

the
REFORMATION
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THE
Healing of
A BROKEN HEART

You Need Not Be a Failure \ The Best Medicine! \ The Temple of Jehovah

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"The age in which we live calls for reformatory action."
—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Let the Light Shine— Not *Make* It Shine

By D. Sureshkumar

It is so simple, yet it describes so clearly the kind of effect we are to have on the world around us. Jesus points out that as lights we must not allow our light to be hidden. As you read this scripture you begin to understand that sometimes we should emphasize our need to do good works, which is to make our light shine. You must do good works that your light may shine. That is actually saying, you will do good works if your light is shining—which may be true, but how to get there?

Many try to do good works so that their light may shine and that the Father be glorified. This makes sense—our good works are important, and they will glorify our Father in heaven. But, I want to see this from a different angle and wish to focus on the word LET. This word is defined as to permit; to allow; to give, grant, or assign, as a work, privilege, or contract; or go; to rent or lease; to make cause. So we need to LET our light shine, not MAKE it shine, as most people do (of course, out of good intentions). They TRY to shine because they want to glorify the Father.

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.” “In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 8:12; 1:4).

Now, if Jesus is the light of the world, then, when we follow Him by reflecting His character, WE TOO BECOME LIGHTS. Jesus is the light in us. He is God. God is love. So if we have Jesus in us, then we should let His light shine in us, that is, His love; reflect in our heart and in our life. None should

try to make it shine, but let it shine. If we let the love of God shine through, then the work which we so much want to do will just come spontaneously. Many try to make their light shine by doing good works that please them. It is like getting the cart before the horse. And the danger is that it builds up a spirit of self-righteousness instead of the fruit of the Spirit. Every church member should feel an interest in all that concerns the human brotherhood and the brotherhood in Christ.

“Love for one another is not to be manifested by praise and by flattery of one another, but by true fidelity. The love of Christ will lead us to watch for souls, and if we see one in danger, we will tell him so, plainly and kindly, even at the risk of his displeasure. The religion of Christ is not to be controlled by impulse. We need to pray much and lean wholly upon God. We need to hold the truth with firmness, and in all righteousness and truth; but while we speak the truth with fidelity, we should speak it in love.”¹

“Those who have come together in church capacity can do one hundred-fold more than they are now doing to let their light shine forth in the world. They are to come out from the world and to be separate, and to touch not the unclean, but to set their affections on things that are above. They are to live, not to please themselves, but to follow the example of Him who died for their redemption. They are cheerfully to bear the cross, fulfilling their mission to this world by shining as lights in the world.”² ✍

References

¹ *The Signs of the Times*, February 7, 1895.

² *The Home Missionary*, October 1, 1892.

Thursday, August 14, 2003, a bit after 4:00 pm, there was a sudden power outage in Manhattan and other boroughs of New York City. Simultaneously all of the computers crashed, the lights went out, and the phones stopped working. Most cell phones apparently were not working because of too much demand or no power in the towers. Subways were shut down. Buses were way, way overcrowded and stuck in traffic. The streets were incredibly overcrowded, with pedestrians everywhere and street traffic at a standstill. Everything was orderly, save the occasional intersection where pedestrians flowed through the lights, ignoring the lone auxiliary policeman who tried to stop them. Traffic was not going anywhere. It was all due to a blackout in the northeastern United States and Canada. When the people walked home, it was so dark that they could not see even their own hand in front of their face; when there was no light the streets disappeared. Without light the world is completely black. This is how much we need light—and how much more do we need the light of God as well.

Jesus says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). This is a wonderful way in which Jesus teaches us to have a good influence in the world around us. As an illustration

Baptism and Rebaptism



Part 2

By Davi Paes Silva

*I*n our previous article in this 2-part series on baptism, we saw the significance of this ordinance and the prerequisite steps for it to be meaningful. Baptism is an outward symbol of the visible fruit of inward repentance and faith manifested in one who believes wholeheartedly in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Saviour and Lord of life.

It is indeed a glorious moment when a person makes this public pledge of complete dedication to Christ: "As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, [Christ] registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. They are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus they are united with the three great powers of heaven. They pledge themselves to renounce the world and to observe the laws of the kingdom of God. Henceforth they are to walk in newness of life. No longer are they to follow the traditions of men. No longer are they to follow dishonest methods. They are to obey the statutes of the kingdom of heaven. They are to seek God's honor. If they will be true to their vow, they will be furnished with grace and power that will enable them to fulfill all righteousness. 'As many as received Him,

to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name' (John 1:12)."¹

Yet, baptism is not just a one-way street. At every baptism, the heavenly agencies also commit themselves to that person: "When we have accepted Christ, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit have pledged ourselves to serve God, the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—the three dignitaries and powers of heaven—pledge themselves that every facility shall be given to us if we carry out our baptismal vows to 'come out from among them, and be . . . separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing.' When we are true to our vows, He says, 'I will receive you' (2 Corinthians 6:17)."²

"In whose name are we baptized? In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—the three highest powers in the heavenly courts. They pledge themselves in our behalf. We may claim the strength and the victory that they may give us as we stand before the world, not to ape its fashions, not to study the fashion books, but to walk humbly with our God."³

Besides the vow between the soul and God, there is an additional component to this commitment as well. The church of God on earth is also making a pledge to the new soul being

baptized: "God's Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires His church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are 'like apples of gold in pictures of silver' (Proverbs 25:11)."⁴

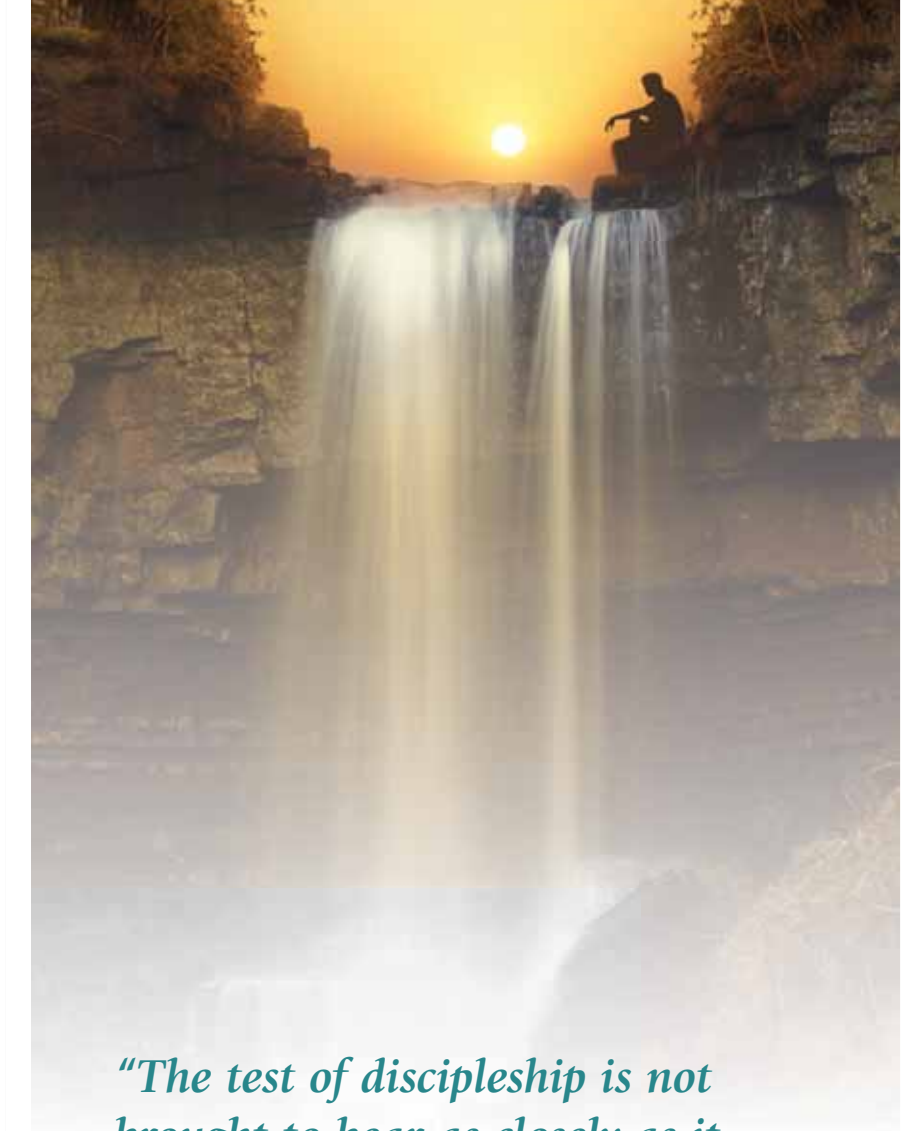
In this threefold, mutual commitment being made between the soul, the Lord in heaven, and His church on earth, an important responsibility rests upon the church in making every effort to ensure that the baptismal candidate reflects indeed a genuine conversion experience.

Examination of the candidates

"The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism, there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirements of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism.

"One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress.

"There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witnesses we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every



"The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism."

detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. **So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic.** In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the Word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion—that we may appear like the world. Christians are

not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments.

"The words of Scripture in regard to dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel.

"All who study the life of Christ and practice His teachings will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of charac-

The Lord calls for a decided reformation. “And when a soul is truly reconverted, let him be rebaptized.”

ter. As they walk in the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God, they exert an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work. In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character.

“The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, expressed in character, is an exaltation above everything that is esteemed in earth or in heaven. It is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city. This knowledge it is God’s purpose that all who put on Christ by baptism shall possess. And it is the duty of God’s servants to set before these souls the privilege of their high calling in Christ Jesus.”⁵

Rebaptism

In the Bible and the Spirit of prophecy we find the two main reasons for rebaptism: 1. Increasing of light, and 2. Reconversion. Let us consider some interesting experiences:

1. Increasing of light

In Acts 19:1–5 (NKJV) we read:

“And it happened in the time Apollos was at Corinth, Paul was passing through the higher parts to Ephesus. And finding certain disciples, he said to them, Have you received the Holy

Spirit since you believed? And they said to him, We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit is. And he said to them, Then to what were you baptized? And they said, To John’s baptism. And Paul said, John truly baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe into Him coming after him, that is, into Jesus Christ. And hearing, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

“On his arrival at Ephesus, Paul found twelve brethren, who, like Apollos, had been disciples of John the Baptist, and like him had gained some knowledge of the mission of Christ. They had not the ability of Apollos, but with the same sincerity and faith they were seeking to spread abroad the knowledge they had received.

“These brethren knew nothing of the mission of the Holy Spirit. When asked by Paul if they had received the Holy Ghost, they answered, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.’ ‘Unto what then were ye baptized?’ Paul inquired, and they said, ‘Unto John’s baptism’ (Acts 19:2, 3).

“Then the apostle set before them the great truths that are the foundation of the Christian’s hope. He told them of Christ’s life on this earth and of His cruel death of shame. He told them how the Lord of life had broken the barriers of the tomb and risen trium-

phant over death. He repeated the Saviour’s commission to His disciples: ‘All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’ (Matthew 28:18, 19). He told them also of Christ’s promise to send the Comforter, through whose power mighty signs and wonders would be wrought, and he described how gloriously this promise had been fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost.

“With deep interest and grateful, wondering joy the brethren listened to Paul’s words. By faith they grasped the wonderful truth of Christ’s atoning sacrifice and received Him as their Redeemer. They were then baptized in the name of Jesus, and as Paul ‘laid his hands upon them,’ they received also the baptism of the Holy Spirit, by which they were enabled to speak the languages of other nations and to prophesy. Thus they were qualified to labor as missionaries in Ephesus and its vicinity and also to go forth to proclaim the gospel in Asia Minor.”⁶

“There are many at the present day who have unwittingly violated one of the precepts of God’s law. When the understanding is enlightened, and the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the conscience, they see themselves sinners in the sight of God. ‘Sin is the transgression of the law’ and ‘he that shall offend on one point is guilty of all’ (1 John 3:4; James 2:10).

“The honest seeker after truth will not plead ignorance of the law as an excuse for transgression. Light was within his reach. God’s Word is plain, and Christ has bidden him search the

“There are many who will need rebaptizing, but let them never go down into the water until they are dead to sin, cured of selfishness and self-exaltation.”

Scriptures. He reveres God’s law as holy, just, and good, and he repents of his transgression. By faith he pleads the atoning blood of Christ, and grasps the promise of pardon. **His former baptism does not satisfy him now. He has seen himself a sinner, condemned by the law of God. He has experienced anew a death to sin, and he desires again to be buried with Christ by baptism, that he may rise to walk in newness of life.** Such a course is in harmony with the example of Paul in baptizing the Jewish converts. **That incident was recorded by the Holy Spirit as an instructive lesson for the church.”**⁷

The Rebaptism of Ellen G. White

“Soon after accepting the Sabbath truth, Ellen White requested rebaptism—undoubtedly into the third angel’s message. James White writes of this in *Life Incidents*, page 273, in connection with his presentation of Ellen White’s visions:

“‘On receiving baptism at my hands, at an early period of her experience, as I raised her up out of the water, immediately she was in vision.”⁸

2. Reconversion

Rebaptism was recommended by Ellen G. White for those in Minneapolis who had been opposed to the message of Christ Our Righteousness.

“We must see Christ as He is. By the eye of faith we must discern the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. By failing to cherish the Spirit of Christ, by taking wrong positions in the controversy over the law in Galatians—a question that many

have not fully understood before taking a wrong position—the church has sustained a sad loss. The spiritual condition of the church generally is represented by the words of the True Witness: ‘Nevertheless,’ saith the One who loves the souls for whom He has died, ‘I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.’ **The position taken by many during the Minneapolis General Conference testifies to their Christless condition.** The admonition to every such an one is: ‘Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent’ (Revelation 2:4, 5).

“Have not many in this ministerial school seen their mistake of not abiding in Christ? Can not they have the privilege of repenting, and of doing their first works? **Who shall condemn this work of repentance, of confession, of baptism? If some conscientiously feel that their first duty is to repent of their sins, confess them, and be baptized, is not this the first works that they must do? . . .**

“I speak to our leading brethren, to our ministers, and especially to our physicians. Just as long as you allow pride to dwell in your hearts, so long will you lack power in your work. For years a wrong spirit has been cherished, a spirit of pride, a desire for preeminence. In this Satan is served, and God is dishonored. **The Lord calls for a decided reformation. And when a soul is truly reconverted, let him be rebaptized. Let him renew his covenant with God, and God will renew His covenant with him. My brethren, show true repentance for departure from God.** Let angels and men see that there is forgiveness of sin with God. Extraordinary power from God must take hold of Seventh-day

Adventist churches. Reconversion must take place among the members, that as God’s witnesses they may testify to the authoritative power of the truth that sanctifies the soul. Renewed, purified, sanctified, the church must be, else the wrath of God will fall upon them with much greater power than upon those who have never professed to be saints.”⁹

This appeal for reconversion and rebaptism made by the servant of the Lord after the General Conference of Minneapolis produced some positive results. In his book *Movement of Destiny*, L. E. Froom reports of some rebaptisms that took place after the Minneapolis General Conference of 1888:

“[The Minneapolis Meeting] was a turning point in the personal lives of many. Men who were there so attested—as with McReynolds, G. B. Starr, Westphal, Gates, Hyatt, Robinson, and others who have left their written testimony on record. Others dictated oral statements to the author that so affirm.

“For example, a number of ministers who accepted the Minneapolis Message and rejoiced in it were **actually rebaptized**—notably W. S. Hyatt. And the experience there gained remained with him the rest of his life. In this Hyatt was typical of many. George B. Starr, in an article prepared for the *Review*, July 24, 1930, tells of how the teaching of Righteousness by Faith was presented clearly and forcefully, and with wholesome results:

“‘The Holy Spirit was manifestly present. . . . Our souls were refreshed with the water of life, and our spirits rejoiced in Jesus as our personal, all-sufficient Saviour. His person, His love, His righteousness, and His power to save to the uttermost, were exalted as I had never heard them in any preceding Conference.’—G. B. Starr, *Increased Light Since 1888*.”¹⁰

“Many need to be converted anew and rebaptized. When they learn to drink of the Spiritual Rock, . . . how their experience will change!”

In addition, Ellen G. White writes: “It is this baptism of the Holy Spirit that the churches need today. **There are backslidden church members and backslidden ministers who need re-converting, who need the softening, subduing influence of the baptism of the Spirit, that they may rise in newness of life and make thorough work for eternity.** I have seen the irreligion and the self-sufficiency cherished, and I have heard the words spoken, ‘Except ye repent and be converted, ye shall never see the kingdom of heaven.’ **There are many who will need rebaptizing, but let them never go down into the water until they are dead to sin, cured of selfishness and self-exaltation; until they can come up out of the water to live a new life unto God.** Faith and repentance are conditions essential to the forgiveness of sin. . . .

“And this is the prayer that every one of us may offer. . . .

“We want all the powers that God has given us cleansed and sanctified. We want to clear the path for every working agency, in order that they may not be impeded as they try to advance. We want to come into working order, and into perfect unity with one another. Let us, in tenderness, ‘admonish one another,’ and seek to help one another. Let us pray with one another, and put away everything that would keep us from entering into and following that narrow path that leads upward to heaven. . . .

“Whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ.’ This is the manner in which we may glory. **And as transformation of character takes place, through repentance and confession and reconversion and rebaptism, you will glory through Jesus Christ,** ‘in those

things which pertain to God,’—not in the things that pertain to your own personal selfish interests. . . .

“In order to prepare for entrance into this beautiful city, we must now be clothed with the wedding garment—with the robe of Christ’s righteousness. We must stand before Him without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. You have not been appointed to talk about others’ faults. While probation still lingers, every soul ought to be washing his own robe of character, and preparing for translation.


“It is our privilege now, in this world, to be workers together with God. But first of all, we must be re-converted. . . . I want that you should clear the King’s highway. And do not be afraid of the converting power of God. Be not afraid of His truth coming into the formation of your own individual character. If this work should tear your character to pieces, it can bring it together in a wholeness that is sanctified. We greatly need to humble the soul before God and before Christ Jesus, and so relate ourselves toward our Maker and toward one another, that we shall be brought into unity of action. . . .

“You are in danger of overestimating your own value. So long have you followed plans of the enemy’s devising, that you seem powerless to break the spell, or to resist evil influences. In the name of the Lord I ask to seek the Lord with all the power at your command. **Repent, and be rebaptized, that you may act a part in union with Christ as a laborer together with God.** Just as long as you seek to have your own way, trying to serve God and mammon, you will continue your record of mistakes and failures. You have now an opportunity to redeem the past, but nothing

will avail you short of a complete surrender to God. . . .

“I saw that the workers in the cause need now to be wide awake. Many need to be converted anew and rebaptized. When they learn to drink of the Spiritual Rock which followed the army of Israel in the wilderness, when they partake daily of the heavenly manna, how their experience will change! What the food we eat is to our physical needs, Christ is to our spiritual necessities. He is the Bread of life. ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood,’ Christ declared, ‘ye have no life in you’ (John 6:53). Whoso eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood, hath eternal life. When Christ is formed within the soul, His presence will be as a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.”¹¹

A great privilege

“[Rebaptism] is a matter to be treated as a great privilege and blessing, and all who are rebaptized, if they have the right ideas upon this subject, will thus consider it.”¹² 

References

- ¹ *Evangelism*, pp. 307, 308.
- ² *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1075.
- ³ *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, p. 287.
- ⁴ *Evangelism*, p. 352.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 311–313. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ⁶ *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 282, 283.
- ⁷ *Evangelism*, p. 372 [Emphasis supplied.]
- ⁸ Arthur L. White: *Ellen G. White, The Early Years*, vol. 1, p. 121.
- ⁹ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, pp. 261–263. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹⁰ L. E. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, p. 257. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹¹ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, pp. 267–273 [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹² *The Faith I Live By*, p. 148.

You Need NOT Be a FAILURE

By A. Balbach

Years ago I read a modern parable about a pessimist: An elderly man was making a living by selling fruit. Day after day he would open his fruit stand by a busy road, and he was quite satisfied with his business. One day his son said to him:

"Dad, I just heard over the radio that difficult times are ahead of us. This means that your business will suffer."

The old man began to worry. He said to himself:

"My son knows what he is talking about, because he has been to school. I must listen to him. When the unemployment rate is high, and people have no money to buy things, they must still eat. I'm afraid they will grab my fruit and walk away without paying. What shall I do?"

The son repeats the same warning to the old man.

"I know what I must do," the father muses over the expected crisis. "I will

reduce by 50% the quantity of fruit exposed to the public here at my fruit stand."

It took only a few days before the old man could see the result of his first "safety measure"—his sales decreased. And he said to himself:

"My son is right. Difficult times are setting in."

Then he decided to take a second "safety measure"—he removed the posters announcing the sale of his produce. And his business suffered even more.

"Yes, my son is right. I can feel the crisis."

As a third "safety measure," he moved his fruit stand away from the main road and set it up alongside a secondary road, and, as a consequence, his sales dropped considerably, so that he almost went bankrupt.

"Difficult times have come sooner than I expected," the old man continued repeating to himself. "My son was right."

This old man represents a pessimist



The world would sleep if things were run by folks who say, "It can't be done."

who is always looking at things from the most unfavorable point of view, anticipating unnecessary failures which, in most cases, are the product of one's own negative attitude.

Beware of unjustified pessimism

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. . . . In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Ecclesiastes 11:4, 6).

Not all pessimism is wrong, and not all optimism is right. Both extremes, however, such as unjustified pessimism and unreasonable optimism, are self-defeating. The Lord warns us:

"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).

Caution, prudence, and forethought are essential in every enterprise, of course. But I want to emphasize the effect of excessive and preposterous pessimism. Pessimism often goes hand in hand with negativism, which is a morbid tendency to say or do the very opposite of what is expected.

The story of

Robert Fulton, who was the first to apply steam to navigation, is well known. He built the steamer *Clermont* in 1807. A group of pessimists were shouting, "She'll never start! She'll never start!" But when the boat started to move up the Hudson River, they shouted, "She'll never stop! She'll never stop!" Where would we be today if all men were like those doubting Thomases, who could see things only from a negative angle? From an unknown author we have a poem depicting such people:

The man who misses all the fun
Is he who says, "It can't be done."
In solemn pride, he stands aloof
And greets each venture with reproof.
Had he the power, he would efface
The history of the human race.
We'd have no radio, no cars,
No streets lit by electric stars;
No telegraph, no telephone;
We'd linger in the age of stone.
The world would sleep if things were run
By folks who say, "It can't be done."

Allow me to mention a few more examples of pessimism allied with negativism—examples which have remained in our history. Here is a news item published in a New York newspaper in 1868:

"A man has been arrested in New York for attempting to extort funds from ignorant and unsuspecting people by exhibiting a device which he claims will convey the human voice any distance over metallic wires so that it will be heard by the listener at the other end. He calls the instrument a telephone. Well-informed people [scientists in the first place] know that it is impossible to transmit the human voice over wires."

However, when Alexander Graham Bell exhibited his invention at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, PA, in 1876, scientists welcomed it enthusiastically.

When it became known that Thomas Alva Edison was trying to create a practical electric system, the Parliament of England appointed a committee of top scientists to find out whether the prospective invention would work. After two months they gave their opinion:

“Impossible!” Nevertheless, on October 21, 1879, Edison surprised his detractors. The electric light was invented.

In 1890, Henry Ford, a skinny young man, went to a government bureau to tell them that he could make a buggy run all by itself, without a horse. But he said he needed help to build a little shop and to buy the needed tools so he could start working. The pessimistic chairman answered:

“Well, Mr. Ford, we’ve got plenty of horses. Who wants a buggy without a horse?”

But Ford found optimistic people who were prepared to help him, and in 1893 he produced his first “gasoline buggy” which was able to run 25 miles per hour. And, in 1903, he founded the Ford Motor Company, becoming one of the world’s leading industrialists.

Humans free moral agents

The Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were created as free moral agents, endowed with intelligence to reason from cause to effect and vice versa. But, unfortunately, men and women do not always use their intelligence. Human beings have also been given a conscience to discern between right and wrong, and to choose between good and evil. Therefore, they should be fully aware of the result or consequence of their daily and hourly decisions and actions.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7).

The world is fraught with fears, anxieties, and sense of defeat. And there will always be difficulties before us. Nevertheless, the Word of God assures us that there is a way out. We should be convinced that:

1. Pessimism, negativism, apathy (indifference to what is happening), and fatalism can only make things worse and they certainly contribute to form what is known as the inferiority complex.
2. By blaming others—our parents, the church, the school, the job, society, the state, or God—we make life more and more miserable for ourselves. Let us put the blame for

Christianity is not a religion of fatalism. There is no such thing in the Bible.

our failures and troubles where it rightly belongs, namely, upon ourselves.

3. The first step out of our problems, if we have reasons for spiritual or secular discontent, is to face realities and admit our shortcomings. It certainly takes faith and courage to frankly confess our mistakes. But it’s a powerful remedy.
4. The solution to many of our difficulties will come as a result of following the teachings of Christ. He tells us:

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

We must ask . . .

Of God we are to ask for wisdom, guidance, courage, protection, health, more faith, discernment between right and wrong, power to overcome, and other things. (Read Matthew 6:9–13; James 1:5; 5:14.) Of those who have found the way and are willing to share their knowledge and experience, we should ask for advice. We will never regret if we are humble enough to learn from those who, in some areas, know more than we do.

We must seek . . .

We should not seek to satisfy our fanciful and sinful desires or our worldly ambitions; we should rather seek to stand right before God and our fellow human beings, faithfully carrying out our duties and responsibilities. Then we will also have the respect, confidence, and cooperation of our associates. And, above all, we will have the blessings of God.

We must knock on doors . . .

Before God, we must knock on the door of mercy. In the world, we should knock on the doors of reasonable possibilities and lawful opportunities.

God offers; humans choose

If we follow Christ’s method—asking, seeking, and knocking—we will have His presence both in our spiritual life and in our secular affairs. Where He



leads there can be no defeat.

“If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

“The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you” (2 Chronicles 15:2).

There is a belief called fatalism, according to which humans cannot choose how to act; they have no power to shape their future, and therefore, they must accept that which has already been predetermined for them. “What must be shall be,” said Seneca, a Roman philosopher.

A fatalist believes that, if it is in the order of things that he or she should have a car accident, it will be useless for him or her to be especially careful while driving, because he or she will have an accident anyhow.

Fatalism plays an important role among the followers of Mohammed.

Our destiny depends entirely on the wise or unwise choices we are making every day and every hour.

They think that all the actions of people, good and evil, as well as their ultimate destiny, have been predetermined by Allah.

Christianity is not a religion of fatalism. There is no such thing in the Bible. But, strange to say, some Christians seem to be fatalists. The Holy Scripture teaches that a man or a woman, by using his or her freedom of choice, is the arbiter of his or her present and his or her future.

Wrong use of our freedom of choice

Since Christ assures us, in Matthew 7:7, 8, that we can obtain all the help



we need, why are there so many failures? Why so many misfits in life? And why so many spiritual shipwrecks?

A Christian believer was trying to find an answer to a question which is troubling many serious-thinking minds: why is it that so many young people fall prey into the net of the devil until they are completely ruined?

While worrying about this problem, he sat down in the shade and suddenly noticed a worm moving quietly along in the footpath. In his meditation, the man said to himself:

That poor worm is destitute of reasoning powers to guide it. And no enemy is lying in wait to entangle it. But our young men and women, rational beings endowed with a conscience, are entrapped and destroyed in great numbers. Why does this happen?

At that very moment, a spider crossed the path in front of the worm and stood still. Soon the worm was stopped by an invisible cord which the spider had spun across the path. He turned to go back, but the spider spun a second cord right behind him. He turned and twisted in an effort to escape, but it was all in vain, for the spider wasted no time weaving more ropes around him. It took the spider one whole hour to force the helpless worm to move to the entrance of her hole.

Then the spider eyed the worm for a moment, darted on him, struck him repeatedly with her fangs, and the poor thing rolled over. Without wasting a second, the spider pulled the dead victim into her hole to feast on it.

Whenever that man saw boys

and girls ensnared by the destroyer, he could not help thinking of that poor little worm. But he understood the difference: While the worm has no reasoning powers and, therefore, cannot make a choice, human beings are gifted with intelligence to choose between life and death. The man found the answer: No one ever falls into the trap of Satan and remains in it, to his own destruction, but by the wrong use of his free will. We are free to choose, and, once we have made our choice, we must take the consequences.

Our destiny has not been predetermined. It depends entirely on the wise or unwise choices that we are making every day and every hour. Then why is it that millions and millions who want to have success in life prove to be complete failures? Find the answer in the gospel according to John, chapter 15, verse 5.


Once saved, always saved?

Some denominations teach that once a person has been saved, no matter what he or she does afterwards, he or she can no longer change his or her condition. He or she is saved once and for all. According to the dictionary, predestination is the doctrine that God has decreed everything beforehand since the creation, and that certain souls shall be saved while others shall perish, regardless of individual choice. This doctrine is in direct conflict with the Bible where we read that:

1. We must choose: Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Isaiah 1:19, 20; Hebrews 11:24–26.
2. We must strive: Luke 13:23–27; 2 Peter 1:3–11.
3. We must abide in Christ: John 15:7; 2 Corinthians 13:5, 6. If we choose to turn away from Christ, we are lost: Hebrews 6:4–6; 10:26–29, 35–39; 2 Peter 2:20–22; Revelation 3:5; 1 Corinthians 9:27.
4. We must remain faithful to the end: Matthew 24:13.

Therefore, we must confirm our calling and election (2 Peter 1:10) by asking, seeking, knocking, and striving.

“Fight the good fight of faith” and “lay hold on eternal life” (1 Timothy 6:12).

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things” (Revelation 21:7). 

Lessons From the Preparation of SOIL

Conclusion of a 6-part series

By Les Gibson

[Emphasis supplied throughout.]

In our previous studies we considered our need to be abiding in Christ and have the love of God that glues or cements the branch to the vine, and about the consecration that we need in our life.

In John 17:18–21 Jesus prayed for unity among His followers, that souls around the world might believe in Him and be sanctified. Let us now examine an inspiring prophecy:

“Oh, that all might repent and do their first works. When the churches do this they will love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. **Divisions will then be healed**, the harsh sounds of strife will no more be heard in the borders of Israel. Through the grace freely given them of God, **all will seek to answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples shall be one, even as He and the Father are one**. Peace, love, mercy, and benevolence will be the abiding principles of the soul. The love of Christ will be the theme of every tongue, and it will no more be said by the True Witness, ‘I have

somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love (Revelation 2:4). The people of God will be abiding in Christ, and the love of Jesus will be revealed, and one Spirit will animate all hearts, regenerating and renewing in the image of Christ, fashioning all hearts alike. **As living branches of the True Vine, all will be united to Christ the living Head. Christ will abide in every heart, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, and presenting to the world the unity of the followers of Jesus, thus bearing testimony that the heavenly credentials are supplied to the remnant church.** In the oneness of Christ’s church it will be proved that God sent His only begotten Son into the world.”¹

The parable of the sower as taught by Christ represents the work that must be done upon the carnal heart of man. The soil of the heart must be plowed often and deeply.

Heartwork throughout history

Noah’s first work was to preach righteousness, repentance, and to build



an ark. It was heartwork for Noah. Noah and God’s people rode their ark through the water to safety. Abraham’s first work was to preach righteousness, repentance, and to build altars. It was heartwork for Abraham. Moses’ very first work was to ride his tiny ark through the “water” to safety. Moses knew his most important work—to lead out God’s people. But he “got the cart ahead of the horse” when he killed the Egyptian without waiting on God! It was heartwork for Moses. Moses and God’s people built another ark, this one in the desert. Moses’ work then was to preach righteousness and forgiveness. Later, Moses, with God’s people, followed their ark through the “water” to safety. On dry land!

The greatest work that we can do in this life is to prepare for the future immortal life and help others to prepare for it.

Elijah and John the Baptist both taught repentance, forgiveness, and obedience. We have seen that **true repentance is represented as soil preparation.**

"All true obedience comes from the heart. **It was heartwork with Christ.** And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, **sin will become hateful to us.**"²

Do we have a message to preach? Could it be heart work? Could it be soil (heart) preparation? Could it be righteousness and repentance?

Set in concrete

Topics such as the Elijah message, the sealing message, the sanctuary message, obedience, righteousness by faith, the atoning sacrifice, unity, Christian character development, the true science of education, consecration, abiding in Christ, medical missionary work, colporteur evangelism, all have one thing in common:

Soil preparation = heartwork

Let us set this in cement. It was written in stone by the finger of God!

"It was heartwork with Christ. . . .

Sin will become hateful to us."

"It is heartwork that the Lord requires, good works springing from a heart filled with love."³

"There are many who have not a correct knowledge of what constitutes

a **Christian character.** . . . If they were thoroughly converted they would not bear briars and thorns, but rich clusters of the precious fruits of the Spirit—'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance' (Galatians 5:22, 23).

The great danger is in neglecting a heartwork. . . . They are unacquainted with the grace of Christ, and He is not abiding in the heart by living faith."⁴

As we pour into God's "cement mixer" the ingredients of our time, talents, and our thoughts and feelings combined, and wait upon the Lord, we see with astonishment that what comes out is a golden chain of love that encircles the world for which He died.

"God's instrumentalities should seek to follow in the footsteps of the divine Healer. . . . 'Ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's' (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). Yes, we are God's property, and **the path of obedience to nature's laws is the direct path to heaven.**

He who is converted from errors in eating, drinking, and dressing is **being prepared** to hear and receive the truth into a good and willing heart. Many, by practicing the laws of nature and by receiving the renovating grace of God into the soul, obtain a new lease of physical and spiritual life. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' (Proverbs 9:10)."⁵

Let wisdom's voice be heard, for "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Proverbs 3:17). "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come" (Revelation 14:7).

This study is not about the first angel's message, but of necessity, it is also included. This study is not about

health reform, but of necessity, it too is included.


Dear reader, do you see how these subjects flow together? If you have the talent for medical missionary work, then that is your pioneer work. If my talent lies in the direction of agriculture, then that is my very first work. If another has the talent to help us see the importance of Christian character development, then that is the most important work for that individual. All for the glory of God. It is heartwork that the Lord requires. Without heartwork all else is futile. Let us all seek the Lord with all our heart. "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).

Conclusion

Jesus' first parable was about soil preparation. Soil preparation means heartwork. Heartwork involves our eternal destiny. Your eternal destiny involves your choice. This is what is encompassed in Jesus' first parable.

"I have been instructed that the greatest work that we can do in this life is to prepare ourselves and to help others to prepare for the future immortal life."⁶

We need—desperately need—to recognize what Jesus is trying to teach us by the parable of the sower. No matter what pathway we are on, if it doesn't lead us to a correct preparation of heart and soul for heaven, we're on the wrong track. If whatever path you are on leads you or someone else to Christ, that is the path of soil preparation.

Eternal destiny equals heartwork. It involves our choice. 

References

¹ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, pp. 51, 52.

² *The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 306.

⁵ *Counsels on Health*, pp. 221, 222.

⁶ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 282.

The Temple of JEHOVAH

By J. A. Senior

The work of making the new furniture for the temple was a huge undertaking. God used a Gentile to make the furniture for the temple. In front of the temple porch was the brazen altar of sacrifice (2 Chronicles 1:5). On the east side of the "inner court," right in front of the entrance, was the laver or "molten sea," or simply "the sea" as it was called—a huge laver with a diameter of 10 cubits, 5 cubits high, with a perimeter of 30 cubits. This contained two or three thousand baths of water, more than 12,000 gallons. The laver stood upon a base of 12 figures of oxen, grouped in three and looking toward the four winds (1 Kings 7:23–26).

Besides that huge laver, ten more lavers of four cubits with a capacity of 40 liters were made of brass. Each one was set upon a quadrangular base, four cubits length by four cubits breadth and three cubits height (verse 38) with wheels. Each was finely decorated with figures

of cherubims, lions, oxen, and palm trees (verses 27–37).

Ten candlesticks were made "according to their form," following the original pattern. Their forms were after that of the candlestick of the wilderness, and they were placed in the holy place of the temple. Five were set up at the right, northward; and the other five at the left, southward (2 Chronicles 4:7). As ten candlesticks were made, so also ten tables were made. At the north was found the golden table of the showbread; and toward the east, in front of the inner veil that was separating the holy place from the holy of holies, was located the golden altar of incense.

The inauguration of the temple

After "seven years," being precisely seven years and six months of constant labor (1 Kings 6:38), the building of the temple and all



Entering into the world, Christ said: "A body hast thou prepared me. . . ."

its furniture were ready. Then Solomon proceeded to inaugurate the temple, bringing to this beautiful structure the Ark of the Covenant and the other utensils of the tabernacle of the wilderness. And when the ark was introduced by the priests in the most holy place (1 Kings 8:6), "the glory of the Lord" "filled the house" in such a way that the priests were not able to enter to minister because the glory of Jehovah filled the temple (1 Kings 8:11). Then King Solomon addressed the people gathered and raised up an invocatory prayer after which, once again, another supernatural manifestation of God occurred: Divine fire came down out of heaven and consumed the burnt offering. Meanwhile the glory of the Lord continued filling the house. The manifestation of the shekinah in the most holy place was a token of the approval and pleasure of God for the temple built for Him. As the divine fire came down out of heaven, it was a sign of acceptance of the perfect sacrifices and prayers offered to Him. God was pleased and blessed His people.

The history of the temple

This first temple, called Solomon's Temple, was destroyed by the Babylonian army during the invasion that occurred under the reign of Zedekiah in

the year 586 BC (2 Chronicles 36:19). At that time, the temple was burned, and the utensils of gold and silver were taken to Babylon.

After seventy years of captivity, a remnant went back to Jerusalem, and under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the rebuilding of the temple was carried out. This second temple was called the temple of Zerubbabel.

During the year 37 BC, Herod ascended to the throne, and some years later, around the year 20 BC, he decided to rebuild the temple after the old building had been taken down. It was a marvelous structure of white marble overlaid with gold, about 120 meters high. John 2:20 states that in the days of Christ the temple had already been under construction for about 46 years, and actually it was not completely finished till the year AD 66, just four years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman armies in the year AD 70.

The human temple

In that marvelous temple built by Solomon, restored by Zerubbabel, and later rebuilt by Herod, was the human temple portrayed. When God created Adam and Eve, the Lord made them temples of the living God; but because of sin, humanity became, by nature,

"short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Humanity ceased to be the living temple of God; but God promised to rebuild it through the plan of redemption based on the incarnation and saving work of His only-begotten Son.

During His ministry, our Lord Jesus Christ made plain this glorious truth when He prophesied: "Destroy **this temple**, and in three days **I will raise it up**" (John 2:19). The second Adam, the man Jesus, incarnated in a temple of flesh prepared for Him by the eternal Father after 4,000 years of degeneration of the fallen race. Entering into the world, Christ said: "a body hast thou prepared me" (Hebrews 10:5).

The eternal Word, the divine architect of the perfect and glorious human temple, had to incarnate in a **human fallen temple** in order to rebuild it after God's character. So He became bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh in order to condemn sin in His flesh through a life of perfect and constant obedience to the law of God. Christ developed fully the perfect character that Adam had failed to develop because of sin. Then, as the eternal God and **sinless man**, He had to suffer death on the cross in order to set the cornerstone for the new human temple created after the pattern of His sinless spiritual nature and the life that He lived in human flesh.

It is by accepting Christ as our personal Saviour and partaking of His divine nature that we once again have the golden opportunity to become the temple of the living God.

The spiritual temple

In that glorious temple built by Solomon, the prophets and apostles saw portrayed the edification of **the spiritual temple**, namely, **the church of Christ** on earth. Read Amos 9:11 and Acts 15:14–17. Every Christian is “a lively stone” “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto **an holy temple** in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:20, 21). What a great privilege to be a stone in this spiritual temple that will endure for eternity!

“How thankful we should be that a way has been opened whereby we may each have a place in **the spiritual temple**! Will you, my brethren and sisters, think of these things, study them, talk of them? Just in proportion as we appreciate these things shall we become strong in the service of God, and so be enabled to comply with His requirements, and be doers of the words of Christ.”¹

The heavenly temple

The great atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ opened for humanity a living and new way to gain access to God. The typical temple and its services met the antitypical reality in the entering of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, in a sanctuary or temple not “made with hands,” (Hebrews 9:24) that is, not of this creation. It is in fact “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Hebrews 8:2). God is the Architect and builder of this temple. This


“. . . in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.”

heavenly temple is not heaven itself, but it is in heaven. John, the seer of Patmos, saw in vision when “the temple of God was opened in heaven,” and he saw there the Ark of the Covenant (Revelation 11:19). There, in that temple, the Ancient of days, the eternal Father, the Judge in the investigative judgment, sat down; and the books were opened; and there, in that heavenly temple, our only Advocate, was brought “near before him,” to intercede for us in the presence of God. In this great day of the antitypical atonement in which we are living, we have the privilege to enter into the heavenly places by faith to obtain mercy and grace from God (Daniel 7:13; Ephesians 1:3; 2:6).

The temple of the new earth

There will also be a temple on the new earth. In Revelation we find a glorious promise for those who since 1844 will have overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, and have reached the spiritual state of the church of Philadelphia: “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God” (Revelation 3:12). To what temple is the Lord through John here referring? Since John “saw no temple” in the city of the new Jerusalem, because “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Revelation 21:22), obviously

Revelation 3:12 refers to the temple that will be located outside of the city. Ellen G. White described her vision: “Mount Zion was just before us, and **on the mount was a glorious temple**, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. . . . And as we were about to enter **the holy temple**, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, ‘Only the 144,000 enter this place,’ and we shouted, ‘Alleluia.’”²

Therefore, that wonderful earthly temple designed by David and built by Solomon was not just a type of the heavenly temple, nor just a figure of the human temple. Neither was it just a symbol of the church. By extension it also pointed to that glorious temple in which only the 144,000 will enter in the near future. Would you like to have the great privilege to enter that holy temple? Then, “let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand.”³ Amen! 

References

¹ *The Review and Herald*, July 27, 1911.

² *Early Writings*, p. 19.

³ *The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905.

The **Duty** of the Congregation During the Day of **Atonement**



By *Reiner G. Kremer*

The Scriptures set the importance of each precious day that God in His great mercy gives us. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6:34).

God has given us today to do the things of today. There is a specific work that each is enjoined to do. It is a matter of life and death.

During the last few years, three very special people that I have had the privilege of knowing died suddenly, unexpectedly—and humanly speaking, before their time.

One was viciously slain by a former boyfriend who had a history of harassing her. As she was leaving my office just a few days prior to her abrupt end, my last words to her had been, "Keep looking up!" She had been a single mother with two children, working two jobs to make ends meet.

The second was a wealthy real estate developer and investor who loved to

hunt and eat wild animals. He didn't like doctors, or going to the doctor. However, a series of events led him to experiencing irretractable low back pain that was diagnosed as metastasizing renal cell carcinoma. His dreams and life came to an abrupt end a few months later, as all attempts in treating and containing the cancer failed.

The third was a female psychologist who had a zest for life and a passion for the poor and the disenfranchised. Her goal in life was to see the world become a better place. Kind and forbearing, she had been diagnosed with breast cancer 5 years earlier, treated and pronounced cured, only to have the cancer return in its full fury—stage IV and terminal.

Dear reader, where are you in relation to your journey here on this earth? Beginning? Middle? End? Don't know?

Ellen White gives guidance with regard to life's preparation for the unexpected twists and turns, repeating the admonitions she received at various times, including these:

"Time is almost finished. Do you reflect the lovely image of Jesus as you



“Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye must have a greater preparation than ye now have, for the day of the Lord cometh.”

should?’ . . . Said the angel, ‘Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye will have to die a greater death to the world than ye have ever yet died.’¹

“Will ye shun the seven last plagues? Will ye go to glory and enjoy all that God has prepared for those who love Him and are willing to suffer for His sake? If so, ye must die that ye may live. **Get ready, get ready, get ready.** Ye must have a greater preparation than ye now have, for the day of the Lord cometh. . . . Sacrifice all to God. Lay all upon His altar—self, property, and all, a living sacrifice.’²

“Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and ye are not ready.”³

This is the question for our time: Are you, dear reader, prepared to stand before God without a Mediator? Am I?

The day of atonement and the investigative judgment

“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14). This integral time-prophecy recognized by Adventists and those believers in the second coming of Jesus started in 457 BC with the rebuilding of Jerusalem, followed

by Christ beginning His earthly ministry in AD 27 (69 weeks), the stoning of Stephen and the gospel going to the Gentiles in AD 34 (70 weeks), and 1844, when Jesus Christ our High Priest went from the holy place to the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary, continuing His work of intercession during the antitypical Day of Atonement. See Daniel 9:24–27.

According to Leviticus 23:27, the tenth day of the seventh month was the Day of Atonement. “It was regarded as more sacred than any other day in the yearly round of service. It was a ceremonial Sabbath and a fast day.”⁴ (Verse 32.)

The Israelite who did not afflict his or her soul upon that day was cut off from among the people (Verses 28–30.)

On that day the High Priest went through a specific process that is detailed by the Advent pioneer, Stephen N. Haskell.⁵ This sacred work was the cleansing of the sanctuary and the removing of the sins. Let us be mindful

that every sin is marked before the Lord in heaven (Jeremiah 2:22). When sins are confessed and forgiven they are covered by the blood of the sacrifice (Psalm 32:1). This was typified by their being transferred to the sanctuary, where no human eyes except those of the priest ever beheld the stains of the blood of the sin offering upon the horns of the golden altar before the veil.

It could not be possible that the books of heaven will always hold the records of sin, or that Christ will always bear the sins of the world. As the typical work was performed at the close of the year, so the cleansing of the sanctuary necessitates an examination of the records—an investigative judgment. This work was begun in AD 1844 at the end of the prophetic period of the 2300 days.

All are judged out of the those things which are written in the books, according to their works (Revelation 20:12). As the books reveal one life record after

The earthly high priest presented blood to atone for the sins of the people; our High Priest pleads His own blood.

another, Christ confesses the name of every overcomer before the Father and before the innumerable company of angels (Revelation 3:5).

The earthly high priest presented blood to atone for the sins of the people; our High Priest pleads His own blood: **Father, My blood, My blood, My blood.**

While Jesus pleads as our High Priest, there is hope for every repentant sinner; but when He at last comes forth from the sanctuary, mercy's door will be forever closed. There will be no intercessor then (Isaiah 59:16).

He will proclaim, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11).

The congregation

"Anciently the congregation was not accepted as a whole; but it was an individual work. So today, each one answers for himself before God. We must not content ourselves by doing just as our fathers did, who passed away before the judgment opened in the courts of heaven. **God requires special service of His people now.**"⁵

The individual who, during the antitypical Day of Atonement, or the investigative judgment, thinks that Christ will plead his or her case while he or she ignores the work that God has enjoined upon the antitypical congregation will be among those whose names will be blotted out from the book of life. We are saved by faith in our High Priest, but faith without works is dead (James 2:17). If we have a living faith, we shall gladly do as the Lord directs.

Four things were required of each individual member of ancient Israel on the Day of Atonement, as found in Leviticus 23:27, 28:

1. **A holy convocation: Assembling for religious worship.** "There is a special blessing in worshiping with others. God promises that where even two or three are gathered in His name, He will meet with them. This first requirement is a spiritual thermometer by which every Christian can test his [or her] spiritual condition."⁷ Absenting oneself from the worship of God—taking no pleasure in it—indicates a low level of spirituality (Hebrews 10:21–25).
2. **Afflict the soul: Searching our own heart.** Each individual was to "afflict" the soul—search his or her own heart, put away every sin, and spend much time in prayer. With this was connected abstinence from food. This was so forcibly impressed upon the mind of the Jews that even at the present day the fast upon the tenth day of the seventh month. The individual who realizes that the judgment is going on in the heavenly sanctuary, and that his or her name will surely be presented before the great tribunal, will search his or her heart and pray earnestly for God's acceptance—being temperate in all things and in complete control of the appetite (Luke 21:25–33; Isaiah 22:12–14).
3. **"Offer an offering made by fire."** The Lord desires that the whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the entire life of the Christian be laid

on the altar, ready to be used as the Lord directs. None can do this who do not daily accept Christ as his or her personal Saviour, his or her sin-offering, and know what it is to be accepted in the Beloved (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

4. **God's work comes first.** God's work was given the first thought during the entire day. He promises to bless His people in temporal things if they look after His work and service first, and their temporal interests second. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with . . . cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

God is testing the congregation today. Who will fulfill God's design for His people? Who will not forsake the assembly of God's people? Who will keep a clear mind by controlling the appetite—and a pure heart by prayer and personal, deep heart searching? Who will lay all their interests upon God's altar, to be used for His glory, and never let the cares of this life crowd out God's work or the study of His word?

Over such as these our High Priest will say, "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11). Only such can stand before a righteous God without a Mediator. ☞

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- ² *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 67. [Emphasis Supplied.]
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 119. [Emphasis Supplied.]
- ⁴ Stephen N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 209.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 209–211.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

Wholesome Wellness — The Natural Way!

By Alicia Prest

As knowledge increases, people are seeking “alternative” methods to better health and wellness. They are realizing that the typical doctor visit and prescription is not what they are looking for. With all the world’s fad diets, legal drugs, and fitness programs blowing around, many do not know where to turn for answers about their health. How do we know what will work and what won’t? How do we know what to accept and what to reject?

Back to the beginning

Do you know who created you? God created our bodies! It makes sense then that He knows what will cause us to function properly. Not only that, but He has seen to it that we have ample ways to care for our bodies. Let us examine what provisions the One who created us has made for us.

Nutrition contrasted

God provided Adam and Eve with fruit trees. “And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” (Genesis 2:9). This food was perfect in its simple, raw form and contained the

proper balance of nutrients to sustain health and life. Do we still consume fruits and vegetables in their natural form, or do we cook them until all the life force is depleted? “Let [our people] preserve the health and increase the strength by avoiding the large amount of cooking which has filled the world with chronic invalids. We are coming to the time when recipes for cooking will not be needed, for God’s people will learn that the food God gave Adam in his sinless state is the best for keeping the body in a sinless state.”¹

Large industries make billions of dollars from the public by selling them synthetic vitamins, protein shakes, energy drinks, and medications after convincing

Now is the time to establish good health habits so that we may live the healthful and prosperous life that God intended for us.

them that we need these products to stay healthy. But one does not need to purchase an inferior form of what God has provided for us naturally. I would encourage all to find the freshest, most organic food available, and use it abundantly rather than rely wholly on a synthetic version of nutrition. More often than not, most supplements available are not absorbed, but rather thrown off to the liver and kidneys to be dealt with as intruders, before being eliminated from the body. God provided us with all we need to have perfect health, and it didn't come in a bottle!

Ready, set, dig!

It was never God's intention for the human race to become a sit-down, drive-around, elevator-riding society. When God created Adam, He put him in a beautiful garden and instructed him to tend it. "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Genesis 2:15). If we were meant to be sedentary, God would not have given us muscles and bones that **need** exercise for growth and health. Digging around in the soil is still one of the best sources of physical activities today. It increases circulation without increasing heart load, mobilizes joints, stretches tendons and ligaments, and has a calming effect on the mind. In situations where gardening is not practical, brisk walking is also a beneficial form of exercise. It increases circulation and has an energizing effect.

In contrast, over-exerting exercise such as running triggers the hormone adrenaline to kick in. This is the same hormone that is released when you are afraid (fight or flight response) or stressed out. Runners usually become addicted to this type of exercise because it gives them "a rush." This "rush" is the initial effect of this hormone, but excessive amounts of adrenaline entering the blood often enough will eventually bring illness. While it is not a bad thing

to increase your heart rate by a small percentage, completely exhausting yourself during exercise is not necessary to have a healthy heart. Combined with a healthy diet, gentle exercise is all that is needed.

Rest vs. drugs

Today's world bumps along 24/7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), but was this ever God's plan? Our bodies need periods of rest to heal and restore. Lack of proper rest taxes both body and mind which eventually results in illness. Long-term fatigue and exhaustion result in nervous system dysfunctions.

The world's way of dealing with the body's natural need of rest is by flooding it with caffeine, sugar, and other various stimulants, so people can stay awake and get things done that they evidently think are more important. These unnatural methods, of course, then require the opposite unnatural method to undo them: Sleeping medication. Life becomes a constant cycle of uppers and downers, and is a sure way to lose health and vitality.

How can those of us who consider ourselves "night owls" get more rest? We **must** make it a priority or it will always end up "on the back burner," so to speak. Turn off the computer, turn off the lights, and start going to bed 15 minutes earlier each night. Staying up late can be a difficult habit to break, but it can be done a step at a time! Establishing some of the following guidelines will help:

Avoid all stimulants (we discard coffee, black and green teas, chocolate, sugar, stimulating spices). Do not eat within 3 hours before bedtime. If the stomach is working to digest food, it can keep you awake.

Start winding down an hour or two before bedtime. You can't expect your body to fall into "sleep mode" if you're still wired to the activities of the day. Refuse the temptation to get up and

start doing other things if you can't immediately fall asleep.

If you are a worrier and can't "turn off your mind," it may help you to keep a paper and pen near your bed, quickly jot down the problem, and resolve to think about it tomorrow. "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2).

Stay out of the sun?

Today we are constantly being told that the sun causes cancer and to stay out of it as much as possible. Is not God the creator of the sun? Would He have created something for us that is a poison? I am not suggesting that we go to the extreme and stay outside and uncovered during the midday heat to burn. However, people today have generally gone to the other extreme, spending minimal time outdoors after they've lathered themselves in carcinogenic chemicals (sun-block lotions). In doing this, they cause injury to themselves. Yet some evidence indicates that those who spend most of their time outdoors actually decrease their risk of skin cancer.

What about the many of us who have office jobs that keep us indoors for 8-10 hours a day? Spend your breaks and time off outdoors! If smokers can take every hour their break outdoors to pollute their lungs, surely someone who wants to get sunshine and fresh air can spend his or her breaks outside, too.

Stop making excuses

We can always make excuses for why we do not eat properly, exercise, sleep, or spend time in God's creation, but in doing this, whom are we cheating? Only ourselves! We are the ones who will suffer the results of our own carelessness. It is true that we reap what we sow. Now is the time to establish good health habits so that we may live the healthful and prosperous life that God intended for us to live. "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 2). ✠

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The Best MEDICINE!

By Janet P. Sureshkumar

Happiness is the birthright of all, and laughing is a natural aspect of life and part of the universal human vocabulary. All members of the human species understand it. The part of the brain that connects to and facilitates rejoicing is among the first parts of the nervous system to come into line after birth. Infants begin smiling during the first weeks of life and laugh out loud within months of being born. We all express our happiness by smiling or laughing. Laughing makes one feel good. It is natural, spontaneous, and occurs unconsciously. Happiness, rejoicing, and laughing are actually a complex response that involves many of the same skills used in solving problems.

Rejoicing is a great thing. As the saying goes, “A merry (rejoicing) heart doeth good like a medicine” (Proverbs 17:22). Medical science provides strong evidence that rejoicing can actually improve health and help fight disease.

It is contagious. Paul says to rejoice and stop worrying. When you rejoice, you express it through smiling and laughing. It is more contagious than a cough, flu, sniffle, or sneeze. A smile and a laugh cause a domino effect of joy and happiness and set off a number of positive physical effects as well. Did you know that laughing strengthens our immune system and helps us recover from illness, thus bringing joy into our life?

Why do we rejoice?

Rejoicing begins as a gesture of shared relief at the passing of danger or difficulty. Since the

relaxation results from a bout of rejoicing, it inhibits the biological fight-or-flight response. This results in smiling or laughing, indicating trust in one’s companions or environment. The purpose of rejoicing is related to making and strengthening human connections.

There are three basic brain functions that contribute to our ability to laugh: Cognition, emotion, and motion. The interesting thing about rejoicing is that, unlike most of the other emotions, it is created by the functions from several parts of the brain. Laughing engages various parts of the brain. Dr. Peter Derks, from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg (Virginia, USA), showed that laughing pulls the various parts of the brain together rather than activating a component in only one area.¹ Although most of the activity is in the frontal lobe, the center of emotional activity, there are also many electrical impulses in the occipital lobe or the motion center of the brain. The limbic system of the brain is where most of the functions essential to a living organism are stimulated.

You naturally rejoice when you are comfortable with another person, when you feel open and free and express it through a smile or a laugh. “And the more laughing [there is], the more bonding [occurs] within the group,” says Mahadev Apte, cultural anthropologist at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.²

The physiological study of laughing has its own name—*gelotology*, from the Greek word *gelos* and it is exactly that—the physiological study of humor and laughter. And we know that certain parts of the brain are responsible for

When you smile, you use 15 muscles. But when you frown, you use 34 muscles. Why, then, use 34 muscles?

certain human functions. For example, emotional responses are the function of the brain's largest region, the frontal lobe. In earlier articles in *The Reformation Herald* we mentioned that the frontal lobe is the seat of morality, spirituality, and will power. It has long been established that the ability to laugh is helpful to those coping with major illness and the stress of life's problems as well as in developing the frontal lobe.

What is laughter?

Laughter is the physiological response to rejoicing. Laughing consists of two parts—a set of gestures and the production of a sound called laughing. When we laugh, the brain pressures us to conduct both of those activities simultaneously.

When we laugh, 15 facial muscles contract. Stimulation of the *zygomatic major* (a muscle of facial expression) occurs and our upper lip lifts up. Meanwhile, as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* explains, our breathing is disrupted by the *epiglottis* (at the back of the throat), half-closing the *larynx*, which makes us gasp. In extreme cases, the tear ducts are also activated, so that while the mouth is opening and closing and the struggle for oxygen intake continues, the face

becomes
moist
and often

red. The noises that usually accompany this behavior range from mild giggles to energetic laughing. Again, when you smile, you use 15 muscles. But when you frown, you use 34 muscles. Why, then, use 34 muscles?

What happens when you are happy and joyful?

When you are joyful, you express it with a smile or a laugh. When you laugh, the *neurons* (brain cells) release two types of chemicals that fight cancer.

One type of chemical is called a *nerve protein*. The other chemical *opioid* which enhances the immune system.

God has created us wonderfully. Our body, mind, and spirit are so well connected, that when the mind senses true joy and happiness, it send out *opioids* into the bloodstream which then connect with *monocytes*. When *monocytes* receive the message from the *opioids*, which triggers a response, they begin to eat bacteria and viruses that tear down our immune system.³ Just learn to laugh. It is your free flu shot.

When you are gloomy, you allow fear, worry, stress, and anger to take over, and you are opening the door to sickness and suffering. Your body is not secreting what it needs in order to keep you vibrant. Do not be gloomy or brooding over anything. Because worry can create emotional stress and cause anxiety disorder. As part of his preaching, Martin Luther advised depressed people not to isolate themselves, but to surround themselves with friends who could make them laugh.

Smiling and laughing shift the ways in which we think. Laughing activates the chemistry of the will to live, and it increases our capacity to fight disease. Laughing relaxes the body and reduces problems associated with high blood pressure, stroke, arthritis, and ulcers.

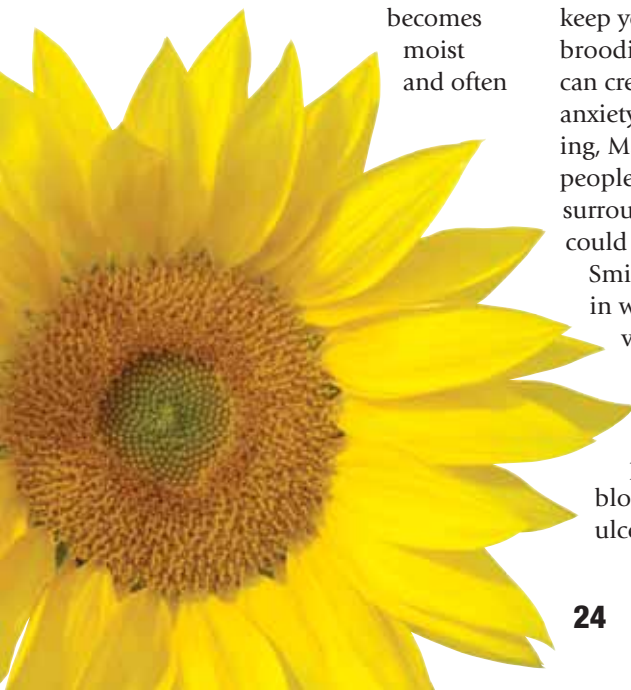
Health benefits of being joyful

"The relation that exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health to a far greater degree than many realize. Many of the diseases from which men suffer are the result of mental depression. Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life forces and to invite decay and death."⁴

Distress is greatly associated with the way we think. It is not actually some situations that generate our stress—it is the meaning we place on the situations. Laughing adjusts the meaning of an event so that it is not so crushing. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can impact your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity.

In contrast, positive thoughts actually release *neuropeptides* that help fight stress and potentially more serious illnesses. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body, beginning with your face. Laughing can:

Protect the heart. Historically, research has shown that distressing emotions like depression, anger, anxiety, stress, and gloominess are all related to heart disease. Research also suggests that laughing or smiling is a good cardiovascular workout that reduces the risk of heart disease. According to a recent study by cardiologists at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore, laughing helps protect you against a heart attack. During laughter, the heart beat quickens and blood pressure rises; after laughter, both heart rate and blood pressure drop to a point that is lower than its initial resting rate. In addition, after the laughing subsides, the cardiovascular system goes into a state of relaxation.⁵ The study that indicates that laughing and rejoicing may help prevent heart disease, found that people with heart disease were 40 percent less likely to laugh in a variety of situations compared to people of the same age without heart disease.



“Christians should be the most cheerful and happy people that live.”

“The old saying that ‘A merry heart is the best medicine,’ definitely appears to be true when it comes to protecting your heart,”⁶ says Michael Miller, M.D., director of the Center for Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center and associate professor of medicine at the University of Maryland, School of Medicine, in his paper presented at the Scientific Session of the American College of Cardiology on March 7, 2005, in Orlando, Florida.

The ability to laugh at stressful situations helps mitigate the damaging physical effects of distressing emotions. That is why God inspired Solomon to write Proverbs 17:22.

Remove stress hormones. Rejoicing may indeed be the best medicine. In the words of Dr. Patch Adams, “Seriousness has no healing qualities at all.” Too many people confuse seriousness with professionalism. Stress, according to many physicians, is the number one killer today. More than 70% of such difficult illnesses as high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, depression, frequent coughs and colds, peptic ulcers, insomnia, allergies, asthma, menstrual difficulties, tension headaches, stomach upsets and even certain forms of cancer, have some connection with stress. Two studies done at the Loma Linda (CA) University School of Medicine in 1989, showed that laughter removes stress hormones, lowers serum cortisol levels and stimulates the immune system counteracting the immunosuppressive effects of stress by raising levels of T-cells, disease-fighting proteins called Gamma-interferon, and B-cells, which produce disease-destroying antibodies.⁷

Trigger the release of endorphins, that is, the body’s natural pain killers, and produce a general sense of well-being.

Soothe tension and stomach aches. Laughing can also ease digestion and improve circulation, which helps reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Lower blood pressure. People who laugh heartily on a regular basis have lower blood pressure than the aver-

age person. When people have a good laugh, initially the blood pressure increases, but then it decreases to levels below normal. Breathing then becomes deeper which sends oxygen enriched blood and nutrients throughout the body.

Give our bodies a good workout. Laughing can be a great workout for your diaphragm, abdominal, respiratory, facial, leg, and back muscles. It massages abdominal organs, tones intestinal functioning, and strengthens the muscles that hold the abdominal organs in place. Not only does laughing give your midsection a workout, it can benefit digestion and absorption functioning as well. It is estimated that hearty laughing can burn calories equivalent to several minutes on the rowing machine or the exercise bike.

Improve brain function. Laughing activates both sides of the brain, increases the *endorphins* that are released by your brain to enhance learning. It eases muscle tension and psychological stress, which keeps the brain alert and allows people to retain more information.⁸

Improve mental and emotional health. A merry heart is a powerful emotional medicine that can lower stress, dissolve anger, and unite families in troubled times. Laughing also helps us avoid loneliness by connecting with others who are attracted to genuine cheerfulness. The good feeling that we get when we laugh can remain with us as an internal experience even after the laughing subsides.

Provide social benefits. Smiling and laughing are essential in our work, marriage, and family. We all need laughing and rejoicing as much as record-keeping and problem-solving. These bind us together instead of pulling us apart. They lighten our burdens and help us keep things in perspective. A merry heart is

the best medicine. When you look at someone or see something even mildly pleasing, practice smiling. The simple act of considering the good things in your life will distance you from negative thoughts that are a barrier to rejoicing and cheerfulness.

A word of caution. There is often a tendency for happy laughter to descend into comical foolishness. In social gatherings, the loud, shrieking laughter commonly heard becomes painful to the ears. Laughter is not wrong, but foolishness is—causing the conscience to sleep, and drowning out the voice of the Holy Spirit. *PR*

“A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken” (Proverbs 15:13). God is not pleased to have us pass our life in despondency and gloom; it is God’s will that we should be cheerful. He would have us open our heart to the sunbeams of heaven. “The cheerfulness of the Christian is created by the consideration of the great blessings we enjoy because we are the children of God. . . . Christians should be the most cheerful and happy people that live.”⁹

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THE Healing A BROKEN HEART

By Mukahirwa Stephanie, as told to J. P. Cruz

Some may wonder: Is the principle of the SDA Reform Movement regarding complete non-participation in acts of war and bloodshed really necessary? Living in a world where bitterness, revenge, and hatred run rampant, what would Jesus do at those times when unthinkable violence breaks out?

The following personal testimony is a poignant illustration of our great need to uphold His standards consistently and reflect Christ's miraculous quality of peaceable, merciful love.



Finally, I was there, face to face with Brother Evaliste. I was shaking and shocked when I heard from him that he had killed my family.



ing my relatives. We, the survivors of that shooting, were cast into that pit latrine to die drowned in the human excrement. It is with deep, heartfelt understanding I can declare

the words of David in Psalm 40:1, 2: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

After being taken out of that horrible place, I ran to the hospital where I found a godly doctor who hid me in a deep hole, which he had dug near the hospital to be used as a hiding place. From that place, I was moved to different hiding places around that hospital. When the genocide intensified, the Lord provided another godly Hutu man who hid me in other places in the village until the genocide ended.

When the genocide ended I was very sad, very depressed. I had no news about my husband and my boy. I knew nothing about them. Finally I was informed that they had died a violent death together with other relatives. I survived with Chantal, my beloved daughter. However, their deaths were for a long time a mystery to me. I did not know where they had died and who exactly had killed them. Some people used to tell me that they were killed in the stadium where they had been taken by the government soldiers and Hutu militias. Others used to tell me that they were killed in the Bisesero village. Still others, who are converted

that time, on Friday, April 8, 1994, I went with my family to welcome the Sabbath in the church of our village. I had a very big family—we were eleven relatives in the same church. As soon as we welcomed the Sabbath, some members of the church with others of the Interahamwe locked the doors and announced: "Nobody can go out, nobody is allowed to leave the temple; all the Tutsis are enemies of the country and enemies of the church as well." We were shocked and astonished to realize that we were being betrayed by our own fellow members. We were terrified, and we remained all that night in the church.

On Sabbath morning the soldiers and others of the Interahamwe, well armed with machetes, spears, guns, and so forth, came and ordered everybody to put down whatever we had. We had nothing besides our Bibles—no weapons except the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. At that time my children were at home. Then we were ordered to move out one by one and to lie down on the ground. Outside the church a soldier selected and separated the members. We were extremely sad to see that the very people who were betraying us were our own brethren in the faith. After the selection process, we were pushed to the nearby pit latrine where they opened fire at us, killing many members of the church includ-

*M*y name is Mukahirwa Stephanie. I was born in 1968 in the city of Mushubati, in the former province of Kibuye (now West Province), Rwanda. The name of my father is Munyambibi Jacob and my mother's name is Mukabaziga Suzan.

I was married in 1987 to Rukerikibaye Yohana. We were blessed with two children: Chantal Nyirarukundo, a girl born in 1989; and Fizz Hakizimana, a boy born in 1991. Rukerikibaye, my loving husband, was a very good Christian man. We were a happy family, living peacefully in the church and with the neighbors.

Unfortunately my beautiful family was almost completely destroyed in the 1994 genocide, when almost one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus lost their lives in Rwanda.

The genocide had begun on Thursday, April 7, 1994, just one day after President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane was shot down. Rapidly the news spread all over the country, and the Interahamwe, the Hutu militia group, started the genocide. As a Seventh Day Adventist member at

Now I have fellowship with very nice people, and I am part of God's family.

now and are in the church, told me: "In the genocide we went to your home to kill your husband and your children, but we didn't find them there."

I am so thankful to the Lord for providing a godly person who hid my dear daughter Chantal until the end of the genocide. You cannot imagine the unspeakable joy of my heart the day I met and received my beautiful girl back in my arms. The reencounter with my daughter relieved a little bit the pain of my heart. Now I am greatly blessed for having her company.

In 2006 I received the reformation message and became a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement Church. I feel safe and comfortable in the Reform Church for its standards and Bible doctrines against war, against participation in politics, against worldliness, and also for the health message, and so forth. I found here those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith in Jesus. Now I am very happy with the remnant people of God. My life was changed completely, both spiritually and materially. Before, I was living in an extreme poverty, in loneliness, depressed, traumatized, and hopeless. Now, I found comfort in Jesus and in His church. Now, my spiritual and physical needs are being met. Now I have fellowship with very nice people, and I am part of God's family. The most important thing is that now I love and feel loved. Now I am happy again. Now I have peace and hope.

On Sabbath, June 9, 2007, more than 13 years after the genocide, Elder Jorai Cruz visited us and presented a very touching message about the second coming of Jesus and forgiveness. In the afternoon I and many other widows from our church were interviewed by Elder Cruz, who was deeply impressed by our experiences here in Rwanda. On that Sabbath afternoon, I told Brother Cruz my experience as one of the surviving widows of the genocide.

On June 18, 2007, Elder Jorai Cruz invited me to come to Gitarama Church because he wanted to talk to me. I came and met Elder Cruz and Brother Bosco. That day Brother Cruz, through Brother Bosco, the translator, told me that Brother Evaliste, one of the members of our church in Kibuye, would like to talk with me and confess to me that he was involved in the murdering of my family. It was not easy to accept that meeting, but I was impressed by the Holy Spirit to agree. Then the meeting was arranged and held that same day.

Finally, I was there, face to face with Brother Evaliste. I was shaking and shocked when I heard from him that he had killed my family. He confessed that he was a wicked man, that he was not converted, that he was possessed by demons when he killed many people, including many members of my family. At the beginning, I did not know what to do, what to say, when he said: "I am very, very sorry for what I have done. I am repentant. I want and need your forgiveness. Please, Sister Stephanie, can you forgive me?"


I need to confess that it was not an easy task. What Brother Evaliste was requesting of me was very, very hard. I was astonished. I was shocked. Satan worked in my mind to harden my heart not to forgive. But, praise the Lord, the Holy Spirit prevailed and I was led to forgive Brother Evaliste completely.

I felt a great burden falling off my heart when I stretched my hand to Brother Evaliste and told him: "Brother Evaliste, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you. I want to be in heaven. For my eternal and your eternal salvation, I forgive you." Since that day I have been at peace with the Lord. I don't keep any resentment or bitterness in my heart. The Holy Spirit helped me to overcome this great trauma in my life. The great wound of my heart was completely healed. Now,

in peace with myself, even with those who hurt me the most, I am waiting for the second coming of the Lord to receive my family back, to meet my husband and my boy again.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank Brother John Bosco, our spiritual leader in Rwanda. Brother Bosco knows very well the real conditions of the widows and orphans of Rwanda. He also is a survivor of the genocide. He has contacted our people in different parts of the world to share our life conditions. As a result of his contacts, some widows and orphans, including myself, have received financial assistance. Now, we have a house to live in and we are able to shelter other widow sisters who still have no place where to live. We thank all of you who have been merciful to us. May the Lord richly bless you all.

Above of all, I thank the Lord for His great mercy to me. I am a survivor of the Rwanda genocide by the grace of God. The Lord had a beautiful plan for me. I needed to know the message that I know now. I needed to know the people that I know now. I know the Lord still has a great plan for my life. Now I have hope. Hope to meet and reunite my family again. Hope to live eternally in God's kingdom, where "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 passed away (Revelation 21:4)."

Many times Satan tries to depress me with the sad remembrances of the genocide. Then I pray to God and He sends the Holy Spirit to comfort my heart. He lifts me up with the wonderful thoughts and promises of the heavenly home, where eternal harmony and happiness will reign among God's saved people. From the bottom of my heart I wish to be eternally saved with Jesus, with my family and with all those for whom He has died. There, only there, in the eternal home of the saints, will be effective the well-known sentence written in almost all the memorials in my country, Rwanda: "GENOCIDE, NEVER AGAIN." Amen. 

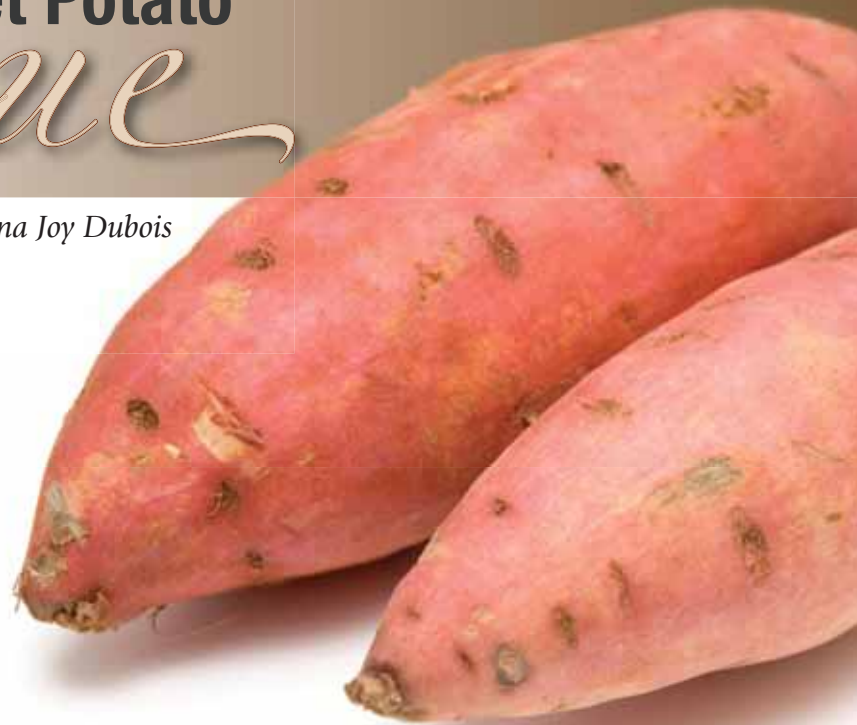
Bisque

Harvestime Sweet Potato

By Alina Joy Dubois

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ large cooking onions
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 ½ Tbsp olive oil or water
- 5 large sweet potatoes (yams)
- 5 potatoes
- several cups of water (to fill pot)
- salt
- ¾ cup dried parsley
- a sprig of fresh parsley for each bowl as a garnish, if desired



Steps:

- 1 Peel and slice, dice or grate the sweet potatoes and potatoes. Set aside.
- 2 Using a large pot, sauté onions and garlic in a little water (or olive oil), until softened but not brown.
- 3 Add the sweet potatoes and potatoes to the pot, and immediately add enough water to cover the potatoes.
- 4 Boil until the potatoes are soft and mushy.
- 5 Finally, the most important step: After everything is well cooked, blend the soup until the texture is thick and creamy (a hand blender is a handy tool for this but, if you are using a regular blender, be very careful because the soup is hot!).
- 6 Add a little salt to taste.
- 7 Mix in enough dried parsley to put plenty of little green flecks into the soup. Garnish each bowl with a sprig of fresh parsley, if desired.
- 8 Serve with a fresh salad and some nice, crusty whole wheat bread, and enjoy!

TIPS FOR PREPARING

Sweet Potatoes

If you purchase organically grown sweet potatoes, you can eat the entire tuber, flesh and skin. Yet, if you buy conventionally grown ones, you should peel them before eating since sometimes the skin is treated with dye or wax; if preparing the sweet potato whole, just peel it after cooking.

As the flesh of sweet potatoes will darken upon contact with the air, you should cook them immediately after peeling and/or cutting them. If this is not possible, to prevent oxidation, keep them in a bowl covered completely with water until you are ready to cook them.

— www.whfoods.com

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup 200g (200 g)			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories	180	Calories from Fat	3
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat	0g		0%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Trans Fat			
Cholesterol	0mg		0%
Sodium	72mg		3%
Total Carbohydrate	41g		14%
Dietary Fiber	7g		26%
Sugars	13g		
Protein	4g		
Vitamin A	769%	Vitamin C	65%
Calcium	8%	Iron	8%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	Less than	300g	375g
Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4
		Protein	4
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Nutritional data and images courtesy of www.NutritionData.com



United States

*Baptism in September 2007 (top),
A group in Buckley,
Washington State (right)*



Australia

Workers seminar in Elim Heights



Ukraine

*Missionary school students
in Chernovitz, Buko Vina*



Moldova

*Brethren from Belz (left),
Workers Seminar with their wives in
Kishinev, November 2007 (below)*





Horsepower versus *Heavenly*

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7).

By B. Monteiro

The horse is a magnificent beast of God's creation. People of all ages cannot help but admire the great beauty and strength of horses. How nice it is also to know that these fine creatures are pleased to work for humans. They do needed tasks with grace and pleasure.

Because of the horse's strength, it is no surprise, then, that the power of man-made engines and motors is calculated in "horsepower" units of measurement.

Horses have been used in war throughout history. In Moses' day, Egypt—the world's strongest nation at that time—had many horses and chariots to boost their army's might. Yet, most of us know about how the Red Sea opened for God's people to escape. The great God of heaven caused the hooves of the horses to get stuck in the mud and crippled their journey. The chariot wheels got stuck as well. Then the Red Sea flowed back into place and the Egyptian army was drowned—horses and all. "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea" (Exodus 15:3, 4).

How did this happen? It was humanly impossible. But even a gentle, peace-loving God will not allow people to hurt His children for too long. He will enter the picture, and "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

Many look today to modern-day "horses"—big, fancy cars or expensive toys in order to feel strong, important, and proud. Bible prophecy actually foretells today's scene of modern cars flowing in traffic: "The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation. . . . The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings" (Nahum 2:3, 4).

Just as in old times, God warns us against putting our hope for happiness in today's various "modern horses" instead of in Him: "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!" (Isaiah 31:1).

In the end, the only thing that can really save and protect us is the Lord. "An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine" (Psalm 33:17-19).

So, when you are tempted to be dazzled by the power of big, strong things, just keep in mind your Bible stories. Young David defeated a huge giant by trusting in God. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call" (Psalm 20:7-9). *R*



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