But lest we think of this in earthly terms,

let us go on to ponder what this means as far as spiritual realities. What is citizenship of heaven? It is our regenerated beings in subjection to the King Himself, who dwells within all subjects and all citizens. Being His ambassadors means that we have become the visual representation of the living Christ, who works powerfully in all of His ambassadors to manifest His light.

The second matter is our residence.

We are the citizens of one country, Heaven, but we reside upon the earth. Peter refers to believers as follows: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you [who live in this world] as strangers and [temporary residents]." 1 Peter 2:11. We are special representatives of the King of kings, living in a foreign country—we are in the Foreign Service! With these two factors, of our citizenship and residence settled, we are now prepared to consider the challenges which face us as heaven's ambassadors upon earth.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR?

What is a governmental ambassador? "An ambassador is a minister of the highest rank, employed by one prince or state at the court of another, to manage the concerns of his own prince or state, and representing the dignity and power of his sovereign." What is a Christian ambassador? A Christian ambassador is a messenger/representative of his Lord. He is sent to represent the King of kings. He is sent to do what the Sovereign would Himself do if He were visibly present. The ambassador is sent to make known the will of the One Who sent him. He is on divine business. The Christian ambassador does not go in his own name, or in the name of any church or in the name of any earthly power, but he goes in the name of Him who made Heaven and earth and who governs all things by the word of His power! An ambassador must never go beyond his commission. His power comes from his King—he has no power of his own.

WHO IS A CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR?

"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:20. Paul uses the word "we" more than a dozen times in 2 Corinthians 5 to identify believers in Jesus Christ and the word "us" over one-half dozen times. Christians are addressed throughout the chapter, and; therefore, are the subjects to whom the truth of ambassadorship is applied. "We"—"we" who are God's people; "We" who are "in Christ"; "we" who are "a new creation." All in the family of God are representatives of the Father of the family.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS

The sending of an ambassador or a representative from one country to another has been a common practice for centuries. In the New Testament, the word ambassador is used twice. The apostle



Paul first used this image to help Christians understand their role on earth. "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors," he wrote, "as though God were making His appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20). And later, when shut up in prison he explained: "I am an ambassador in bonds." Ephesians 6:20. The image of the Christian as an ambassador of Jesus Christ is just as lucid today.

One must acknowledge and act upon the appointment as Christ's ambassador. Everywhere we go, we presently are ambassadors. Paul was an ambassador, even when he was in prison. He asked the Ephesian Christians to pray for him, "that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." Ephesians 6:19–20. There is never a time or place when Christ's ambassadors cease to be an ambassador! True, many of Christ's ambassadors are bad examples of His ambassadors and bring reproach upon His holy name, but once having become an ambassador through the new birth, one is an ambassador until death!

1) As ambassadors we represent Christ

There is no such thing as an independent or freelance ambassador. Ambassadors by definition represent those who have sent them. The same is true for the Christian. Whether we are aware of it or not, as Christians we represent Christ. Many non-Christians will never open a Bible but will look at how you and I live. What are they concluding as they watch what I do? Does my life reflect something of Christ's humility and selflessness, His gentleness and righteousness? Living conscious of the fact that we represent Christ at home, at work, at school, at church and in our neighbourhood, must affect the way we view ourselves—there is no room for inferiority or superiority complexes. We are very valuable because Christ chose us to represent Him. Yet He chose us because of His grace, not because we were or are so fantastic. We must always remember the following two points as ambassadors :

Suffering—some of the inconveniences we experience come our way because we represent Christ. God may allow some suffering to make us better representatives of "the Man of Sorrows."

Sin—our sin not only affects our communion with the

Lord, it may also affect how other people will think of Jesus.

2) As ambassadors we have a purpose

One must be a citizen of heaven to represent Christ upon the earth. Ambassadors are not sent abroad for the fun of it! Neither are they sent away to get rid of them! Similarly, we Christians are not left on earth just to kill time "until He comes," neither are we put here that we may live to please ourselves. Paul prayed for the Colossian Christians in order that they may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10). What drives the Christian is the desire to please God rather than himself. In everything he does, a good ambassador seeks to further the interest of those he represents. Is your way of life furthering God's purposes on earth?

3) As ambassadors we are always foreigners

The nature of an ambassador's job forces him to live away from home; therefore, as long as he is an ambassador he will be a foreigner. In his first letter, Peter refers to Christians a number of times as "strangers." He urges Christians to "live your lives as strangers in reverent fear." "Dear friends," he adds, "I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires" (1 Peter 1:1, 17; 2:11).

As ambassadors of Jesus Christ we operate under different rules from those of the world we live in. Our standards differ. The value we place on things differs. The great danger is for us to adopt the values of the world around us and thus cease to live as foreigners. Paul's words are both clear and strong: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2). Does the use of my time, my energy and my money agree with the divine call to live as a foreigner in this world?

4) As ambassadors we are accountable to Christ

I find that there are many people I would like to please: my dear wife, my family and friends, fellow Christians, etc. Yet amid these legitimate desires I must not forget that as an ambassador of Jesus Christ I am finally accountable to Him alone. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before Him to whom we must give account (Hebrews 4:13).

In this same way, as sons of God our speech should mark us as different spiritually, and cause those around us to see us as the embodiment of the kingdom which we represent: "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians 4:6. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every

man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."1 Peter 3:15

5) As ambassadors of the Kingdom we have to be Loyal To the Kingdom

In 1 Corinthians 4:1–2, the word "account" means that when others look at us, it should be evident that we are "ministers of Christ". No one should have to ask if we are a Christian for we are to be "*found faithful*". Being "*found faithful*" means no one should have to look for proof, for it is everywhere. We should openly pray in a restaurant, we should openly read our Bible at work on our break, we should openly talk of Christ to our relatives, our neighbours, our friends. Could you imagine an ambassador from the DR Congo, living in another country, and no one knowing who he is? He flies a big Congo flag, drives a marked car, wears a D.R.C. lapel pin to let everyone know who he represents. Let us all be "*found*" as Christians. This is a great question you may ask yourself. Christians need to preach the Gospel, even if the world thinks it is foolish. First, because that is how people will believe; and second, because our loyalty is to heaven, not to the world.

6) It requires A Visual Representation

Conversing, Jesus said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John 14:9–11

This ambassadorship consists of one who is sent to show a true representation of the one sending him. In the same



way Jesus came as a visual manifestation and perfect representation of the Father and related this truth as we read in the passage above ; so, we are becoming, corporately, the visual manifestation of Christ in the earth, as our Lord brings us from one degree of glory to another. This is a high and holy calling, to be part of this wonderful revealing that is going to take place. As ambassadors, re-

member that "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9–10

"If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness to their souls, and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this they bear false witness against our heavenly Father." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 116

SPIRITUAL AND EARTHLY AFFAIRS

Another mark of an ambassador is that his focus is on representing the one sending him, rather than meddling in the affairs of the place he is sent to. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Timothy 2:4. Can you imagine if an ambassador came to the Democratic Republic of Congo from another country, and demanded the right to vote, and lobby, and defend their rights, and change laws, and generally expend their energy in such a manner? Would Congolese not be right in saying that such an ambassador is more concerned with meddling in our business than minding their own? In the same way, we are seated in the heavenlyies with Christ, and are sent into the world to manifest that spiritual kingdom, not to obsess about who rules over these earthly kingdoms which are temporal, and must pass away to the everlasting rule of God.

Can you imagine the Lord Jesus Christ, who has ascended far above all things and has been given the rule of all things by the Father, casting a vote for a carnal man in an earthly election? Can you imagine this Lord of all, attended by countless legions of glorious angels and men, defending His earthly boundaries with carnal weapons such as guns and knives? Of course not! So then, should we, as His very body, be found doing these things? The world is looking to us for a demonstration of this spiritual kingdom, which is built not by human hands—should we then live in the same way that every other man lives? On the contrary, my dear readers and brethren, the light of all this, the concept of ambassadorship is very useful for reminding us of our place as bearers of the light of Christ and ministers of His grace. We are not called to curse the darkness, but to let the light shine forth. We have become children of light and life, and when we have been perfectly conformed to that light within, we shall become perfect ambassadors and embodiments of that light. Then

the world shall see a true corporate witness of Jesus Christ, and the prophecy shall be fulfilled as we read "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isaiah 60:1-3

WHY IS AN AMBASSADOR NEEDED?

Throughout the history of the human race mankind has been at variance with God. There has been a conflict, a battle going on. This rebellious attitude and activity by humankind against God began in the Garden of Eden where a revolt against God took place by our ancient parents. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." Colossians 1:12. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:10. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James 4:4. If there is a war between two countries, and the leaders of one country want to bring the conflict to an end, an emissary, an ambassador is sent to deliver the terms for the cessation of warfare and the grounds for peace.

In the loving heart of God, He desires man, the crown of His creation, to be reconciled to Him, that there be peace between the rebellious sinner and Himself. Proof of that is seen in the condescension of God in sending His one and only Son to be the reconciling agent, the Ultimate Ambassador, from the Throne Room in Heaven to His enemies upon the earth. Romans 5:8-10 explains God's initiative as follows: "But God commendeth His love toward us,

in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved

by His life."

Jesus came and, as the Ambassador/Mediator made a way for His enemies to come back to God. Through His sacrificial atonement (at-one-ment) Jesus Christ brought man and God together again. Sinners have been reconciled to God, and He has demonstrated His love to the lost world.

WHAT DOES A CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR DO?

God's ambassadors are scattered all over the earth and their main purpose is to show and tell forth the Good News that God is the friend of sinners and, if sinners will repent of their rebellion and resistance and accept God's terms of peace, they can become God's friends. An ambassador of Heaven seeks to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God. The Christian ambassador has a distinct ministry called "the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). He announces, proclaims, and communicates the peace terms that God has dictated. We are the messengers of Christ Jesus bearing the Good News. He sends ambassadors and He commands those ambassadors to plead with men, to pray for them, to beseech them that they would be reconciled to God. We are to proclaim, but we are to do far more—we are to beseech. We are to beseech men as though God did beseech them. Now, how does God beseech them? Read several of the Lord's pleadings in Isaiah—how imploring they are! He says: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me" Isaiah 1:2. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18

Another of God's pleadings—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isaiah 55:1

Our only responsibility is to deliver the message just as God gave it. We cannot, and must not, minimize the message, change the message, or add to the message. We are not to negotiate any new terms, or change those which God has dictated. We are simply to declare, explain and encourage people to abide by the terms on which God is willing to be reconciled to man.

God's ambassadors are not sent to do the work of reconciling, of making peace between man and God, but to deli-



"Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service." —Steps to Christ, p. 115

ver the message from God to the estranged sinner that the work has already been done. All we have to do is to communicate that which God Himself has written in His Word. We have to speak out God's message as the spokesmen of God! "He bids us—each according to his opportunity, experience, knowledge, ability and grace—to go abroad among the sons of men and exercise 'the ministry of reconciliation,' to labor to bring men into harmony with God, that they may be willing to accept what God has done toward the making of an everlasting peace." — *Charles H. Spurgeon*. Uppermost in the minds of God's ambassadors is that we are here to bring others to know the love of God for them; we are here as witnesses who have already experienced reconciliation ourselves; we are here as heralds to proclaim the Good News of salvation; as lights to be a blessing in a dark world; as sowers to scatter the Good Seed of God's peace proclamation; we are here on business for our King!

WHAT IS IN THE FUTURE FOR AN AMBASSADOR?

An ambassador is a steward. A steward is one to whom an assignment has been given to be administered for the one who gave it and for which the steward must give an account.

There is a coming day when all of God's ambassadors will be called to give an account of their stewardship—how they represented Him as His ambassadors. Paul warns us of that coming day: "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" Romans 14:10–12

The ambassador will have to give an account of how he conducted his Master's business. 1 Corinthians 3:13–15 makes it clear that we will be rewarded for faithful service as an ambassador and if we have not rendered faithful service we will lose any reward we may have received. This is what Paul wrote: "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire."

The children of God are not always aware of an inescapable appointment; that we have to appear before the Judge of the universe. Even though Paul reminds us of that coming court appearance, many live as though it will never happen. However, the Word of God is plain and personal as 2 Corinthians 5:10–11 states: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that

he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Ambassadors of earthly governments are called to come before the head of their government from time to time, to report on their conduct of the government's business in the country to which they have been sent. There is coming a time when we too, as ambassadors of the King of Kings, will be called to report. In view of our coming court appearance, will we be rebuffed or rewarded? The Book of Proverbs reminds us that "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health." Proverbs 13:17. Let us be faithful ambassadors of Jesus Christ!

"The children of God are called to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the

goodness and mercy of the Lord. As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love. 'As Thou hast sent Me into the world,' said Jesus, 'even so have I



also sent them into the world.' 'I in them, and Thou in Me; . . . that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me.' John 17:18, 23. The apostle Paul says to the disciples of Jesus, 'Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ,' 'known and read of all men.' 2 Corinthians 3:2, 2. In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him.

"Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 115–116

Let us remember that an ambassador represents someone else in person, in speech, etc. Are you "in Christ"? Are you fulfilling your responsibilities of ambassadorship? What do you need to get in/out of your life to properly act "in Christ's stead"?

Victor Shumbusho, D R Congo



HEALTH MATTERS:

Turmeric



Turmeric, also known as Indian saffron, is a plant related to ginger, and is grown throughout India, other parts of Asia, and Central America. Turmeric is a common spice and a major ingredient in curry powder. The part of the turmeric plant that is used in cooking, as a dye in clothing, food and cosmetics, and in healing, is the rhizome. A "rhizome" is an underground stem that resembles a plant's root. It typically grows horizontally and branches off in many directions. The finely ground turmeric powder is processed from the turmeric rhizome. This part of the plant is boiled, then dried. Next, the rhizome is ground into a fine spice. The turmeric rhizome is a dark orange color. After it is processed into a spice, the powder is slightly brighter in color. For healing, turmeric's underground stems are dried and made into capsules, tablets, teas, or extracts. Turmeric powder is also made into a paste for skin conditions.

As with many other plants, the colour is the source of the active compound or phytochemical that contains properties that are beneficial to our health. Different colours provide different health benefits. The source of turmeric's yellow/orange colour is a group of compounds known as curcuminoids. Although the words curcumin and turmeric are often used interchangeably, they describe two different things. Turmeric is the plant, whereas curcumin is the naturally occurring chemical compound found in turmeric.

Historically, turmeric has been used in Ayurvedic medicine, primarily in South Asia, for many conditions, including breathing problems, skin diseases, rheumatism, pain, and fatigue. It is also traditionally used for supporting the blood, liver, joints, immune system, and digestive tract.

Unlike a lot of other compounds found in plants, turmeric has been studied extensively by scientists to determine whether its reported health benefits can be validated. Over 6,000 scientific articles have been written proving the benefits of turmeric and its healing compound, curcumin. It has been stated that it is probably the most

powerful herb on the planet at fighting and potentially reversing disease. Often when turmeric is compared to conventional medicines, its benefits equal that of many pharmaceutical medications, and without the potential hazardous side effects. And, in fact, a number of studies have reported that using curcumin is more advantageous than certain prescription drugs.

The curcumins in turmeric have been found to be powerful antioxidants. They may help in reducing damage to cells and DNA caused by free radical molecules, known as oxidative stress. This is advantageous in preventing many of the diseases caused by the aging process. Free radical damage happens over a lifetime, with its effects becoming more evident as people get older, with diseases such as arthritis, damage to blood vessels, cancer, inflammatory joint disease, asthma, diabetes, dementia, and degenerative eye disease. Also, because of the damage to the blood vessels, cholesterol begins to build up to patch up the damaged areas, which leads to high levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol.

As curcumins are also strong anti-inflammatories, they not only reduce arthritis symptoms, but prevent many of the illnesses that are associated with high levels of inflammation in the body. Chronic inflammation can last for months or years as a result of failure to eliminate the cause and repeated exposure to things such as a poor diet, stress, a sedentary lifestyle, environmental toxins, and more. The diseases caused by ongoing inflammation include colitis, asthma, arthritis, Crohn's disease, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels and Parkinson's disease. Many of the diseases caused by free radical damage and chronic inflammation are the same. Modern medicine focuses on treating symptoms instead of addressing the root cause of an illness. Using supplements such as curcumin minimizes inflammation and prevents disease from happening. With rising health care costs, prevention of disease is

now becoming more popular in medicine.

Curcumin also have benefits in cognitive health. They have been effective in treating mild depression. They have benefits in cardiovascular health by acting as blood thinners, and in lowering cholesterol. In diabetes, curcumin can lower blood sugar. They also help with bowel health. Curcumin preparations were found to be more effective than aspirin and ibuprofen on pain. Preparations of curcumin ointments are useful in treating skin conditions and in the healing of wounds. Curcumin brings cholesterol levels down.

Of all the various topics scientists have tackled in regards to the curcumin and disease reversal, cancer (of various types) is one of the most thoroughly researched topics. A number of laboratory studies on cancer cells have shown that curcumin does have anti-cancer effects. It has the best effects on breast, bowel, stomach, and skin cancer cells.

Turmeric is being extensively studied as an additive to chemotherapy agents in fighting cancer. Studies have shown that turmeric has properties that prevent cancer cell development, growth, and spread. It can shrink the size of tumours and actually kill cancer cells. However, the challenge is in figuring out how to introduce the amounts of turmeric into the body that is needed for it to provide its cancer-fighting benefits. Oral use of curcumin in cancer treatments cannot provide the amounts needed to be effective. Nanoparticle technology is being looked at as a way to allow large amounts of curcumin to be absorbed. Combining curcumin with other phytochemicals such as resveratrol (from red grapes) also increases its absorption and positive health effects. The formulation and delivery systems need to be further improved in order to make curcumin into an effective anti-cancer drug; this is the next step in research into curcumin's role in fighting cancer.

The list of health benefits from curcumin are long and exhaustive. Study abstracts from the National Library of Medicine's database shows over 600 potential health benefits of turmeric, and/or curcumin. Because many of the health benefits have been proven through extensive research studies, curcumin should always be considered when trying to treat various diseases and illnesses.

As more and more research demonstrates the benefits of curcumin in the diet, supplement companies have created an entire industry around this compound. When we talk about the effectiveness of supplements, we use the word "bioavailability". This indicates the proportion of a drug or other substance that enters the circulation when

introduced into the body and so is able to have an active effect.

A significant flaw that researchers have determined with curcumin is that it is very poorly absorbed into the body from the gut when taken by mouth. In fact, most conventional curcumin powders and supplements can be so poorly absorbed that no curcumin is actually found in the bloodstream in testing, thus having no appreciable benefit to the brain and body. The potential health benefits of curcumin are limited by its poor water solubility, low absorption from the gut, rapid metabolism into less effective metabolites, and rapid elimination from the body. The other challenge is that supplements are not regulated by the government in terms of ensuring they contain what they claim to contain on the packaging. Research done by labs show that more than 20% of curcumin supplements deliver less than 15% of the advertised amount of the compounds. With many of the cheaper supplements of curcumin, the amount absorbed is so negligible that the health benefits are not realized, and the money used in purchasing the supplement is wasted.

The other challenge in taking supplements labelled as turmeric, is that the curcumin content of turmeric is low. It is around 3%, by weight. Most of the studies on this herb are using turmeric extracts that contain mostly curcumin itself, with dosages usually exceeding 1 gram per day. It would be very difficult to reach these levels just using the turmeric spice in your foods. Therefore, if you want to experience the full effects, then you need to take an extract that contains significant amounts of curcumin and that is capable of being absorbed by the body in adequate amounts to provide health benefits. Several companies have been adding special patented ingredients to their supplements to improve absorption.

However, despite the challenges of supplementing with curcumin, there is one interesting fact to consider. The United States has an Alzheimer's/dementia death rate which is the 2nd worst in the world (2nd only to Finland). Finland is 53.77 people per 100,000 the US isn't much better at 45.58 people. Now compare those numbers to 0.46 per 100,000 for India. Does India's high dietary usage of turmeric have anything to do with that? If so, then it is being accomplished without any special patented ingredients for increasing absorption. Therefore, eating more turmeric in your diet is probably a good idea.

**NEXT MONTH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT TURMERIC/CURCUMIN
SUPPLEMENTATION**



CHILDREN'S CORNER:

The Banquet



"Good morning children," mother smiled, as Max and Annie walked in the kitchen for morning worship and breakfast.

"Good morning, mother," both Annie and Max answered at the same time. After eating breakfast, Annie nervously handed a brown envelope to her mother.

"Is this your report card, Annie?" asked mother as she started opening the envelope.

"Yes mother," Annie smiled nervously.

"Well, I'm sure you're doing great, now let's see here." Mother carefully and silently read the report, nodding and smiling with each line she read.

"Will we be celebrating, mother?" asked Max anxiously, "Has Annie done well?"

"Annie has done a wonderful job! Annie, I am pleased with what this report says." Mother held her arms open wide and Annie jumped into them for a big hug. "Because you've done such a great job, we will celebrate. You may invite some friends over for tomorrow and we will have a special treat."

"Will Grandpa come?" asked Annie excitedly.

"I'm sure he wouldn't miss it, I will call him and let him know." Mother headed for the phone as the two children ran out happily to get ready for school.

As they both walked to school, Annie and Max talked about who they would invite over for their small cele-

bration.

"Maybe you can invite the new neighbours, Annie; there are many children in that house and I'm sure they would like to come," Max said as they walked past the old white house.

"No Max, I don't think so, we don't even know them. Anyways, I'm planning to invite just my group of friends—Sandy, Cindy and Eva. I don't think Eva likes the new girl anyways."

"But it's the right thing to do, Annie," Max said confused.

"I'll see you after school Max! I have to go now," Annie hopped happily to her group of friends who waited for her at the front doors.

The next day came, and mother had prepared a special blueberry pie. The table was full of different types of fresh fruit and other treats. Grandpa had arrived early and had brought some homemade banana ice cream. However, when Annie came through the door, she looked very sad. She was in tears and ran to mother, crying inconsolably.

"Annie, speak, what is wrong?" Mother asked worried, but Annie couldn't speak.

"Mother, Annie is sad because her friends will not be coming to celebrate with us today. Eva invited the girls to her house to watch a movie and they decided they would go there instead," Max explained. He was heartbroken to see his sister so sad.

"Well Annie, are you sure there is no one else who



would like to come and celebrate with us?" Grandpa asked as he looked at the table filled with all the delicious food.

All of a sudden, Annie stopped crying and she remembered her neighbours. Without saying one word, she ran out to the old white house and invited all the children. In a matter of seconds, the house was filled with grateful children who had never seen so much colourful food in one meal.

Later that evening, Grandpa told the children the parable of the banquet. Jesus had spoken about a man who had invited special guests to his banquet. However, his guests made up excuses and rejected the invitation. This saddened and angered the king, who then decided to invite anyone who was willing to come. Grandpa then explained that Jesus was inviting each human being to a great spiritual feast, and many people would make excuses; however, some would be willing to attend that great feast and many times they were people who we would least expect.

"So, does this mean we should not just invite those who are special to us, but everyone?" asked Annie, as she thought about her neighbours.

"We should be like Jesus, who invites us all. We are all special to Him and the banquet He is preparing is the greatest ever seen. We should accept His invitation," Grandpa explained.

"I want to be at that banquet, Grandpa!" Maxed said anxiously.

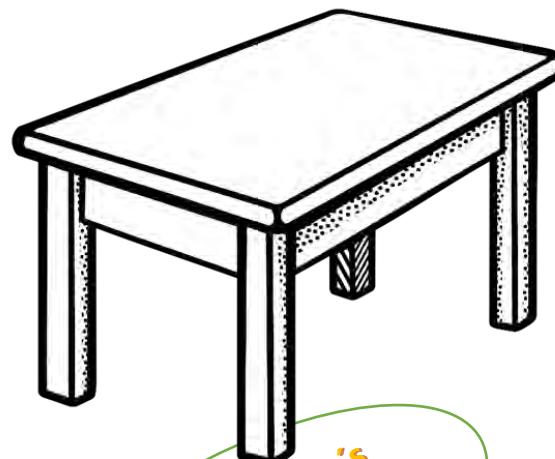
"Me too!" said Annie.

"Let us pray and tell Jesus that we accept His invitation then," Grandpa held his grandchildren's hands as they prayed.

Challenge Six

Draw the kind of food you would serve at a banquet.

Write below where the parable of the Banquet is found



Don't miss Grandpa's
next visit to Annie and
Max's home!!



Email your challenges here:

veronicanoemigarcia@gmail.com

Romania



Together with my family I had the privilege of recently traveling to Romania.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers and support while we were travelling.



It was a great blessing to have the opportunity to travel to Romania with my family in March 2017 for our vacation. We spent two weeks studying the Bible with our families as well as studying and praying with some of my friends while visiting them. My wife's parents came from Spain to spend time with us and we had a wonderful time together.

Before leaving Canada, I asked the Lord to open ways and give me opportunities to spread the message, the good news of salvation, while I was in Romania. Although it was vacation time for myself and my family, as a missionary, I felt compelled to make use of every opportunity God would give me to talk about Jesus and His love for His people. As I prayed the Lord opened up the way for me. I was thankful that I

was asked to participate in an Evangelistic campaign for three days from March 31 to April 2. The meetings were held in the local church where my spiritual birth took place. My wife and I went from house to house giving invitations to our friends and to the people in the village. It was wonderful to see my mother, father, and one of my sisters come each night as I presented Jesus. Many other people also came each night.

May our Lord and Saviour bless those who attended the meetings there. Please keep them in your prayers.

Nicholas Anca





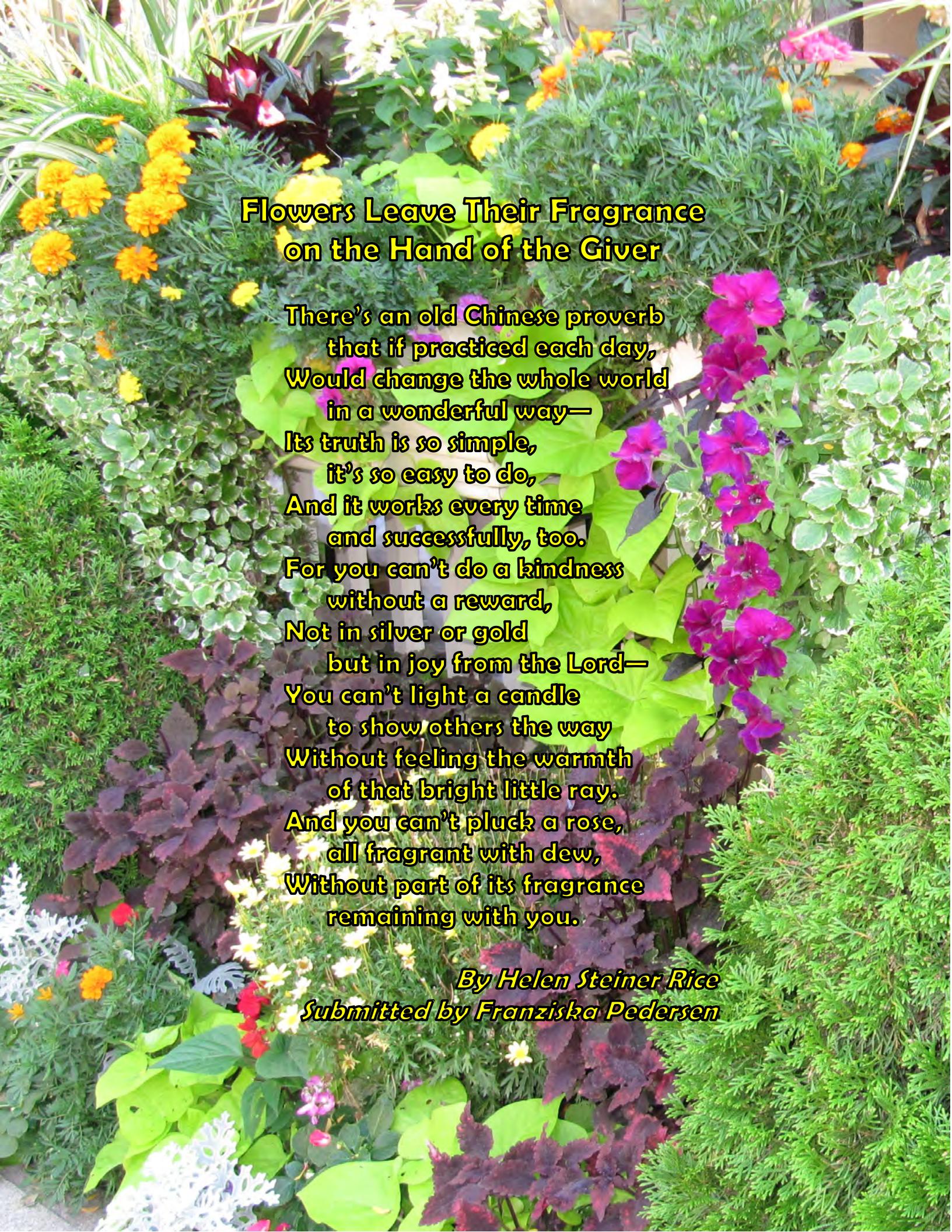
Baptism in Benin

**Visayan Field
Conference,
Philippine Union
New officers (on right)
April 26-29, 2017**



Japanese brethren—Conference April 8-23, 2017





Flowers Leave Their Fragrance on the Hand of the Giver

**There's an old Chinese proverb
that if practiced each day,
Would change the whole world
in a wonderful way—
Its truth is so simple,
it's so easy to do,
And it works every time
and successfully, too.
For you can't do a kindness
without a reward,
Not in silver or gold
but in joy from the Lord—
You can't light a candle
to show others the way
Without feeling the warmth
of that bright little ray.
And you can't pluck a rose,
all fragrant with dew,
Without part of its fragrance
remaining with you.**

***By Helen Steiner Rice
Submitted by Franziska Pedersen***