



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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Ask for the Old Paths

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.” Jeremiah 6:16

“Let none seek to tear away the foundations of our faith,—the foundations that were laid at the beginning of our work, by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation. Upon these foundations we have been building for more than fifty years. Men may suppose that they have found a new way, that they can lay a stronger foundation than that which has been laid; but this is a great deception. ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid.’ [1 Corinthians 3:11.] In the past, many have undertaken to build a new faith, to establish new principles; but how long did their building stand? It soon fell; for it was not founded upon the Rock.” —*Gospel Workers*, p. 307

“There are men whom God has qualified with more than ordinary ability. They are deep thinkers, energetic, and thorough. But many of them are bent upon the attainment of their own selfish ends, without regard to the honor and glory of God. Some of these have seen the light of truth, but because they honored themselves, and did not make God first and last and best in everything, they have wandered away from Bible truth into skepticism and infidelity. When these are arrested by the chastisements of God, and through affliction are led to inquire for the old paths, the mist of skepticism is swept from their minds. Some of them repent, return

to the old love, and set their feet in the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. No longer are they actuated by the love of money or by selfish ambition. The Spirit of God working upon the heart is valued by them more highly than gold or the praise of men. When this amazing change is wrought, the thoughts are directed by the Spirit of God into new channels, the character is transformed, and the aspirations of the soul reach out toward heavenly things.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 312

“Salvation is for all who believe, and there is no respect of persons or nations with God. The truth must be made to appear before men, whether they will hear or whether they will

forbear. We must preach Christ and Him crucified, and return to the old paths, and lead others in the good way. We must lift up Jesus and let self sink out of sight, that Christ may draw to Himself the souls for whom He has died.” —*The Review and Herald*, July 7, 1891

“Have faith in God. However stormy may be the times, looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of your faith, you will be complete in Him. Abide in the old paths, whoever may turn back. Be rooted and grounded and built up in the most holy faith, a living epistle known and read of all men.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 212

“The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for a renewal of spiritual life.” —*Counsels for the Church*, p. 326

“It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 478

Ellen G. White

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Isaiah 58:12



Have You Counted the Cost?

Have you ever made a budget? Have you ever tried to make your income match your expenses? Have you figured out what you can afford to buy, and what is too expensive? Many people carelessly spend their money, and end up in bankruptcy; they lose their car or house because they failed to make the payments for them. If they had made the proper calculations, they would not have bought so expensive a car or a house.

Jesus spoke of a man who planned to build a tower. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish." Luke 14:28–30

In like manner, we must calculate the cost of salvation; how much does it cost to gain heaven and eternal life. Are we able to pay the full amount for it? Jesus said, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:33

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13–14

"He that loveth father or mother more than Me is

not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." Matthew 10:37–39

These are the conditions for salvation that Jesus told His disciples. This is the price that they have to pay in order to be His disciples; this is also the price that we must pay if we want salvation and eternal life. There are about two and half billion Christians who claim to be disciples of Christ, but most are not willing to pay the price for it. They did not count the cost before they became Christians.

Christ is calling us to make up our minds; which one do we want to buy, Him or the world? We do not have enough means to buy both. This was Elijah's message: "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, than follow him. And the people answered him not a word." 1 Kings 18:21

They had not fully decided for one way or for the other. Millions have started to build their building of faith, but will never finish. They want to buy heaven, but are not willing to pay the full price; they want the world also. The full price includes all our time—not even one moment for the world. It includes all our money, not only a tenth part of it. We must give an account of every penny that we have

earned, and how we use it. Of all of our talents that God has given us we must give an account, and that includes our speech, our singing talent, our strength, our influence, and also our eyes, ears, hands, and feet; we must place all on the altar of sacrifice. Many give part of these talents, and promise to give all later, but this is not acceptable to God.

“I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage. My brother, you need to reform. The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. Victories are frequently lost through delays. There will be crises in this cause. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God. Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy, and he is disappointed and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 497–498

“Again I call for the help that we ought to have had, the means that we must have, if anything is accomplished in this country. Let your hearts be drawn out in love for perishing souls. Obey the impulse given by High Heaven. Grieve not the Holy Spirit by delay. Resist not God’s methods of recovering souls from the thralldom of sin. To every man, according to his several ability, is given his work. Do your best, and God will accept your efforts.” —*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 56

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went, and sold all that he had, and bought it.” Matthew 13:44–46

Did they sell all that they had grudgingly, and complaining, and asking, “do I have to sell?” No, they joyfully sold all that they had.

Although the field cost all that they had, the treasure

is worth millions. Did they delay the purchase of the field with the treasure? No, they bought the field immediately. If they had sold ninety percent of their belongings it would not have been enough to purchase the field with the treasure.



The hidden treasure is Jesus, who is also the goodly pearl. Many Christians are without Christ and without the Saviour. They were not willing to sacrifice so much. However, a life without Christ is misery, it is unhappiness and a joyless exercise, and worth nothing. Ananias and Sapphira kept back something from that which they had promised, and for this they lost all. We need a place to live in, and we need a car for travel, but they are not ours anymore; they have been given to God. Our house is a place for someone who is homeless. Our car is for someone needing a ride, and our money is for the poor.

Do you think that without sacrificing all you have, that you will make it to heaven? Do you think that while wasting your time in vanity and watching worldly shows you will make it to heaven? That is not giving all. Do you think that you will make it to heaven while indulging appetite and eating forbidden foods? No, it is not possible. If you dislike someone, and have an unforgiving spirit, do you think that you will make it to heaven?

“The suffering Jesus, His love was so deep as to lead Him to give His life for man, was again held up before me; also the lives of those who professed to be His followers, who had this world’s goods, but considered it so great a thing to help the cause of salvation. The angel said, ‘Can such enter heaven?’ Another angel answered, ‘No, never, never, never. Those who are not interested in the cause of God on earth can never sing the song of redeeming love above.’ I saw that the quick work that God was doing on the earth would soon be cut short in righteousness and that the messengers must speed swiftly on their way to search out the scattered flock. An angel said, ‘Are all these messengers?’ Another answered, ‘No, no; God’s messengers have a message.’

“I saw that the cause of God had been hindered and

dishonored by some traveling who had no message from God. Such will have to give an account to God for every dollar they have used in traveling where it was not their duty to go, because that money might have helped on the cause of God; and for the lack of the spiritual food that might have been given them by God's called and chosen messengers, had they had the means, souls have starved and died. I saw that those who have strength to labor with their hands and help sustain the cause were as accountable for their strength as others were for their property.

"The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause." *-Early Writings*, p. 50

Why is it so difficult to give all to God? Is it not because we do not love Him, and we are not dead to the world? "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." 1 Peter 4:18-19

Judas had bought Christ, but then sold Him for a small price. Nothing is so expensive as sin. Even the smallest sin casts out your peace, your joy and happiness, and your salvation. Christ and the Holy Spirit are the price you must pay for sin. Is it worth it? What price did Adam and Eve pay for their little enjoyment? Pride is for sale, and the price is destruction. Covetousness is for sale, but the price is losing their houses and lands.

"And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out My hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely." Jeremiah 6:12-13. It is a terribly, high price to pay for covetousness.



Any sinful indulgence costs us a very high price. "And He said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." Luke 15:11-13. All the money and goods which he had he spent in riotous living, instead of spending to buy the field with the hidden treasure.

Sister White saw in vision heaven and the glory of it. She writes, "We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!' and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring." *-Early Writings*, p. 17

Isaiah writes, "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 mercy and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isaiah 55:1-2

We sing in the gospel song, "Have you counted the cost if your soul should be lost, Though you gain the whole world for your own?"

Do not deceive yourself; pay the full price, which is all that you have, and heaven will be yours. Jesus will be your companion, and the Holy Spirit will fill your heart; then your joy will be full, and the peace of heaven will fill your soul. Amen.

Timo Martin





Prosperity of the Wicked

Many times, the wicked appear to prosper much, especially in material and financial wealth. They lavish in their wealth—living a luxurious life. The children of God, on the other hand, appear to be in constant lack or have intermittent supply of their daily basic needs. Today's popular religions (the charismatics, and especially the Pentecostal movements) have taught that financial success is the perceived primary sign that one is a true follower of Christ. Everyone's desire (of their believers) is tilted towards that end! Strange as it is, a person in good spiritual standing, but not materially rich, is seen with remorse and considered as "not having been answered" by God; or taken to have followed a wrong path altogether. At certain times, the righteous suffer persecution, while the wicked exult or taunt them for their suffering.

Many a time, God's people are tempted to ask: "Why is this so? Are there any better days to come?" In the book of Psalms, there is a record of this situation. "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." Psalm 73:3, 12

COMMANDMENT KEEPERS VS. THE DISOBEDIENT

Today, those abiding by the law of God (especially the faithful Sabbath keepers) and are by grace liv-

ing a holy life are a sometimes a subject of ridicule by idolaters and the new prevalent religions. The faithfulness of the righteous is said to be the reason for their poverty, suffering, and disdain. "You are following an old religion of the Jews [because of the Sabbath]" they claim. "You are following a wrong God; unless you change, your prayers will remain unanswered, and you will die poor," they conclude. Unlike the claim that obedience is a stumbling block to prosperity [riches], the Lord in the following [and many other verses] has put obedience as the foundation of success. He delights in those who honor His law and bountifully fill their lives with blessings.

"If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies

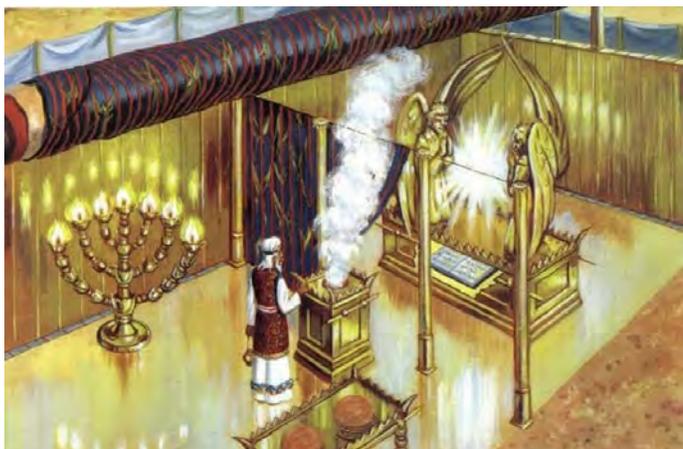
shall fall before you by the sword." Leviticus 26:3-8

"But if ye shall at all turn from following Me, ye or your children, and will not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for My name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people." 1 Kings 9:6-7

God's people are prosperous in this life, and much more abundantly will they be in the life to come. Prosperity must be seen also in a broader view (Deuteronomy 28:3-13). Inner peace, joy, health, security, children, and hope of eternal life, just to mention a few, are the important things that are bestowed upon the righteous which the rich wicked rarely have. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3. Many of the rich are destitute of inner peace and security. They surround themselves with many bodyguards, wear bullet proof attire, etc.; they are worried about what may happen. They often have high hospital bills for chronic illnesses due to intemperance, etc. . . .

Coming back to Psalm 73, we see how these rich wicked people are and act like. "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." (verse 5). Because of this, "pride compasseth them about as a chain," and are violent, have "more than the heart could wish." "They are corrupt, and speak wickedly," or exalt themselves, or they scoff at God. (verses 6-9, 11) None of these traits are pleasing to God.

Finally, the writer found that his "steps had well nigh



slipped" (verse 2) when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. It was painful though to understand the situation how the child of God, the clean in heart (verse 13) is "plagued" all the day long, "and chastened every morning" (verse 14), while those not in the fear of God are left to lavish. Until the writer went to God's Sanctuary did he understand their end [of the wicked]. (verse 17). Here it is clear. The difference between the righteous and these apparently prospering lies in their end.

God allows His children to suffer out of love, with the object of purifying them. "That we might be partakers of His holiness." Hebrews 12:10, last part. If left without chastisement, then they are not sons, but bastards. (verse 8) "It is good for me [the Psalmist writes] that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes." "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now I have kept Thy word." Psalm 119:71, 67

THE PERPLEXITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The people of God are led to be tempted to look for some immediate temporal reward for their well doing—their godly living—as they see the disobedient surrounded with earthly honour. In the time of Malachi the prophet, the people spoke stout words against God. Yet they asked: "What have we spoken so much against Thee?" Malachi 3:13. They were told: "Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Malachi 3: 14-15. Is not this the same complaint as in Psalms 73:13-14? "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. . . ." Yes, it is the same.

Often times, those who admire the riches and luxurious life of worldly people are ignorant of how this wealth is gathered and accumulated. In the first place, they often violate God's law by breaking the Sabbath. Some also use crookedness, bribery, corruption etc. to accumulate their wealth. Many dark stories have been told (by witnesses) of the dark forces found within the residences of some of these people. There is a whole range of rituals, evil spirits being entertained, human sacrifice, personal surety to remain loyal to the secret societies' affiliation or die a terrible death, and so on. The terrible thing is that

these people are the ones in the forefront, professing to believe in Jesus, and that it is Him who has given them these riches. Yet such riches are all vanity and “vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 1:17) to them that hold them. Many of the riches are obtained in a filthy way. If their eyes were opened to see these things (the dark powers behind the riches), the heart would be filled with terror, and a full appreciation of God’s love (why He has kept us from such things) is aroused.

GOD’S ANSWER

As already mentioned above, it took the Psalmist [Psalms 73] to go to the sanctuary to understand the whole thing, the reward of the wicked, seemingly prosperous. While in the Sanctuary, he saw them “set in slippery places,” and cast “down into destruction,” hurriedly “into desolation”, and “utterly consumed with terrors. Their image before the Lord, was despised as in a dream. (verses 18–20)

Malachi says that the conversation of those that fear the Lord are immortalized by being safely kept in a book of remembrance (Malachi 3:16); they are promised deliverance (verse 17)—eternal life. God will bring them to a time when these two groups will be clearly separated and their character revealed. (verse 18). In the day “that shall burn as an oven,” the wicked will be totally destroyed, notwithstanding their affluent state, being left among “them neither root nor branch.” Malachi 4:1. This is how God will settle the matter. So, like the Psalmist, we are foolish and ignorant if we envy the prosperity of the wicked (Psalms 73:22).

OCCUPY TILL I COME

Is it a sin to be rich? No! The Bible does not say so. Some have used the verse in 1 Timothy 6:10, to state that “money is the root of all evil.” Any efforts and skill used to make money is a questionable undertaking. Any advancement financially is looked upon with abhorrence. Thus the blessings which God would have bestowed upon His faithful working servant according to his talents are forfeited. Laziness of body and mind has been eclipsed in a pretense of following God’s will. Poverty, which was not supposed to be, stalks! While it is true that there is one who gives earthy glory to his followers as

in the temptation of Jesus: “Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.” (Matthew 4:8–9) It is “the LORD that maketh poor, and maketh rich: He bringeth low, and lifteth up.” 1 Samuel 2:7. The command of the Lord remains: “Occupy till I come.” Luke 19:13. We are to utilize all our talents and knowledge for all useful education and employment to which the Lord leads us. Businesses done following the “principles of diligence, honesty, thrift, temperance and purity” (*Education*, p. 135) are not offensive to God and often prove a great blessing to the work of saving souls. Having narrated a parable of a rich foolish man, warning His hearers to beware of covetousness, Christ stated what was the actual danger in wealth accumulation: “So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, *and is not rich toward God.*” Luke 12:21 (emphasis mine)

CONCLUSION

Now is the time to set our “affection on things above, not on things on the earth;” we must “seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Colossians 3:2, 1. “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Philippians 3:20.

That is the goal that should be foremost in our life efforts, is my wish and prayer. Amen.

*Joel Msiska,
Malawi*





A Miracle by definition is: an extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a supernatural cause, such an effect or event considered as a work of God.

Often people pray for miracles after they have tried every earthly support and this support has failed them, and then as a final resort, they pray for a miracle. As the definition stated, a miracle surpasses all known human or natural powers, so when human powers have failed, they go beyond.

Sometimes we pray for miracles, but are not prepared to accept the answer the Lord brings as it may hurt.

Let us use the example of physical exercise. People exercise to keep their body physically fit. Sometimes people exercise more intensely because they want to build muscle, to have a better looking and more toned body. What actually happens to the muscles after intense exercise?

“When greater than normal resistance is placed on a muscle, small microscopic tears occur in the tissue—perfectly normal. The size and severity of the tear does depend on exercise intensity. . . .

“The tears in the muscle tissue from exercise disrupt the muscle cell organelles. This disruption activates satellite cells from outside the muscle fibers, which rush to the area of damage. These cells replicate, mature into grown cells and fuse to your muscle fibers. This process forms new muscle protein strands, which increases the strength and visible size of the muscle to better cope with similar physical activity in the future.” <https://www.livestrong.com/article/533248-what-happen-to-your-muscles-when-you-work-out/>. Thus, the muscle needs to tear first before it can become stronger.

So, what does this analogy have to do with miracles? When

we ask for miracles, we may get an unexpected answer. We pray for strength, but the Lord may need to tear us down a little before we can be stronger. “Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.” Hosea 6:1. The Lord says, “I wound, and I heal.” Deuteronomy 32:39. “For He maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and His hands make whole.” Job 5:18

Why would the Lord sometimes wound, tear and smite a person—especially a Christian who is wanting to follow Him? It is not only to purify character, but to remove all earthly supports, so that we learn to trust in Him alone. It can be a painful process to remove and leave off all earthy supports and idols.

When we pray for miracles, we need to be ready to be torn and humbled if necessary.

Namaan had to be made sick with leprosy before he found his way to the Lord. He went to the prophet Elisha and asked Elisha to perform a miracle, “I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.” 2 Kings 5:11. Yet, he was told to go wash in the muddy waters of the Jordan River. This was not what he expected, but his friends encouraged him to comply, and thus he did, and was healed. Through Namaan’s sickness and suffering, he found the Saviour and was miraculously healed.

If we pray for miracles, we have to be prepared for, and accept, God’s answer.

Now I ask,

- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to face Goliath?
- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to walk in the

fiery furnace?

- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to go into the den of lions?
- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to spend 40 years in the wilderness?
- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to be sold as a slave?
- When we pray for miracles, are we willing to deny ourselves of our dearest treasures?

Gideon prayed for a miracle so he could conquer the Midianite army who were like the sands of the sea, compared to his 32,000 men. God's answer was, yes, but only with 300 of your men. (Judges chapter 6 and 7)

Moses prayed for a miracle in delivering the Israelites from Egypt, and God first led them to the Red Sea, with mountains on either side and the Egyptian army in hot pursuit behind them, before delivering them through the sea (Exodus 14).

Daniel prayed three times a day for a miracle of deliverance for his people from their captivity and he found himself in a Den of Lions (Daniel 6).

The nation of Israel prayed for a miracle of deliverance from the Philistines, and they were told that only one of them needed to fight, but the enemy was Goliath. All the hardened soldiers were fearful, except one young shepherd boy.

Joseph prayed for strength to be faithful in a foreign land with no believers around and he found himself a slave, and later on a prisoner.

These people all faced fearful challenges that would cause most people to shrink back in despair. However, it is the experience of fear that builds our faith, and the realization that the miracle indeed came from God. The trial is not meant to cause us to fear, but to learn to trust. David had courage to face Goliath and in the name of the Lord, he slew him without fear.

The Lord did not bring us out of Egypt to face the trials in the wilderness to fear, but that we would learn to depend on Him. Humanly speaking, we as humans would rely on humans before the Unseen. Often we pray for miracles as a last resort after we have tried and tested all our human supports.

God brings us to Red Seas, to the lion's dens, to the Goliaths, and fiery furnaces so we will call on Him. He cannot get the glory if there is anyone left on earth we can rely on. Thus He will weaken us down to 300 men so that we will have to say, with men this is impossible, surely God did this. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27

Often when we read the story of Jonah, he is portrayed as a rebel prophet who tried to run away from God. Although nothing is recorded as to his attitude at the time, could we not reason that perhaps he was timid? He loved the Lord, and wanted to serve Him, and so the Lord told him to go face the lions and Goliaths in Ninevah, and he got afraid and ran the other way. We do see his temperament in the end when he got frustrated at the Lord for not following through and destroying the nation. However, he could have been so timid, and now being seen as a "false" prophet he may have wanted to go and hide under a rock. We do not know, but we cannot judge. It was clearly wrong for him to run the other direction, but the Lord straightened him out and put him on the right path, and he faced the mighty nation, preaching the message the Lord had for them.

How do we feel when called upon to face the lions, the fire and the giants? Do we fear—and want to run in the other direction? Or do we go boldly forth in the name of the Lord?

We do pray for miracles in varying other circumstances also as follows:

We pray for miracles in our churches so that they will grow, but are we willing to help out in the missionary work? Do we always have some excuse such as, too old, too young, too tired, too busy with my own personal work. How easy is it to go and do canvassing work? We often go and put flyers into people's mail boxes, but how about talking in person to people—to strangers? This is like facing Goliath, for some people. However, seeing as this is the final work that will be done on this earth, are we up to the challenge? Impossible, some may think. They are far too timid. This is when the power of God can enable us to do the impossible. Although we may not go door-to-door, the Lord has people for us to meet wherever we may be. We just need to keep our eyes and ears open to the needs of those around us, and search for opportunities. We cannot be too busy with the cares of this life to neglect the Lord's work if we want to see miracles in our churches. We are to work for Him at every moment, at school, at work, while shopping, or whatever we find ourselves doing during the day.

"To everyone who becomes a partaker of His grace the Lord appoints a work for others. Individually we are to stand in our lot and place, saying, 'Here am I; send me.' Isaiah 6:8. Upon the minister of the word, the missionary nurse, the Christian physician, the individual Christian, whether he be merchant or farmer, professional man or mechanic—the responsibility rests upon all. It is our work to reveal to men the gospel of their salvation. Every enterprise in which we engage should be a means to this end." *—The Ministry of Healing*, p. 148

"At such a time as this, every hand is to be employed. The

Lord is coming; the end is near, yea, it hasteth greatly!" – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 101. "Every day there is something to do for our Lord and Master. Every day we are to point souls to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." – *Ibid.*, p. 48. How do *you* interpret "every day"? It can be on social media also if you are home all day.

We pray for miracles in the lives of our leaders and workers so that they can be good shepherds of the flock, but are we willing to lift up their hands when they are tired?

In the Old Testament we read: "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." Exodus 17:8–12

Here we witnessed a crisis. Israel was seemingly dependent on Moses' raised hands for their victory, however Moses was tired. Aaron and Hur were near at hand. They could have become angry with Moses and blamed him for Israel drawing back at that moment. Yet they said not a word. They simply came over to where Moses was standing, had him sit down and they held up his hands. Without being asked, they saw a need and stepped in to fulfil the need. They saw the leader needing help and they helped. Not one word of criticism was spoken.

Some unconverted people in the church study the leaders carefully and criticize every move they make that does not live up to their own private standard as to how a leader should act. "There are many who find special enjoyment in discoursing and dwelling upon the defects, whether real or imaginary of those who bear heavy responsibilities in connection with the institutions of God's cause. They overlook the good that has been accomplished, the benefits that have resulted from arduous labour and unflinching devotion to

the cause, and fasten their attention upon some apparent mistake, some matter that, after it has been done and the consequences have followed, they fancy could have been done in a better manner with fairer results; when the truth is, had they been left to do the work, they



would either have refused to move at all under the attending discouragements of the case, or would have managed more indiscreetly than those who did do the work, following the opening of God's providence." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 196

Maybe the worker is tired and needs help and encouragement. "Happy the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously." – *Ibid.*, p. 531

We pray for a miracle for our health, but are we willing to change our diets? My husband had an aunt who had three artificial joints. The doctors told her to give up eating red meat. She could not. She simply said "I love my bacon." And so she continued to suffer ill health, being bedridden in the final years of her life.

Although a large part of ill health has to do with diet, do good people suffer ill health? Yes, they sometimes do. "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died." 2 Kings 13:14. Would Elisha and his friends have prayed for his healing? Possibly; likely. Nothing is written. We do know he was a very faithful prophet. We do not understand why Elisha suffered. However, he may have prayed for a pure heart and God's answer may possibly have been this illness. This illness is what Elisha needed for his salvation and for his purity.

Job also suffered ill health as did Ellen G. White. As a youth she suffered a terrible accident and suffered for many years following, before the Lord called her into the office of prophetess. The Apostle Paul also had a thorn in his flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7).

However, these people more than likely lived up to the health message the best they knew, otherwise their suffering could have been worse.

If we pray for a miracle of health, we must first be willing to comply with the health counsels in the Bible and detailed in greater depth in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. God may or may not heal us. We have to accept His answer. He will help and comfort us in any suffering if He chooses not to heal us because it is for our benefit and salvation. That is the miracle of healing, whether healing of the body or the healing of the mind—having perfect peace and trust in the midst of illness. Just resting in the arms of Jesus.

However, diet is an idol of many and poor diet has led to many diseases that could have been avoided. Ask anyone who has come from a meat-eating background if it was difficult to become a vegetarian. For many it is quite a challenge and they are tempted for many years following. Some give up and say it is not possible. Now, consider how difficult it is for some to adopt a vegan diet. Truthfully, for God's rem-

nant people today vegetarianism is not enough for salvation. In heaven there will be a vegan diet, a diet free from eggs, dairy, chemicals, preservatives and refined products (white flour products such as rice, pasta, bread, sugar, etc.) and that is the goal we are aiming for. If we are unwilling to make the change and comply with the heavenly diet today, we will not be ready when the Lord comes. Our character and taste must be changed today.

In 1902 (117 years ago) we read from the Spirit of Prophecy, "Let the diet reform be progressive. Let the people be taught how to prepare food without the use of milk or butter. Tell them that the time will soon come when there will be no safety in using eggs, milk, cream, or butter, because disease in animals is increasing in proportion to the increase of wickedness among men." —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 349. How soon is soon? I believe soon happened many years ago.

"Many have expected that God would keep them from sickness merely because they have asked Him to do so. But God did not regard their prayers, because their faith was not made perfect by works. God will not work a miracle to keep those from sickness who have no care for themselves, but are continually violating the laws of health, and make no efforts to prevent disease. When we do all we can on our part to have health, then may we expect that the blessed results will follow, and we can ask God in faith to bless our efforts for the preservation of health. He will then answer our prayer, if His name can be glorified thereby. But let all understand that they have a work to do. God will not work in a miraculous manner to preserve the health of persons who are taking a sure course to make themselves sick, by their careless inattention to the laws of health." —*Ibid.*, p. 26

Is it easy to change our diet? Often, no. The human frame craves all those addicting foods that the devil has provided and the flesh cries out when denied. Only a miracle from God, and a willingness on our part—a willingness to strive and agonize, will we thus be able to overcome.

We pray for a miracle of victory over sin, but are we willing to strive? Some people would rather blame others, or God, for their mistakes, as did Eve. I once knew a man who could not give up smoking. He said that he prayed to God to remove the sin, but God did not, so it is not his fault any longer. Now it is God's fault that he smokes. Is this really an excuse? Is it God's fault?

"We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labor, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. . . .

"In one way we are thrown upon our own energies; we are to strive earnestly to be zealous and to repent, to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts from every defilement; we are to reach the highest standard, believing that God will help us in our efforts. We must seek if we would find, and seek in faith; we must knock, that the door may be opened unto us.

The Bible teaches that everything regarding our salvation depends upon our own course of action. If we perish, the responsibility will rest wholly upon ourselves. If provision has been made, and if we accept God's terms, we may lay hold on eternal life. We must come to Christ in faith, we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure. . . .

"The faith we are required to have is not a do-nothing faith; saving faith is that which works by love and purifies the soul." —*Faith and Works*, p. 48–49

The greatest miracle is the sinner changed into a saint. God is willing to perform this miracle in your life; in the life of every sinner who truly repents.

We pray for the miracle of salvation in our personal lives, but are we willing to give up every darling idol? Sure, we know that material goods can be idols, such as houses, cars and lands, but think further. Ask yourself if there is something coming between you and God?

"He 'that forsaketh not all that he hath,' says Jesus, 'cannot be My disciple.' Whatever shall divert the affections from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. Its golden chain binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of others." — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 83

We could be like Martha, wanting to have a clean house and be so obsessed with house-keeping that the Word of God lays quietly on the table. This is idolatry. It is good to be cleanly, but anything that causes us to neglect our time with God, is an idol. It is in the hour of worship that the Lord speaks to us. . . and the miracle of a transformed life takes place. You may not experience that miracle if you do not take the time.

When we pray for miracles, we need to be prepared for what the Lord will answer. It is an answer that may hurt, but then will heal. We may bear scars, but be stronger in the end.

When we pray for miracles, are we willing to comply with what the Lord is asking of us?

We can and should pray for miracles. We need the help of the Unseen; help that no human support can give us on this earth. Then we can praise God as we see the impossible made possible. When we are nothing, in Christ we can be everything.

Wendy Eaton (with some assistance and ideas from Sharon Eaton)





Swallowed Up in Victory - Part 2



What shall be swallowed in victory? When, and what victory? The sad experience of death and its consequences are all over in the world. Scientists, researchers and many other people have been trying to prevent death and sickness, but in vain. Men, animals, and trees, die. Just this past year, 2019, the Congo Union lost more than eight members and 12 interested souls. In East Congo, 4 members and 11 interested souls perished in one day. In South East Congo two dear sisters lost their lives in one day in an accident after the death Brother Kiambe Mbayo Charles. These experiences inspired me to think about this topic. This article is based on the many questions people have regarding death such as, why is death our enemy? Shall it ever be removed? How can we be sure this is true?

The question about whether there is really life after death has been pondered by multitudes around the world for centuries. The desire to know the answer has led many far and wide to search for the truth about death. This desire burns especially in the hearts of those who are grieving over the loss of loved ones. Crying and weeping they ask "No, No. . . shall we see him/her again?" Where can they go to find the answers that will bring them comfort during such difficult times?

Jesus said "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28–29. Here we read that the wicked are reserved somewhere until the day of judgement.

"We believe that, at the return of Jesus Christ, the righteous dead will be resurrected in an immortal state and, together with the living saints, will be translated by the Lord Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:51–53; Revelation 20:6. The wicked will be resurrected a thousand years later to receive their final

judgment. Revelation 20:5, first part." –*Principles of Faith*, N.36. Do you also believe this? This question was asked by Jesus in the first century (John 11:25–26).

In the first article it was clearly shown what the Bible teaches about death. We saw that since death was the result sin, when there will be no more sin in the universe, death will be removed forever. Death is our enemy. Jesus will soon defeat the last enemy, which is death. Death entered this world because Satan deceived Adam and Eve to sin, and Christ's ultimate victory will occur when He defeats this last remaining enemy. Then "death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:54

The Bible states that the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23). In death man knows nothing. Jesus compared death to a sleep (John 11:11–14). All mankind, whether good or evil, are in an unconscious state at death. Ecclesiastes 9:5–6; Job 14:12. Only God, who alone has immortality, will give eternal life to the redeemed at the resurrection. 1 Timothy 6:15–16; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17; 1 Corinthians 15:51–55

RESURRECTION: WONDERFUL HOPE

Many people do not believe in the resurrection of the dead. In many traditions and some religions, they do not expect that one will come to life again after they have died. "The Sadducees. . . did not believe in a resurrection of the dead. Producing so-called science, they had reasoned that it would be an impossibility for a dead body to be brought to life. But by a few words from Christ their theory had been overthrown. They were shown to be ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. They could see no possibility of removing the impression made on the people by the miracle." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 538

How would you answer the question that Jesus asked Lazarus's sister, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he

live; And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" John 11: 25–26. The prophet Isaiah believed this and was inspired to write: "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19

"For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" 1 Corinthians 15:16–22

In other words, without the resurrection the dead in Christ will perish forever. If we hope for a reward only in this life, then we are of all men most miserable and pitiable. We may as well eat, drink, and enjoy life because all we have to live for is that one day we will die. This is exactly what the Humanists believe today. "If the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die." 1 Corinthians 15:32

But Paul goes on to tell us in 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." The fact that we will be raised one day is what gives us the assurance that our labour for the Lord is not in vain. If there is no resurrection, then why steadfastly abound in the Lord's work? Why self-denial, why sacrifice our own time, money, etc.? Since there is a resurrection, then even death cannot prevent our reward being granted us. In fact, if there is no reward after death, then there is no real justice!

The wonderful message of the Bible is that both good and evil people are sleeping in their graves after they have died. They are waiting until the resurrection day. At that time all are brought forth to receive either a reward or punishment according to their deeds. Now, consider how confusing it would be if the reward and punishment were being meted out to the dead today. What purpose would the resurrection serve? Each soul would already have a determined fate, and the idea of some final judgment would be totally meaningless. But in plain and simple language the Bible clearly reveals that all the dead are resting in their graves until the

judgment occurs and their reward figured out, which will be given to them at the resurrection. There will be two different kinds of rewards—eternal life or eternal death—so there will be two different resurrections.

"...there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:15

Many good people suffer in this life just as much or more than evil people. Sometimes wicked people have prospered far above the upright ones. Many criminals and sinners have neither been caught nor punished. Therefore, justice demands a resurrection so that the righteous will finally be rewarded, and the wicked will be ultimately punished. Thus the resurrection serves as a day of reward! Jesus assures us all: "Thou shalt be recompensed [rewarded] at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:14. "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. This is what we read in Hebrews 11:39. This means that none of the righteous dead have yet been rewarded with eternal life. They are still waiting in their graves for the judgment and the end of the world. In one of the final verses in the Bible we find confirmation of this truth.: "And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his works shall be." Revelation 22:12



THE 1000 YEARS AND THE DEAD: TWO GENERAL RESURRECTIONS AND THE SECOND DEATH

The apostle Paul wrote the following: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:14–18

The Bible plainly declares that after Christ comes again and the first resurrection has taken place, there will be a period of 1000 years when the earth is broken and empty. None of the wicked will be resurrected back to life until after these 1000 years are over!

During this period of time, the Devil (Satan) is bound on this desolate earth, and he cannot escape! (See Revelation 20:2-3). This mighty tempter who has been deceiving the earth's inhabitants throughout some 6000 years of history is now left completely alone with absolutely no one to tempt! He will have plenty of time to think, and to view all the destruction which he was responsible for.

As priests and kings, at this time the righteous will be in heaven reviewing all the cases of the wicked dead—including the wicked angels and Lucifer. In unison with Christ, they will pass judgment upon all the wicked. The wicked will then receive their just reward after the second resurrection (see Revelation 20:6, 4; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3).

We believe that the thousand years span the time between the first and second resurrections. We believe the Lord will make new heavens and a new earth after the thousand years. This new earth will be the home of the redeemed. The New Jerusalem will be the capital city of this eternal kingdom. The King of kings will have His throne there (Isaiah 45:18; 65:17; Revelation 21:1-3). Through the wisely laid plan of redemption, which is based on God's eternal love, all the redeemed, freed from the threat of sickness, suffering, and death, will rejoice in the eternal presence of God (Isaiah 65:25; 2 Peter 3:13).

The second coming of Jesus marks the beginning of the 1000 years that are spoken about in Revelation 20. "Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: 'Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!' Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' 1 Corinthians 15:55. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a

long, glad shout of victory." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 644

"After the judgment of the wicked dead had been finished, at the end of the one thousand years, Jesus left the city, and the saints and a train of the angelic host followed Him. Jesus descended upon a great mountain, which, as soon as His feet touched it, parted asunder and became a mighty plain. . . . The angels surrounded their Commander and escorted Him on His way, and the train of redeemed saints followed. Then, in terrible, fearful majesty, Jesus called forth the dead; and they came up with the same feeble, sickly bodies that went into the grave. What a spectacle! What a scene! At the first resurrection all came forth in immortal bloom, but at the second the marks of the curse are visible on all. The kings and noblemen of the earth, the mean and low, the learned and unlearned, come forth together. All behold the Son of man; and those very men who despised and mocked Him, who put the crown of thorns upon His sacred brow and smote Him with the reed, behold Him in all His kingly majesty. Those who spat upon Him in the hour of His trial now turn from His piercing gaze and from the glory of His countenance. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet now look upon the marks of His crucifixion. Those who thrust the spear into His side behold the marks of their cruelty on His body. . . . All are seeking to hide in the rocks, to shield themselves from the terrible glory of Him whom they once despised. And, overwhelmed and pained with His one accord raise their voices, and with terrible distinctness exclaim, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!'" —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 416, 418-419

ALL THINGS MADE NEW: NO MORE DEATH, NO MORE MARRIAGE, NO MORE CHILDBIRTH

The apostle saw the New Earth and he states: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no



more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, . . . and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Revelation 21:1-5

The Sadducees tested Jesus and they ended by asking: "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke 20:34-36 (see also Matthew 22:23-30). "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven." Matthew 22:30. What does this mean? it simply means in the Kingdom of God, in the new Earth no more marriages or childbearing. . . . No more babies and infancy will not exist. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days." Isaiah 65:20

Some people honestly believe that there will be marriages in Paradise, the new Eden, the inheritance of the redeemed. But the Lord is very clear in the verses above. And the inspired pen wrote: "There are men today who express their belief that there will be marriages and births in the new earth; but those who believe the Scriptures cannot accept such doctrines. The doctrine that children will be born in the new earth is not a part of the 'sure word of prophecy' (2 Peter 1:19). The words of Christ are too plain to be misunderstood. They should forever settle the question of marriages and births in the new earth. Neither those who shall be raised from the dead, nor those who shall be translated without seeing death, will marry or be given in marriage. They will be as the angels of God, members of the royal family." – *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 172-173

We will physically grow up into the glorious image of Jesus. We shall eat from the Tree of Life (Revelation 22:2) The redeemed will *grow* up as

calves of the stall. (Malachi 4:2). Worshiping God and Jesus will be our greatest pleasure forever and all mankind will enjoy face-to-face communion with God and Jesus.

The Spirit of Prophecy states: "Then Jesus looked upon His redeemed saints; their countenances were radiant with glory; and as He fixed His loving eyes upon them, He said, with His rich, musical voice, 'I behold the travail of My soul, and am satisfied. This rich glory is yours to enjoy eternally. Your sorrows are ended. There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' I saw the redeemed host bow and cast their glittering crowns at the feet of Jesus, and then, as His lovely hand raised them up, they touched their golden harps and filled all heaven with their rich music and songs to the Lamb.

"I then saw Jesus leading His people to the tree of life, and again we heard His lovely voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, saying, 'The leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations. Eat ye all of it.' Upon the tree of life was most beautiful fruit, of which the saints could partake freely. In the city was a most glorious throne, from which proceeded a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. On each side of this river was the tree of life, and on the banks of the river were other beautiful trees bearing fruit which was good for food.

"Language is altogether too feeble to attempt a description of heaven. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendor and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, 'Oh, what love! what wondrous love!' The most exalted language fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Saviour's love." – *Early Writings*, p. 288-289

Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo





OUR ANTITYPICAL DAY OF ATONEMENT

“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Daniel 8:14

In our last study, we came to understand that Christ’s intercessory work in the heavenly sanctuary is just as essential as His death was upon the cross. We mostly focused on His intercessory work in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. However, we did not study to any great length the second phase of His work in the second apartment. The burden of this article is the last acts of His ministration as He entered the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary—a most decisive work.

Truly in the word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy we have been given much light on this subject. Says Stephen Haskell, a Pioneer writer of the Advent message: “In the light shining from the sanctuary, the books of Moses with its detail of offerings and sacrifices, their rites and ceremonies, usually considered so meaningless and void of interest becomes radiant with consistency and beauty. There is no other subject which so fully unites all parts of the inspired Word into one harmonious whole, as the subject of the sanctuary. . . . Every type used in the entire sacrificial system was designed by God to bear resemblance of some spiritual truth. . . . chosen by God Himself to shadow forth the different phases of the complete plan of redemption made possible by the death of Christ. The likeness between type and antitype is never accidental but is simply a fulfillment of the great plan of God.” —*The Cross and Its Shadow*, VI

First, let us define the word “antitype. According to dictionary.com: “ANTITYPE is a person or thing represented or foreshadowed by a type or symbol; especially a figure in the Old Testament having a counterpart in the New Testament.” For example, Christ is the antitype of Aaron the High Priest. This paradigm shift as per God’s design brings us to our day of antitypical atonement.

Before we continue, another burden that lends itself to this study is to put back this present truth on the table, having been once delivered to the saints, taking it from the bin of obscurity, where mostly a people wholly disregard their needful preparation. Declares E.G. White, the inspired writer of our time: “In the typical service, while the High Priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin, and true repentance.” She warns: “The light,

frivolous spirit indulged by so many of professed Christians must be put away. . . . The work of preparation is an individual work.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 489

Again, says the Spirit of Prophecy: “We are living in the great antitypical day of atonement. Jesus is now in the heavenly sanctuary, making reconciliation for the sins of His people, and the judgment of the righteous dead has been going on almost forty years. How soon the cases of the living will come in review before this tribunal we know not; but we do know that we are living in the closing scenes of earth’s history, standing, as it were, on the very borders of the eternal world. It is important that each of us inquire, How stands my case in the courts of Heaven? Will my sins be blotted out? Am I defective in character, and so blinded to these defects by the customs and opinions of the world, that sin does not appear to me to be as exceedingly offensive to God as it really is? It is no time now to allow our minds to be absorbed with the things of earth, while we give only occasional thoughts to God, and make but slight preparation for the country to which we are journeying.” —*The Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1884

To be sure, this is not speaking of the wicked; this is directed to members of the Church. And since the Church is to be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, we are as strong as our weakest link. The leading men, therefore, have a responsibility before God to call sin by its right name, as says the Pen of Inspiration, E.G. White: “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.” —*Education*, p. 57

The question is, why do we have such a light frivolous

spirit towards what will determine where we spend eternity? The answer according to Spirit of Prophecy: "Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful Mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.

She continued: "Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the Word of truth. The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 487–488. "It is those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of the atonement who receive the benefits of His mediation in their behalf, while those who reject the light which brings to view this work of mediation are not benefited thereby." —*Ibid.*, p. 430; "The sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 520

Dear fellow believer, it is now one hundred and seventy-five years since the judgment, which, according to prophecy, began in 1844. Our Pioneers, as it were, framers of the sanctuary truths saw this for what it was, a significant emergence of light, of which they thought would have been fulfilled in their day. The line of scripture that was their watchword and their song was: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7. They took it literally and made spiritual preparation. The question is, we who are nearer to its fulfillment, are we taking it as seriously? Today we are at the tail-end of every prophecy; are we prepared to stand at the judgment bar of God? It is when we deeply study and understand how critical the issue is, when we own it, then we can and will do something about it.

The excerpts drawn from the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible are meant to exert a deeper interest into the reality of what is taking place in this our antitypical day of atonement. It is meant to agitate us to examine it more in-depth and with humility and penitence "make our calling and election sure."

The Hour of God's Judgment is Come

In the typical dispensation, ten days prior to the day of atonement, the trumpet blowers blew their trumpets

loudly—a reminder that the Day of Atonement was drawing nigh. It is interesting to note that in our antitypical time of atonement such a sounding had been carried out, as for every type there must be an antitype. Says Stephen Haskell: "In the antitype we should expect some world-wide message to be given in trumpet tones, announcing the time near when the great antitypical day of atonement, the investigative judgment, would convene in heaven. Beginning with the years 1833–1834 and extending down to 1844 (10 years) such a message was given to the world in trumpet tones, announcing 'The hour of His judgment is come.' Revelation 14:6–7. Many other consecrated men heralded it in other portions of the world. . . . During that period. . . every civilized nation on the earth heard in trumpet tones the announcement of the message of Revelation 14:6–7, 'The hour of His judgment is come.'" —*The Cross and the Shadow*, p. 204

The Daily Service

Looking back at the typical service carried out by Ancient Israel leading up to the Day of Atonement, we find a daily work that formed an integral part of the whole design of God to cleanse a people from sin. It set the stage for the High Priest's ultimate ministration in the Most Holy Place. Note: Day by day as the priests sprinkle the blood of the animal sacrifice on the outer veil that separates the holy from the most holy place on behalf of the penitent sinner, it remained there until the great Day of Atonement. Similarly, "As Christ at His ascension appeared in the presence of God to plead His blood in behalf of penitent believers, so the priest in the daily ministration sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice in the holy place in the sinner's behalf. The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357

The Day of Atonement

On the tenth day of the seventh month was the Day of Atonement. The final cleansing was the main order of the day. "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Hebrews 9:7 We turn to the book of Leviticus for more details: "And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering. . . . And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD

and the other lot for the scapegoat. . . . Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Leviticus 16:5, 7-8, 15-19

Our Antitypical High Priest

Christ is our antitypical High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Says Paul: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:1-2

Our Antitypical Day of Atonement fulfilled

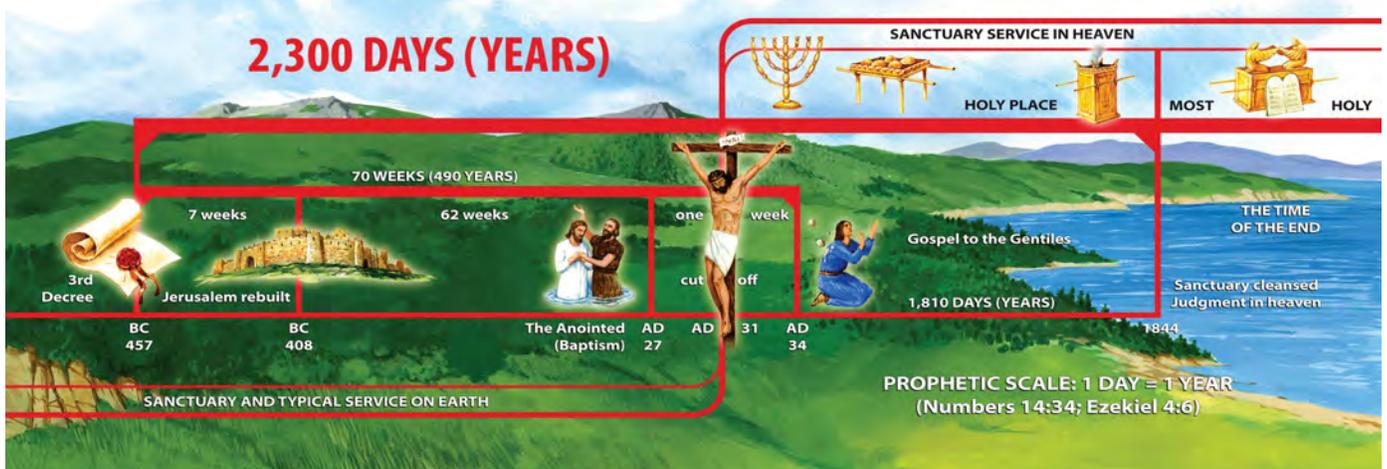
"As in the typical service there was a work of atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work for the redemption of man is completed, there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which began when the 2300 days ended. At that time, as foretold by Daniel the prophet, our High Priest entered the most holy, to perform the last division of His solemn work,—to cleanse the sanctuary." —The

Great Controversy, p. 421. Thus Daniel 8:14, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," found its fulfillment. It opens to view its full interpretation as further explained in Daniel 9:24-27 (see prophetic chart). This, undeniably, with all its waymarks, brought it to 1844, using the day for a year prophetic time formula namely: "After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know My breach of promise." Numbers 14:34

Moveable Thrones

Daniel the prophet was used of God to open to view the scene of Christ moving from the Holy place to the Most Holy Place. Namely: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him." Daniel 7:13. Earlier in the said vision, Daniel beheld God seated. Said he: "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." Daniel 7:9-10. This was undoubtedly the Most Holy Place; this is where the ark of His testament is, where set inside is the Law of the Ten Commandments.

Christ, having been designated to the work of judgment took His seat on the throne set for Him, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John 5:22. "Thus was presented to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to everyone should be rendered



'according to his works.'" —*The Great Controversy*, p. 479

Meaning of the Investigative Judgment

To understand the meaning of the investigative judgment we must go to the type, affirms the Spirit of Prophecy: "As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant, the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ, and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment." —*Ibid.*, p. 421

"In the great day of final award, the dead are to be 'judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' Revelation 20:12. Then by virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed, from the record of sin. In the type, this great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represented by the services on the Day of Atonement—the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, which was accomplished by the removal, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, of the sins by which it was polluted." —*Ibid.*, p. 357

Note: "In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work and takes place at a later period. 'Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begins at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel?' 1 Peter 4:17." —*Ibid.*, p. 480

The Books of Record

There are three distinct records and "As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate

presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: 'Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.' Exodus 32:33. And says the prophet Ezekiel: 'When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.' Ezekiel 18:24." —*Ibid.*, p. 483

Irrevocable

"Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel. . . . The hidden selfishness of men stands revealed in the books of heaven. There is the record of unfulfilled duties to their fellow men, of forgetfulness of the Saviour's claims. There they will see how often were given to Satan the time, thought, and strength that belonged to Christ. Sad is the record which angels bear to heaven." —*Ibid.*, p. 482, 487

"How solemn is the thought! Day after day, passing into eternity, bears its burden of records for the books of heaven. Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. Angels have registered both the good and the evil. The mightiest conqueror upon the earth cannot call back the record of even a single day. Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or condemn.

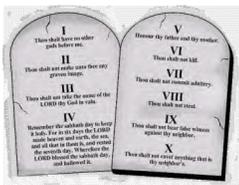
"As the features of the countenance are reproduced with unerring accuracy on the polished plate of the artist, so the character is faithfully delineated in the books above. Yet how little solicitude is felt concerning that record which is to meet the gaze of heavenly beings. Could the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world be swept back, and the children of men behold an angel recording every word and deed, which they must meet again in the judgment, how many words that are daily uttered would remain unspoken, how many deeds

would remain undone.

"In the judgment, the use made of every talent will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of Heaven? Will the Lord at His coming receive His own with usury? Have we improved the powers entrusted us, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world? How have we used our time, our pen, our voice, our money, our influence? What have we done for Christ, in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, or the widow? God has made us the depositaries of His holy word; what have we done with the light and truth given us to make men wise unto salvation?" —*The Great Controversy*, p. 486–487

The Standard of the Judgment

The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment." Ecclesiastes 12:13–14. The apostle James admonishes his brethren: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12



The Accuser of our Brethren

"All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of Heaven: as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out."—*Ibid.*, p. 483

At the same time, according to the Pen of Inspiration, "While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors. . . . Now he [Satan] points to the record of their lives, to the defects of character, the unlikeness to Christ. . . to all the sins that he has tempted them to commit, and because of these he claims them as his subjects." But, says the Spirit of Prophecy, "Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands." She affirms: "Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father 'a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' Ephesians 5:27." —*Ibid.*, p. 484

The Duty of the Congregation

In the ancient typical service the LORD directed Moses saying: "On the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a Day of Atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls. . . . For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." Leviticus 23:27, 29. Says Haskell: "God is testing the great antitypical congregation. Who will keep a clear mind by controlling the appetite, and a pure heart by prayer and deep heart-searching? Who will lay all their interests upon God's altar, to be used for His glory. . . or a study of His word?" —*The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 228

"While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of the penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 425

While the work is going forward, we are to walk in holiness; we are not to live as though Christ is the only one responsible for our soul's salvation. "Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to presume upon His mercy, and become careless, indifferent, and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith." —*The Signs of the Times*, July 4, 1892

The Scapegoat

In the typical service "the high priest, having taken an offering for the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, above the tables of the law. Thus, the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied. Then in his character of mediator the priest took the sins upon himself, and, leaving the sanctuary, he bore with him the burden of Israel's guilt. At the door of the tabernacle he laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat and confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgression in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' And as the goat bearing these sins was sent away, they were, with him, regarded as forever separated from the people." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355

"As in the final atonement the sins of the truly penitent are to be blotted from the records of heaven, no more to

be remembered or come into mind, so in the type they were borne away into the wilderness, forever separated from the congregation. Since Satan is the originator of sin. . . justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final punishment. Christ's work for the redemption of men and the purification of the universe from sin will be closed by the removal of sin from the heavenly sanctuary and the placing of these sins upon Satan, who will bear the final penalty." *-Ibid.*, p. 358

The Investigative Judgment Closes

"In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So, Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, 'without sin unto salvation' (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life." *-The Great Controversy*, p. 485

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of our Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' Revelation 22:11-12." *-Ibid.*, p. 490

Note, when the work closes, "Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil." *-Ibid.*, p. 425

It is then that the church will fulfill the words in the book Song of Solomon: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun?" Song of Solomon 6:10

God's Mercy

To fear the judgment is to misunderstand the true purpose of Christ's mediatorial work; it is to forget the mercies of God. Says Micah "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." Micah 7:18. Furthermore, says the word of God: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus

Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. In this time of atonement as we continuously confess and forsake our sins; we must trust our High Priest and seek to live an obedient life through the power of the Holy Spirit.

His words assure us: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1

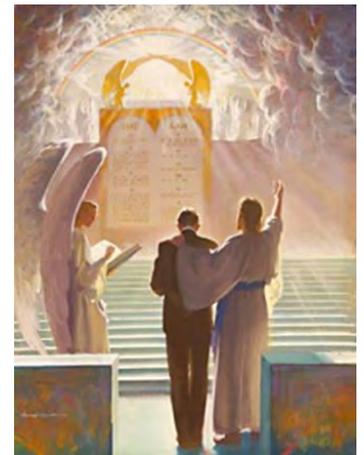
Faith in Christ's Righteousness

"Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: 'This is My child, I reprove him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place, and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.' Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God." *-Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 301

Yes, this is the key; this is the only means through which we can have our names retained in the book of life—having on the garment of Christ, so when God looks at us He sees not our depraved character but Christ's character fully formed in us. Affirms the inspired writer, E.G. White: "Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father 'a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.'" *-The Great Controversy*, p. 484.

"The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters." *-Letter 406*, 1906

Amen.
Rose Powell





The 1916 Model T Ford chugged merrily along the gravelled country road, its brass radiator shining in the morning sun. It was headed toward the town of Glendive on the Yellowstone River in eastern Montana.

Marie and Claudette, the fifteen- and sixteen-year-old occupants of the Ford, were feeling lighthearted, for this day held promises of being exceptionally pleasant. Their older sister, Leona, a telegraph operator, would be coming into town that morning and leaving on the late afternoon train. This would give the three sisters several hours to be together—a privilege they felt came altogether too seldom.

As they were crossing the bridge that spanned the Yellowstone just before entering Glendive, loose planks rattled noisily beneath the wheels of the Ford. Marie shouted above the racket, “It surely will be a relief when the repair work is completed on this bridge!”

Soon Claudette, the older of the two, had parked the car on the main street, and the girls eagerly started looking for Leona. There she stood waiting and watching for them in front of the department store.

After excited greetings were exchanged, the girls were off to spend a happy day together.

All too soon it was time to take Leona back to the train station. As she boarded the train, she paused for one more farewell wave to Claudette and Marie. Standing on the station platform, the two girls shed a few tears as they watched the train disappear down the tracks.

“We can’t just stand here. It is time for us to go home,” Maria said, breaking the silence. In their little Ford they

headed toward the bridge and home where their mother would be waiting to hear a full report of the day’s visit with Leona from them.

As they were nearing the bridge, a row of red lanterns hanging from a low frame blocked their way.

“What’s happening?” both girls exclaimed at the same time. Ahead on the bridge they could see workmen busy with crowbars, hammers, and other tools as old worn planks were being removed and new ones laid in their place. No traffic whatsoever was able to cross.

A groan escaped Claudette’s lips as she pointed to a large sign which read simply, “Bridge closed for repairs between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.”

“Now why didn’t we read that sign when we came into town this morning?” She scolded. “We’re in a real predicament.”

Marie’s eyes were big and round, and her voice was full of concern as she asked, “Whatever are we to do? We’ve got to get home. Mother will be worried sick about us, and there’s no way of getting word to her.”

Claudette did not answer right away. She was thinking and praying. Finally she said, “We have no choice but to walk. We’ll park the car back in town and start walking.”

“Oh, no!” Marie exclaimed with a shudder. “Four long miles—and it will soon be dark.”

“We have no other choice,” Claudette reminded her. “It may get dark, but we just have to pray and trust that the angels will walk by our side.”

After leaving their car, they took a shortcut through the railroad yard. Darkness was closing in on them, and they must not lose a moment. They ran over many tracks and finally came to the main line. Only two more rails to cross. But a big round headlight glaring at them from up the track and the cry of the whistle warned them that a train was traveling on that main line.

“It might be a long freight train,” Claudette panted. “We’ve got to be quick and get across the tracks ahead of it.”

With the one thought in mind of reaching home as quickly as possible, they both darted forward in spite of the warning whistle and the clanging of the bell.

Marie made it safely across, but poor Claudette—tired and anxious as she was—stumbled and fell headlong between the two rails. There was no time for Marie to give her a helping hand for now the fast-moving train

appeared only a few yards from her sister's prostate form.

"Oh God, help us!" Marie pleaded in utter helplessness.

The mighty engine roared by with its long string of box cars trailing noisily behind—but Claudette had managed to scramble to her feet and land beside Marie, unharmed! Severely shaken by the near tragedy neither girl spoke a word. They could only clasp each other's hand, and turning toward the bridge, they pressed on in silence. They knew that it was the protection of their guardian angels that enabled them to cross unharmed.

Arriving at the bridge, they threaded their way over the torn-up planking and through the groups of working men to the far end. Once they had crossed the lighted bridge, the roadway ahead of them loomed dark and forbidding. They were in the country now with no street lights or even a lighted window to make their going easier.

"Claudette," Marie ventured to whisper, "it's terribly dark, isn't it? And such a long way for us to walk alone."

"No, not alone," Claudette offered. "After what just happened in the railroad yard, I feel God is surely watching over us. Maybe after this experience we'll remember to pay attention to signs and warnings."

The freshly graveled road made walking a difficult. It crunched loudly under their feet. As they walked they suddenly heard the sound of footsteps, behind them. Turning quickly, they saw a shadowy form moving steadily toward them. They tried to scream, in hope of being heard by the workmen on the bridge, but their throats were paralyzed with fear.

As the shadowy form drew nearer, it proved to be only a large, friendly dog. In a gentle manner he walked directly up to the girls and quietly stood beside them.

Claudette started to wonder out loud, "Whose dog can he be? There are no farmhouses near here."

"He could belong to one of the men working on the bridge," Marie suggested in a quavering voice.

"Then we should try to send him back." With that Claudette pointed back toward the bridge and commanded, "Go back, boy, go back."

But the dog did not go back. He waited patiently until the girls decided they should not spend precious time arguing with a dog. They were actually thankful that the dog stayed as it didn't seem nearly so dark and

lonely with him trotting along by their side.

Onward they trudged. From sheer weariness their stride had slowed down; but as they neared the last hill between themselves and home, their energies seemed to revive, and they were again walking with lively steps. Over the hill, they could see below them the lighted windows of home. With a surge of joy they were ready to break into a run when they noticed Mother standing in the lighted doorway. They knew she was anxiously listening for the sound of a car motor or the sight of car lights steadily descending the winding road.

Through cupped hands the girls called out, "We're coming. We're all right." The girls were so happy that they began singing cheerily. "There's a light in the window, there's a light in the window, there's a light in the window for me."

Soon they were in the house giving a detailed report of the happy hours spent with Leona, the closed bridge, the sign they had failed to read, and the shortcut through the railroad yards with its horrifying experience. At this point Claudette said earnestly, "I was sure it was the end for me! There wasn't possibly time enough to scramble to my feet and get off the track. I felt an overpowering impulse to make a quick roll, and the next thing I knew I was over the rail just as the flashing wheels of the engine went by. I've been thinking about it all the way home, Mother, and I can see only one explanation—it had to be my guardian angel that helped me over that rail, for I couldn't have done it by myself."

With tears of deep gratitude Mother responded, "Surely God has given us proof of His loving kindness tonight."

Gently patting the dog's head that had followed them along the way, Marie added solemnly, "And couldn't it be possible that even this wonderful dog was a part of God's kindness too?"

Claudette nodded in agreement as she too gave him a pat.

In every difficult and trying circumstance we may face in life, God has promised the protection and comfort of His angels to be with us. Let us thank the Lord for His daily protection and watchcare over us. He sometimes sends help in mysterious ways, but He knows where you are and sees your needs. Just trust Him. "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Isaiah 65:24



Western Conference Calgary, Canada

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, I greet you with the words from Philippians 2:1-4: “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

In a few words, on behalf of the brethren in Calgary, I want to thank all of you who participated in this Conference and made it a blessing for all of us. I thank the Canadian Field for their prayers and support, and especially to Brother Fletcher and Sister Veronica for coming all the way from the east to the west and being part of such a wonderful and blessed Conference. Praise the Lord!

The theme of our Conference was “Let Your Light Shine” based on the Bible verse found in the Gospel of Matthew 5:16 where the Lord Jesus said: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The message was divided into three sections. The first part, Let Your Light Shine in the Family, was the topic of the Divine Service conducted by Brother Fletcher where he mentioned about life being short and we have to think about it in a way that will inspire and motivate us to have our families prepared for our encounter with Jesus Christ at His 2nd coming. Character is important in order to meet Jesus in peace. The Ten Commandments are to be kept with God’s help and each one of us should uplift Jesus in our family. Parents have responsibilities before their children and children before their parents; all we do is to be done with patience, trusting the Lord in all circumstances of life and revealing the love of God in our homes. Love and harmony in the family will bring glory to God in Heaven.

The second part was presented by myself, and I talked about the importance of letting our light shine in the

Church. The Church was instituted by Jesus Himself and He gave His life for it. The Spirit of Prophecy speaks about it as something very precious and unique in God’s eyes. Unity and harmony must exist among brothers and sisters when we come together for worship and also when we are working for the Lord, advancing the Gospel into all the world. Fellowship in unity and love is possible only through the help of the Holy Spirit. We are read of the 120 people in the upper room where the Holy Spirit descended upon them during the early rain. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit made it possible for the disciples to add to the church 3000 in one day, 5000 on another day, and then as they went from place to place preaching the Gospel with power, they planted churches everywhere they went. I mentioned that this will be possible only when we come together in one accord, esteeming others better than ourselves.

Brother Jessie Abragan spoke about “Let Your Light Shine in the World” in closing the Sabbath. The message was about our relationship with the world; it should be based on the Bible standards. It is very important that our faith in Christ is shown to be the difference between people in the world and God’s people in these last days. Looking unto Jesus changes us because Jesus is the light of the world. That light which Jesus imparts to His followers makes us lights as well when we go and mingle with people in the world. At the place we work, at school and everywhere we are, Jesus Christ should be present in our lives. People will always look at us and what they see is what we live by. That is why it is important to be consecrated to the Lord, to study His word and have a prayerful life.

Brother Fletcher also conducted a child dedication; the child’s name is Gabriel, and is only four years old. Sister Rechelle, his mother, was baptized last year (2018) at the Conference in Calgary. I had the privilege of baptizing her, along with two sisters—Sister Aila Mae and Sister Evelyn Abragan.

The Conference was a blessing for all of us, and we had more than ten visitors that came and spent this blessed time together with us, listening to the messages we had prepared for this event. The following day we enjoyed two Health Seminar presentations, by sister Alina Anca and Brother Jessie Abragan. They shared some principles of how to live a more abundant and healthy life by adhering to a healthy diet.

May God continue to bless the Canadian Field.
Your brother in Christ,

Brother Nicholas Anca

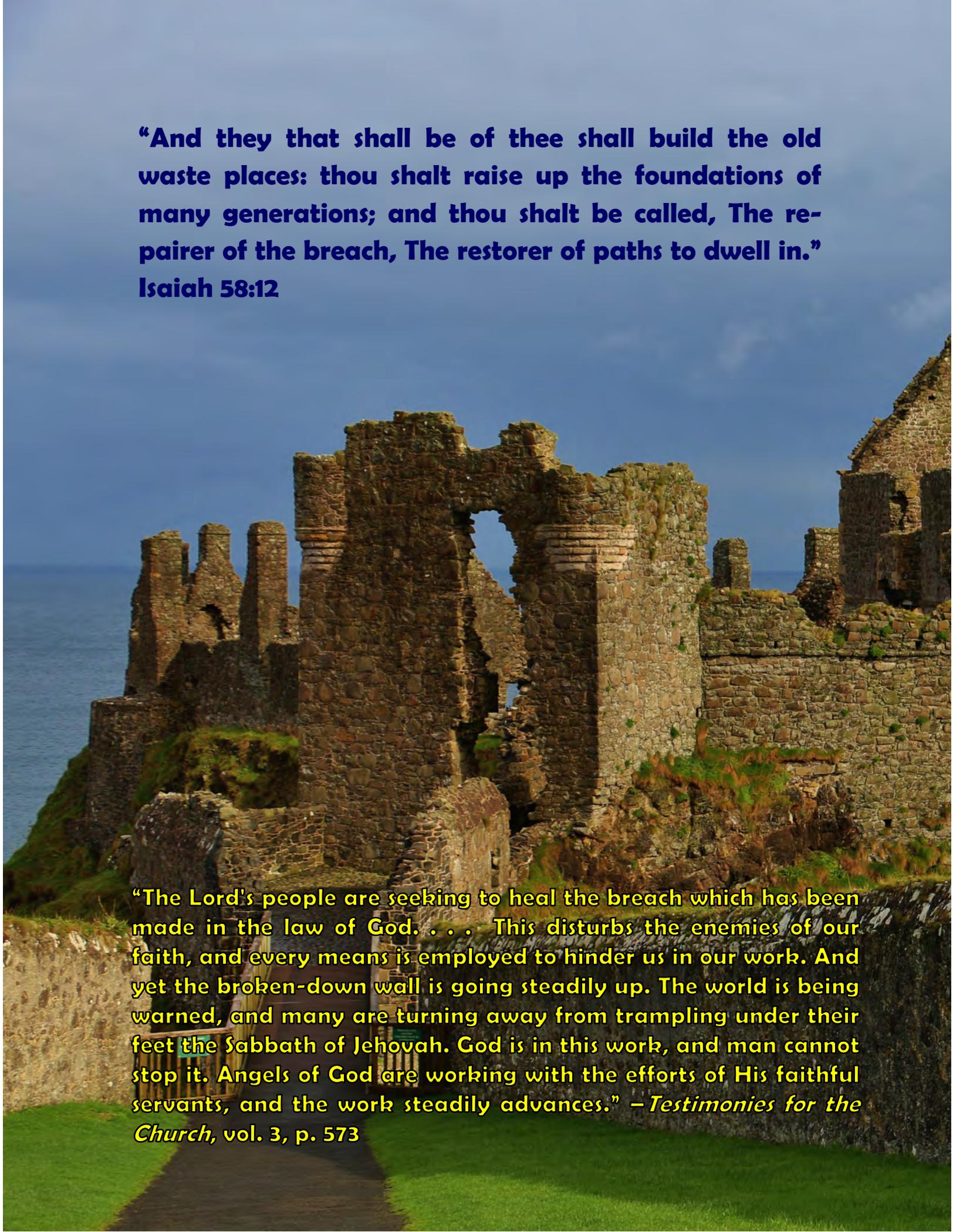
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Western Canadian Conference - Calgary



**“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”
Isaiah 58:12**



“The Lord’s people are seeking to heal the breach which has been made in the law of God. . . . This disturbs the enemies of our faith, and every means is employed to hinder us in our work. And yet the broken-down wall is going steadily up. The world is being warned, and many are turning away from trampling under their feet the Sabbath of Jehovah. God is in this work, and man cannot stop it. Angels of God are working with the efforts of His faithful servants, and the work steadily advances.” – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 573