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Vol. 51, No. 1



Why Rebaptism?

Your Passport to Heaven \ Don't Say Cheese! \ Why Thorns & Thistles?

the REFORMATION *herald*

Volume 51, Number 1

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Reform Movement

"The age in which we live calls for reformatory action."

—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Light-Emitting Love

There exists in nature an intriguing phenomenon known as “bioluminescence.” The name is derived from “bios,” meaning “living,” and “lumen” meaning “light.” This unusual quality possessed by light-emitting forms of life exists in certain flora and fauna such as fireflies, glowworms, and foxfire fungi.

The need for this extraordinary “glowing” appears to be much greater in places where life exists in the midst of darkness. For example, although the firefly lives in areas with a typical day/night ratio, this bioluminescent creature only begins to emit light after sunset. Likewise, the various forms of marine life believed to produce some type of bioluminescence usually consist of species native to the darkest depths of the sea, where very little sunlight penetrates.



A spiritual parallel

Just as natural bioluminescence is remarkable because of its light-emitting ability, the people of God on this sin-darkened planet are uniquely called to be “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). As we will see in this issue of the *Reformation Herald*, according to Deuteronomy 7:6–8; 10:15, this is neither due to any innate superiority in them nor partiality on the part of God. Rather it is a calling based on a need. In this dark era of earth’s history, while moral decadence prevails, we are called to develop holiness of character and moral perfection, developed by obedience to the Creator’s will and ways.

“Let us relate ourselves to God in self-denying, self-sacrificing obedience. Faith in Christ always leads to willing, cheerful obedience. . . . There is to be perfect conformity, in thought, word, and deed, to the will of God. Heaven is only for those who have purified their souls through obedience to the truth.”¹

Two maps in vision

The servant of the Lord describes an interesting vision of a map of the world. This map represented God’s vineyard to be cultivated, and all who received light from heaven were to reflect it to others. The description is as follows:

“I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God’s word was obeyed, and as a result there were memorials for Him in every city and village. His truth was proclaimed throughout the world.

“Then this map was removed and another put in its place. On it light was shining from a few places only. The rest of the world was in darkness, with

only a glimmer of light here and there. Our Instructor said: ‘This darkness is the result of men’s following their own course. They have cherished hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil. They have made questioning and faultfinding and accusing the chief business of their lives. Their hearts are not right with God. They have hidden their light under a bushel.’

“If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan has stolen a march upon us.

“Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, . . . remembering that it is not because of our worthiness that we receive the blessings of heaven, but because of the worthiness of Christ, and our acceptance, through faith in Him, of God’s abounding grace.”²

The glimmer of hope in deepest darkness

“The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.”³

Indeed, through the love of Christ shining in our hearts and radiating outward, our life can actually “glow in the dark”! This spiritual bioluminescence will radiate to outshine the bleakest midnight. ✎

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¹ Bible Training School, February 1, 1905.

² Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 28, 29.

³ Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 415, 416.

Your Passport to Heaven

*Compiled from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, with comments
by Michel-Ange F. Ducheine*

A passport is a most-needed document to travel to a foreign country. It contains valuable personal information relating to your identity, including your full name, your age, your nationality, and your photograph. There are different types of passports. This very idea of having a valid travel document for a voyage is heaven-born: "All the angels that are commissioned to visit the earth hold a golden card, which they present to the angels at the gates of the [Holy City] as they pass in and out."¹

Since we have been invited to take a trip to Heaven, let's consider the kind of passport we need for that very special odyssey.

A most important work

The annals of history are full of names of great men and women who have contributed immensely to humanity in every discipline of art and science. Such men and women have inspired generations after them to dream big and to cherish the desire of doing some great work and thus leaving a legacy to humanity. But what is the most important and noble work we can ever perform? What is the best legacy we can present to the world?

The Bible thus entreats us "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). "Char-

acter building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings; and never before was its diligent study so important as now."²

"The work of forming

[a good character] is the noblest in which men can engage."³

Why is such a work so important? Christ expects us to be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). "God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. **Moral perfection is**



required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrongdoing. . . . *We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin. All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and everyone who receives Christ as a personal Saviour is privileged to possess these attributes.*"⁴

No easy task

Jesus plainly taught that the task of forming perfect character is not an easy one. He illustrated this point with the following description: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12). "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24).

"Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. "It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected."⁵

"Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in conduct be made by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Character building is the work, not of a day, nor of a year, but of a lifetime. The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown."⁶

Although this important work is very difficult, it is not impossible, for "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). "Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character. If you come to this decision, you will certainly fail of obtaining everlasting life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you will not, then you can not

overcome. The real difficulty arises from the corruption of an unsanctified heart, and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God."⁷

God's building

"You cannot build your character yourself. You must unite with the divine Builder. Said Paul, 'According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' Let no man suppose that he is appointed to be a foundation upon which other human beings are to build. Every human being is to erect his building upon the sure foundation, Jesus Christ. 'Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is' (1 Corinthians 3:10-13)."⁸

The building material

Every good foreman always looks for the best material available in the construction. The Bible clearly points out what we should seek for a lasting character building (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

"In every generation and in every land the true foundation for character building has been the same—the principles contained in the word of God. The only safe and sure rule is to do what God says. 'The statutes of the Lord are right,' and 'he that doeth these things shall never be moved' (Psalms 19:8; 15:5). It was with the word of God that the apostles met the false theories of their day, saying, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid' (1 Corinthians 3:11)."⁹

"God expects us to build characters in accordance with the pattern set before us. We are to lay brick by brick, adding grace to grace, finding our weak points and correcting them in accordance with the directions given. When a crack is seen in the walls of a mansion, we know that something about

the building is wrong. In our character building, cracks are often seen. Unless these defects are remedied, the house will fall when the tempest of trial beats upon it.

"God gives us strength, reasoning power, time, in order that we may build characters on which He can place His stamp of approval. He desires each child of His to build a noble character, by the doing of pure, noble deeds, that in the end he may present a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by man and God.

"In our character building we must build on Christ. He is the sure foundation—a foundation which can never be moved. The tempest of temptation and trial cannot move the building which is riveted to the Eternal Rock.

"He who would grow into a beautiful building for the Lord must cultivate every power of the being. It is only by the right use of the talents that the character can develop harmoniously. Thus we bring to the foundation that which is represented in the Word as gold, silver, precious stones—material that will stand the test of God's purifying fires. In our character building Christ is our example."¹⁰

"It makes every difference what material is used in the character building. The long-expected day of God will soon test every man's work. 'The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is' (1 Corinthians 3:13). As fire reveals the difference between gold, silver, and precious stones and wood, hay, and stubble, so the day of judgment will test characters, showing the difference between characters formed after Christ's likeness and characters formed after the likeness of the selfish heart. All selfishness, all false religion, will then appear as it is. The worthless material will be consumed; but the gold of true, simple, humble faith will never lose its value. It can never be consumed, for it is imperishable. One hour of transgression will be seen to be a great loss, while the fear of the Lord will be seen to be the beginning of wisdom. The pleasure of self-indulgence will perish as stubble, while the gold of steadfast principle, maintained at any cost, will endure forever."¹¹

Admittance to Heaven

"John saw a Lamb on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 having His Father's name written in their foreheads. They bore the signet of heaven. They reflected the image of God. They were full of the light and the glory of the Holy One. If we would have the image and superscription of God upon us, we must separate ourselves from all iniquity. We must forsake every evil way, and then we must trust our cases in the hands of Christ. While we are working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, God will work in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure."¹⁸

"A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life."¹⁹

"Let your souls answer the question, Does my character correspond to the qualifications essential that I may receive a passport to the mansions Christ has prepared for those who are fitted for them? Holiness must be inwrought in our character."²⁰ *✍*

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¹ *Early Writings*, p. 39.

² *Education*, p. 225.

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 657.

⁴ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 330 (emphasis supplied).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

⁶ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 452.

⁷ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 331.

⁸ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, pp. 398, 399.

⁹ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 475.

¹⁰ *Child Guidance*, pp. 165, 166.

¹¹ *The Review and Herald*, December 11, 1900.

¹² *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 133 (emphasis supplied).

¹³ *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 146.

¹⁴ *The Signs of the Times*, September 22, 1898.

¹⁵ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 114.

¹⁶ *Prophets and Kings*, p. 233.

¹⁷ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69.

¹⁸ *The Review and Herald*, March 19, 1889.

¹⁹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 332.

²⁰ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 446 (emphasis supplied).

The best material

"Do not permit upon your tables the magazines and newspapers in which are found love stories. Supply their place with books that will help the youth to put into their character building the **very best material**—the love and fear of God, the knowledge of Christ."¹²

1. THE LOVE OF GOD: 1 JOHN 5:3.

"Obedience to the laws of God develops in man a beautiful character that is in harmony with all that is pure and holy and undefiled. In the life of such a man the message of the gospel of Christ is made clear. Accepting the mercy of Christ and His healing from the power of sin, he is brought into right relation with God. His life, cleansed from vanity and selfishness, is filled with the love of God. His daily obedience to the law of God obtains for him a character that assures him eternal life in the kingdom of God."¹³

2. THE FEAR OF GOD: PROVERBS 8:13.

"With the peace and joy of those who . . . serve God, there is always seen a godly fear. . . . This sanctified fear is entirely proper. It is not a servile, cowardly fear; it is a dread to do anything that Christ will not approve. This fear regulates the Christian experience. Those who feel it sanctify the Lord in their hearts. They regard God with a reverence and love that leads to self-abasement. But their fear is very different from the terror of a slave, who lives in expectation of the lash. This genuine fear leads to firm reliance on God."¹⁴

3. THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST:

Jeremiah 22:15, 16;

Psalms 119: 142, 160;

1 John 5:17; 2: 3, 4.

"In His prayer to the Father, Christ gave to the world a lesson which should be graven on mind and soul. 'This is life eternal,' He said, 'that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent' (John 17:3). This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe.

"This is the knowledge which is obtained by searching the word of God. And this treasure may be found by every soul who will give all to obtain it."¹⁵

The greatest testimony

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

"Transformation of character is the testimony to the world of an indwelling Christ. The Spirit of God produces a new life in the soul, bringing the thoughts and desires into obedience to the will of Christ; and the inward man is renewed in the image of God. Weak and erring men and women show to the world that the redeeming power of grace can cause the faulty character to develop into symmetry and abundant fruitfulness."¹⁶

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."¹⁷

WHY THORNS & THISTLES?

All the objections that skeptics have raised to justify their disbelief in a merciful, loving, omniscient, and omnipotent God, Creator of heaven and earth, have been adequately answered by former atheists. Here I just want to discuss one of their arguments.

Skeptics and agnostic evolutionists say that belief in God faces an insurmountable problem. They explain:

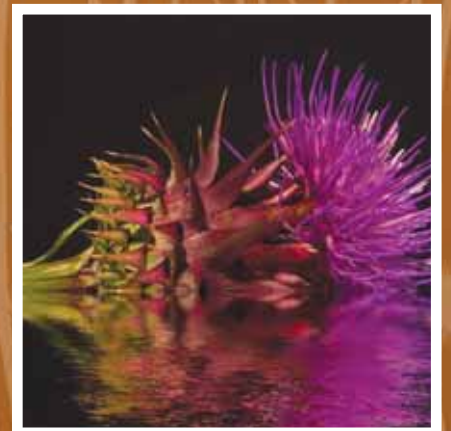
"Whoever contends that each kind of animal was especially designed must assert either that there was a deliberate intention on the part of the Creator to produce these results, or that there was an inability [on His part] to prevent them. . . Of all the animal kingdom as a whole, more than half the species are parasites. Thus we are brought to the contemplation of innumerable cases in which the suffering

inflicted brings no compensating benefit."¹

In other words, they assert that God either intended to produce fleas and flies, mosquitoes and lice, rats and mice, and many other plagues, or that He was unable to prevent these evils. So they say that they cannot believe in a God who is deficient either in love and mercy or in knowledge and power.

Infidels who stumble over this seeming difficulty ignore the teachings of the Word of God. According to the Bible, the original creation of God was perfect. "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). There were no plagues, no pestilences, no scourges to afflict humanity, beasts, or vegetation. But since humanity sided with Satan, opening the door for sin to enter into the world, the entire human race and its descendants must carry

By A. Balbach



the consequence of that wrong choice. This is why there is a curse resting upon this planet. God said to Adam:

"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:17-19).

The curse that the first man brought upon himself, with so many "thorns and thistles," has made it necessary for humanity to struggle for survival on earth. The human race has to bear all kinds of hardships as long as "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19).

Paul, the apostle, wrote about this problem:

"We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:22, 23).

How does God explain all this?

God in His love and mercy suffers with us. Yet He will not stop the suffering that men and women have brought upon themselves through sin. He says:

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable;

there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:12-18).

What would have happened to the human race if the downward road which they chose to travel had been left wide open and well paved, without any obstacles? Wouldn't the Flood have been sent to destroy them much earlier? Wouldn't Sodom and Gomorrah have sealed their doom long before the days of Abraham? Wouldn't the world be ripe for destruction many centuries ago?

What foundation was laid in the ancient "cities of the plain"?

In the history of Sodom and Gomorrah we can see what happens when people do not have to struggle against "thorns and thistles." The inhabitants of these cities did not have to face the obstacles, hardships, and worries that plague our generation. They lived a very easy life, without the discomforts, sufferings, and uncertainties which were molesting the rest of the inhabited world.

"Rich harvests clothed the fields, and flocks and herds covered the encircling hills. . . . With little thought or labor, every want of life could be supplied, and the whole year seemed one round of festivity.

"The profusion reigning everywhere gave birth to luxury and pride. Idle-

ness and riches make the heart hard that has never been oppressed by want or burdened by sorrow. The love of pleasure was fostered by wealth and leisure, and the people gave themselves up to sensual indulgence. 'Behold,' says the prophet, 'this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good' (Ezekiel 16:49, 50)."²

The curse of ease and excess free time

"Idleness and riches make the heart hard that has never been oppressed by want or burdened by sorrow. . . . There is nothing more desired among men than riches and leisure. . . . Idleness is the greatest curse that can fall upon man, for vice and crime follow in its train. It enfeebles the mind, perverts the understanding, and debases the soul. Satan lies in ambush, ready to destroy those who are unguarded, whose leisure gives him opportunity to insinuate himself under some attractive disguise. He is never more successful than when he comes to men in their idle hours."³

If boys and girls are raised in idleness; if they are indulged like pampered poodles; if they are not put to study, work, and carry responsibilities from their early years, many of them will be useless or more than useless citizens. They will be misfits in school, misfits at work, misfits in marriage, misfits in church, and misfits in society.



What would have happened to the human race if the downward road had been left wide open and well paved, without any obstacles? . . . Wouldn't the world have been ripe for destruction many centuries ago?

Their hands will not serve for any good thing—maybe only for handcuffs.

We all want our children and grandchildren to succeed in life. But can they have success in the right direction, on the upward road, unless they are taught to struggle with all the wisdom and power that they can obtain from the divine Helper?

Fleas, frustration, and facts

We may find an enlightening answer in an experiment that was conducted at a university. Scientists wanted to see the difference in the behavior of dogs submitted to two distinct lifestyles. In one cage they kept dogs with fleas; in the other they had dogs without fleas. Those without fleas acted as real troublemakers. The others, that were full of fleas, had no time for canine delinquency; they had a problem which kept them busy struggling to survive. And when they were dipped into a solution to kill the fleas, they used every short moment of respite from toil to get some rest instead of howling and fighting among themselves.

The moral lesson taught by that experiment and by the history of humanity is that people must be kept busy all the time struggling to survive. If we do not have to eat our bread in the sweat of our brow, and if there had not been any "thorns and thistles" in our way, we would in a short time become much worse than the antediluvians, who became so wicked that they had to be destroyed.

There is yet another reason or purpose for the existence of "thorns and thistles" in our life on earth. While we have to suffer because "sin entered into the world" (Romans 5:12), we are led to seek an answer to a question which comes up in the mind of many a human being: "Will there ever be a time when the curse of sin shall be removed from this planet?"

The question raised by the skeptics—"How can we believe in a God who either created all the plagues existing in the world or was unable to prevent them?"—becomes insignificant in comparison to the revelations of God. God, who can be found by each person who is not afraid to accept the challenge—"Ye shall see me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13)—has a plan for this world. And He has revealed His plan in His Word, the Bible. This is of overwhelming significance.

Getting it all into perspective

Honest Christians, who know how to distinguish the significant from the insignificant, do not reverse values. A simple believer said that when he faces a question to which he has no answer, he just uses a bit of "horse-sense." How does a horse act when a portion of hay is dumped into his trough? He does not refuse to eat the hay because there are or may be some inedible particles mixed with it. He feeds himself happily and leaves the hard sticks aside. Why should intelligent human beings get choked on some "hard sticks" and reject altogether the superabundant evidence?

The evidence from the revelations of God shows that this planet will be restored to its original condition. The curse brought in by sin will be eliminated once and for all. This is the plan of God for this world made new:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).

John the Revelator described the glory of that time so soon to come: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor

crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:3-5).

"And there shall be no more curse" (Revelation 22:3).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life" (Revelation 22:14). *✠*

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¹ Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D., *In Defence: A Plea for the Faith*, pp. 40, 41.

² *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 156.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 156, 157.



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Dead *Delightfully Doing* Their Duty



By B. Monteiro

*T*he man's life was over . . . the last funeral dirge was sung. . . . His lifeless body had been carefully placed in the oak casket—and before burial, the casket was sealed shut.

We certainly would not like to imagine that there could be any chance that anyone with any trace of life would be in such a situation. Thankfully, it is the general custom around the world that only dead people are buried. Thankfully, it is only dead people that are stuck in sealed coffins.

There is a spiritual parallel to this. In the sealing message in the book of Revelation, God only seals dead people—not physically dead people, but rather people who have died to selfishness and sin.

Jesus explained, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:24, 25).

"The seed buried in the ground produces fruit, and in turn this is planted. Thus the harvest is multiplied. So the death of Christ on the cross of Calvary will bear fruit unto eternal life. The contemplation of this sacrifice will be the glory of those who, as the fruit of it, will live through the eternal ages.

"The grain of wheat that preserves its own life can produce no fruit. It abides alone. Christ could, if He chose, save Himself from death. But should He do this, He must abide alone. He could bring no sons and daughters to God. Only by yielding up His life could He impart life to humanity. Only by falling into the ground to die could He become the seed of that vast harvest—the great multitude that out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, are redeemed to God.

"With this truth Christ connects the lesson of self-sacrifice that all should learn: 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.' **All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world's need. Self-love, self-interest, must per-**

ish. And the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. The husband-man preserves his grain by casting it away. So in human life. To give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ's sake sacrifice their life in this world will keep it unto life eternal.

"The life spent on self is like the grain that is eaten. It disappears, but there is no increase. A man may gather all he can for self; he may live and think and plan for self; but his life passes away, and he has nothing. The law of self-serving is the law of self-destruction."¹

Three signs of life

There are certain vital signs that show that a person is alive and well; for example, doctors check to see that blood pressure, temperature, and respiration are within the normal range characteristic of human life.

Likewise in the spiritual realm, the "old self" which is supposed to be dead, may be demonstrating evidence of vitality. Remember him or her? He or she is that person you used to be before your conversion to Christ. What are his or her characteristics? The Bible names a few examples, but they are not always exactly the same in everyone's case. Different people have different weaknesses. What are yours? Many people do not like to think about these matters, because the human heart "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," so we all like to think that we are just fine the way we are. But if we ask God to show us ourselves, He graciously, tactfully will do so. Then we need to put that part of our experience to death.

"We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from

sin" (Romans 6:4-7).

There are three strong indicators that the "old self" of a person is still rearing its ugly head. The Bible speaks in 1 John 2:16 of "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Whenever we fall into temptation in any of these areas, it is evidence that the old man is still alive. In the case of the third problem, the "pride of life," spiritual recovery is especially challenging because the person is usually unaware of the problem.

These three problems are also depicted in Matthew 4:1-10. They can be summarized as appetite, love of the world, and presumption. These were the three temptations presented before Christ in an attempt to entice Him to sin. Thankfully, through divine strength, our Lord and Master steadfastly resisted the bait.

Only one Christian?

There was a moment in history when it appears as if that there may have only been one true follower of Christ on earth—at least as far as actions are concerned. Only one living sermon. Who was it? When was it? Please consider the following:

The Lamb of God had just been verbally abused, spat upon in the face, and whipped until the skin on His back was nearly in shreds. It was now the morning after He had been kept awake all night by the unspeakably cruel mistreatment at the hands of men whom He had come to save. He had answered them back with no angry retort, no self-justifying explanation. He had remained silent.

Now a huge, heavy wooden cross was thrust upon His back, and He was expected to carry that tremendous weight in this weakened physical state. So He submissively did for a while but then started to collapse under the mag-

nitude of the burden. Why—because He had not spent His days as a good enough health reformer? Hopefully, we know better. But it should cause us to prayerfully examine our attitude when similar misfortunes befall our comrades made in God's own image.

Now before Jesus stand members of the mainline ecclesiastical organization: Priests and rulers of the great religious order called into existence by God Himself. They are jeering at this pitiful Man of sorrows acquainted with grief. They mock the scene; they ridicule His outward appearance.

What about the brave, noble reformers who had separated somewhat from that dead formalism to follow the Master? These had courageously faced opposition to pursue a unique education from this Rabbi of Galilee. There were twelve of them who had even been specifically ordained to receive the privilege of special 24-hour-a-day instruction by the great Teacher Himself. He had informed them in advance that this exact scene was going to occur. Evidently now they either had forgotten or had just plain refused to believe Him in the first place. . . . After all, it couldn't be true, they thought—there was no way they could think such a thing—it was too contrary to their bold imaginings of a posh new kingdom where they were going to lead out.

Why didn't perhaps three of those big, burly fishermen grab hold of that wooden cross—perhaps one at each side and another at the back, the way men normally have the decency to

One solitary man was compelled to help. He must have had that rare, beautiful gift—the gift of "helps."



do as pallbearers in a funeral procession? No, no, . . . they didn't want to step forward just at this time. They were still in the same mood as they had been the night before when "they all forsook him, and fled" (Mark 14:50).

One solitary man, however, was compelled to help. He must have had that rare, beautiful gift—the gift of "helps" which, in the list in 1 Corinthians 12:28, comes right after "gifts of healings" and ahead of "governments." An unpleasant task was, as it were, "dumped upon" him. But like the Master Himself, he did not refuse it. We do not read of this man before in Scripture, neither after. We just know that his name is Simon and that he was from Cyrene. The Bible speaks of him in Matthew 27:32. The Spirit of Prophecy provides a few more details about the scene:

"The crowd that followed the Saviour to Calvary taunted and reviled Him because He could not carry the wooden cross. They all saw the weak and staggering steps of Christ, but compassion did not reveal itself in the hearts of those who had advanced from one step to another in their abuse and torture of the Son of God. . . .

"A stranger, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming to the city from the country, hears the crowd pass the taunts and ribaldry; he hears the contemptuous repetition,

'Make way for the King of the Jews.' He stops in astonishment at the scene, and as he expresses his compassion in words and deeds, they seize him and compel him to lift the cross which is too heavy for Christ to bear. . . . That wooden cross borne by him to Calvary was the means of Simon taking upon himself the cross of Christ from choice, to ever cheerfully stand beneath its burden. His compulsory companionship with Christ in bearing His cross to Calvary, in beholding the sad and dreadful work and the spectators beneath the cross, was the means of drawing his heart to Jesus. Every word from the lips of Christ was graven upon his soul. . . . And the heart of Simon believed."²

"And the heart of Simon believed." How beautiful! We know the story very well—most of us have read about this also in *The Desire of Ages*. But have we really applied its significance to our individual lives? At that moment, it seemed as if there was only one Christian—only one to step forward in Christ's behalf, only one to take action at the golden moment. Perhaps Simon was not really the only Christian in heart at that moment—but he certainly does quietly shine as one who did not refuse to accept the cross of Christ. He stands out as one who took action. And that was quite unique at this particular moment.

Your golden moment—and mine

At the golden moment, are you and I like Simon the Cyrenian? What is that golden moment, anyway? The golden moment in this case is the crisis moment—the time when it feels as if absolutely everyone you know appears to be doubting. It may not actually be true that they are doubting—you cannot know their hearts—but circumstances are such that to you it may feel like it. For some reason, it is as if everyone is paralyzed with fear. Everyone seems to be trying to save his or her life as if it were in jeopardy—and it may not just be their physical life—maybe it is their only high reputation or standing among people. This is the same kind of attitude the disciples had when they were waiting for someone else to perform the act of footwashing. But Jesus says, "Who-soever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24).

Right now, at this moment in history, the world is scheduled (actually overdue) to be enlightened with the glory of God through people who are to reflect the image of Jesus fully (Revelation 18:1; *Early Writings*, p. 85). Prophetic vision shows these people seeking out strangers to talk with them about salvation. Is this always convenient? No, often our conscience tells us to do this right at the worst possible time. It is always comfortable? No, it is usually a pretty awkward idea—the enemy tempts us to assume that it's not our talent. (That's right—it's not our talent—it's God's. We're just to be His agents.) Is it always easy? No—this is the big problem: It crosses against self.

"The talents of the humble cottager are needed in the house-to-house labor and can accomplish more in this work than brilliant gifts.

"A thousand doors of usefulness are open before us. . . . Selfishness and self-indulgence bar the way.

"Church members, let the light shine forth. Let your voices be heard in humble prayer, in witness against intemperance, the folly, and the amusements of this world, and in the proclamation of the truth for this time. Your voice, your influence, your time—all these are gifts from God



"One talent, if faithfully used, will do the very work God designs that it should do."

and are to be used in winning souls to Christ.

"Visit your neighbors and show an interest in the salvation of their souls. Arouse every spiritual energy to action. Tell those whom you visit that the end of all things is at hand. The Lord Jesus Christ will open the door of their hearts and will make upon their minds lasting impressions.

"Strive to arouse men and women from their spiritual insensibility. Tell them how you found Jesus and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. **This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream.**

"Even while engaged in their daily employment, God's people can lead others to Christ. And while doing this they will have the precious assurance that the Saviour is close beside them. **They need not think that they are left to depend on their own feeble efforts. Christ will give them words to speak that will refresh and encourage and strengthen poor, struggling souls who are in darkness.**"³

The scene of Bethesda repeated

No, we are not saved by works, no matter how zealous our activity. But if we are **not** working, it is a symptom that something is seriously wrong—our condition is like the nameless, impotent man at the pool of Bethesda (in John 5:1–9). Obviously something was wrong with this man. He had been lying around paralyzed for 38 years. He could not even manage to drag himself to the hydrotherapy pool nearby. Surely he might have been able

to come up with a ton of legitimate excuses not to pick up his bed and walk when Christ commanded him to do so. Remember, for 38 years he had been completely immobile. Any physical therapist can assure you that extreme atrophy of the muscles had certainly set in. But instead, this man decided to go ahead and do it—to go ahead and take action on what Christ told him to do. And immediately the Lord supplied the "talent."

If we do not feel that doing some form of missionary work is our talent, then maybe we need a new born-again experience. As mentioned, no, it is not our talent. It is God's talent.

"Talents that are not needed are not bestowed. Supposing that the talent is small. God has a place for it, and that one talent, if faithfully used, will do the very work God designs that it should do."⁴

Does the world need to be enlightened? Yes. Is God willing to bestow the talent to do it? Yes. He's waiting for empty vessels—dead vessels—willing to be used. The obstacle was mentioned earlier in an explanation from the Spirit of Prophecy: "Selfishness and self-indulgence bar the way."

Remember, "every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver."⁵

"It is not merely the ministers who are missionaries; every soul who has given himself to God is a missionary. Everyone ought to feel that he is under obligation to God to win souls to Christ."⁶

To feel that we are "under obligation" is not always comfortable. But if we are dead to self, it really doesn't matter whether it's comfortable or not, does it? *✍*

References

¹ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 623, 624 (emphasis supplied).

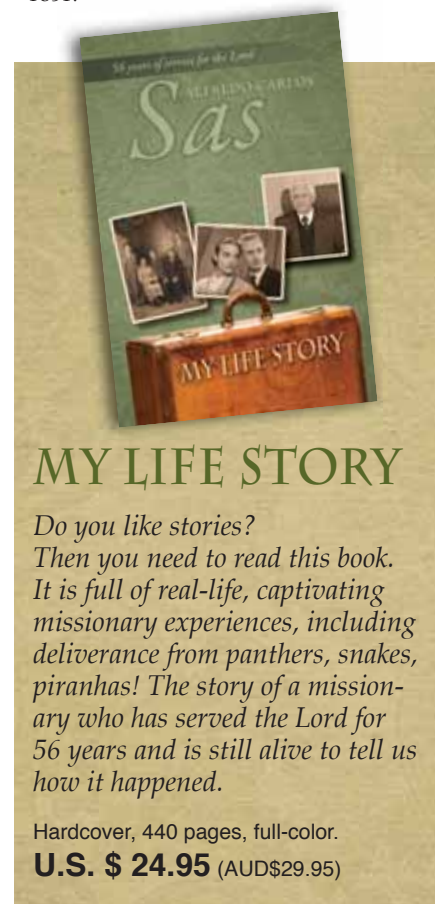
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Expanding

JERUSALEM'S BORD

A study from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compiled by J. P. Jean-François

PART 1 of 3

Were the children of Israel any better, any more righteous than other nations?

"Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. . . ." "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day" (Deuteronomy (9:4, 5; 10:15).

Why did God choose ancient Israel?

The Lord answers in His word:

"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

I. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (Isaiah 54:2, 3).

What is the promise made to Abraham and his descendants?

"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22:16-18).

"Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him" (Genesis 18:18).

"Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him

through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.

"It was for the accomplishment of this purpose that God called Abraham out from his idolatrous kindred and bade him dwell in the land of Canaan. 'I will make of thee a great nation,' He said, 'and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing' (Genesis 12:2)."¹

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel" (Exodus 19:5, 6).

"[Israel's] obedience to the law of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. He who could give them wisdom and skill in all cunning work would continue to be their teacher, and would ennoble and elevate them through obedience to His laws. If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations, and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth."²

"God desired to bring all peoples under His merciful rule. He desired that the earth should be filled with joy and peace. He created man for happiness, and He longs to fill human hearts with the peace of heaven. He desires that the families below shall be a symbol of the great family above."³

What illustration did God use to show what was expected from the children of Israel as a nation?

"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine,

and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes" (Isaiah 5:1, 2).

"The husbandman chooses a piece of land from the wilderness; he fences, clears, and tills it, and plants it with choice vines, expecting a rich harvest. This plot of ground, in its superiority to the uncultivated waste, he expects to do him honor by showing the results of his care and toil in its cultivation. So God had chosen a people from the world to be trained and educated by Christ. The prophet says, 'The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant' (Isaiah 5:7). Upon this people God had bestowed great privileges, blessing them richly from His abundant goodness. He looked for them to honor Him by yielding fruit. They were to reveal the principles of His kingdom. In the midst of a fallen, wicked world they were to represent the character of God."⁴

What kind of fruit was God expecting from that nation?

"It was the privilege of the Jewish nation to represent the character of God as it had been revealed to Moses. In answer to the prayer of Moses, 'Show me Thy glory,' the Lord promised, 'I will make all My goodness pass before thee' (Exodus 33:18, 19). 'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin' (Exodus 34:6, 7). This was the fruit that God desired from His people. In the purity of their characters, in the holiness of their lives, in their mercy and loving-kindness and compassion, they were to show that 'the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul' (Psalm 19:7)."⁵

A warning to us from the experience of Solomon

In Solomon we find a miniature example of what God would have

done with Israel. “And of all my sons, (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.... And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever” (1 Chronicles 28:5–7, 9).

“And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly” (2 Chronicles 1:1). See 1 Kings 2:12; 1 Chronicles 29:25.

“In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead. Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great? And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like” (2 Chronicles 1:7–12).

Solomon is an example of Israel’s great opportunity.

“While Solomon exalted the law of heaven, God was with him, and wisdom was given him to rule over Israel with impartiality and mercy. At first, as wealth and worldly honor came to him, he remained humble, and great was the extent of his influence. ‘Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river [Euphrates] unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt.’ ‘He . . . had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, . . . all the days of Solomon’ (1 Kings 4:21, 24, 25).

“But after a morning of great promise his life was darkened by apostasy. History records the melancholy fact that he who had been called Jedidiah—‘Beloved of the Lord’ (2 Samuel 12:25, margin)—he who had been honored by God with tokens of divine favor so remarkable that his wisdom and uprightness gained for him worldwide fame, he who had led others to ascribe honor to the God of Israel, turned from the worship of Jehovah to bow before the idols of the heathen.”⁶

“There was given to Solomon and his people opportunity to reveal to men of all nations the character of the King of kings, and to teach them to reverence and obey Him. . . .

“Placed at the head of a nation that had been set as a beacon light to the surrounding nations, Solomon should have used his God-given wisdom and power of influence in organizing and directing a great movement for the enlightenment of those who were ignorant of God and His truth. Thus multitudes would have been won to allegiance to the divine precepts, Israel would have been shielded from the evils practiced by the heathen, and the Lord of glory would have been greatly honored. But Solomon lost sight of this high purpose. He failed of improving his splendid opportunities for enlightening those who were continually passing through his territory or tarrying at the principal cities.

“The missionary spirit that God had implanted in the heart of Solomon and in the hearts of all true Israelites was supplanted by a spirit of commercialism. The opportunities afforded by

contact with many nations were used for personal aggrandizement. Solomon sought to strengthen his position politically by building fortified cities at the gateways of commerce”⁷ (See 2 Chronicles 8:4; 1 Kings 9:26, 28; 10:11.)

Let’s think it over

Dear friends, Solomon started off with a good heart and a tremendous missionary spirit. He was extremely gifted. He was granted magnificent opportunities to witness for God. But what happened to him and his people? They allowed their exalted privileges to be eclipsed out of sight by a spirit of commercialism. In other words, buying and selling, buying and selling. Does this too often end up being our focus as well?

Solomon’s encounters with other people ended up being used for personal aggrandizement—in other words, he started seeking to impress others for his own benefit and advancement, not really to honor God any more. Let’s face reality: Are many of us doing the same? What should be our focus instead? What opportunities lie before us in this day and age? What ought to be our focus in this busy era?

“In this our day the opportunities for coming into contact with men and women of all classes and many nationalities are much greater than in the days of Israel. The thoroughfares of travel have multiplied a thousandfold.

“Like Christ, the messengers of the Most High today should take their position in these great thoroughfares, where they can meet the passing multitudes from all parts of the world. Like Him, hiding self in God, they are to sow the gospel seed, presenting before others the precious truths of Holy Scripture that will take deep root in mind and heart, and spring up unto life eternal.”⁸ *✠*

References

¹ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 286.

² *Ibid.*, p. 288.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 286.

⁶ *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 51, 52.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 74.



ORDER

PART ONE IN A SERIES

By Pam Stemmler

With your mind's eye, picture the most beautiful scene you can imagine. Perhaps you might envision a panorama of mountains, oceans, gardens, and lakes. What is your personal definition of the word "beautiful"?

Now, did you happen to picture the scene of a city—or even a rural area after a tornado, with homes, vehicles, garbage, broken tree limbs, and every imaginable substance scattered about and heaped in unusual places? I don't think so! Did you happen to picture a place of filth? I doubt it.

Here is another question: When you plan to have a family picture taken, do you have everyone put on dirty clothing, mess up their hair, leave food on the baby's face, and sit in a hunched manner for the photo? No! Instead, you all would put on nice clothing, make sure your hair was neat and stand erectly in an upright position as prompted by the photographer. He or she will usually orchestrate a special

setup to produce the highest level of symmetry and beauty possible in order to make an attractive photo.

It seems that we all have similar definitions about what order is or isn't when it comes to the scenarios just mentioned. It is a God-given understanding. Why do I state it this way? Think back to Genesis for a moment. What was the earth like in the very beginning?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:1, 2).

Without form, void, and dark. Then what did God do? He began systematically to produce food, shelter, light, and companionship for every creature. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (verse 31).

About 6,000 years have now passed. As we look around the world, we can still see many beautiful sights. But we must also admit that now, on a worldwide scale, there are even more examples of destruction, disorder, filth, and pain than as recent as 100 years ago.

What has happened?

In our scientific world, there is a law of physics known as the law of entropy. This basically states that anything left to itself degenerates. Such a description certainly applies to the condition of fallen planet Earth.

This is what has happened to humanity—not only in general but specifically in society, churches, families, and individuals. It is not in harmony with the Creator's desire or His sense of beauty.

Chaos is seeking to take over our world. Despite any social programs and plans that can be devised to slow down the trend, Bible prophecy nonetheless reveals the final outcome. What is ultimately going to happen?

Where is God's character demonstrated first in biblical history? In His creation . . . on each day, a certain system of life was created.

The prophet John says: "The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were

upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great" (Revelation 6:14-17; 16:18).

An Old Testament prophet was shown a similar scene: "I beheld the

earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it" (Jeremiah 4:23-28).

We don't want to take part in that, do we? No, we want to be in a better place—a heavenly place. What will Heaven be like? Will it be beautiful and orderly? "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

If we want to live in that perfect place of awesome beauty, then we must get ready. To prepare to dwell with our Creator, we need to pursue His orderly ways. When? Now! Where? In our homes and on the property entrusted to us. Why? Because we have been directed to do so. God in His great mercy does not just give us a blueprint of what He expects from us. He actually provides us with power or ability to carry it out. For that we can be most thankful!

God's character revealed in nature

Scripture mentions many attributes of God's character:

"Merciful and gracious,
longsuffering, and
abundant in

goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation" (Exodus 34:6, 7). "God is love" (1 John 4:8).

Where is God's character demonstrated first in biblical history? In His creation. Let us therefore consider the series of steps that our Creator took in forming the amazing system of life on earth.

Day 1

On Day 1, there was light. Science reveals that there are many types of light, not just what we can see. There is infrared light, ultraviolet light, white light, and so forth.

Also the differentiation between Day and Night took place. This is a significant point. Night is important, for many physiological processes take place at night. Our bodies and minds need to be refreshed by sound sleep so that we may be ready for the next day, and the nighttime has been designed specifically for that purpose. Here we can see system and order.

Since the world exists in space and time, civilization has adopted ways and means to chronicle the passing of hours, days, weeks, months, and years. We have the clock and the calendar. Time is much more valuable than money. Time is a talent that God has



entrusted to us, and we are accountable to Him for every moment wasted.

Day 2

On Day 2, God made the firmament called Heaven.

The apostle Paul alludes to the third heaven. Then there must be a second and a first heaven. This has often been explained as follows: Where we can see the clouds floating, the birds and airplanes flying, the rainbow showing its beautiful colors—that is the atmosphere, the first heaven.

From the atmosphere surrounding the earth, we receive oxygen while we exhale carbon dioxide. If the right proportions of the gases contained in the air (about 78% nitrogen, nearly 21% oxygen, almost 1% argon, and



so forth) were suddenly changed, we would die. Here we can also see system and order.

The place of the planets and stars—"outer space"—has often been called the second heaven.

The dwelling place of God—where He has His throne—is identified with the third heaven. By the grace of God, we are looking forward to being there—soon!

Day 3

On Day 3, God made a division between the dry land and the seas.

This was the day our food was created—grasses and herbs yielding seed and trees yielding fruit all appeared in abundant varieties. Think of the corn,

wheat, oat, rice, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, apples, pears, grapes, plums, oranges, mangoes, walnuts. . . . Think also of the lovely cedar trees, maple trees, pine trees, and hundreds of other trees that grow in the forest.

There is system and order in the science of farming. What you sow you will reap. Tomato seeds yield tomatoes; beans yield beans. There is perfect order in seed planting. What you sow, you will reap. It is a natural law. This principle teaches us order as well.

Orderly combinations of nature make water available to us. Soils, metals, gems, and other elements are interspersed for our many needs. Even gravity is a law in God's orderly arrangement to keep things in place.

"God's created works testify to His love and power. He has called the world into being, with all that it contains. God is a lover of the beautiful; and in the world which He has fitted up for us He has not only given us everything necessary for our comfort, but He has filled the heavens and the earth with beauty. We see His love and care in the rich fields of autumn and His smile in the glad sunshine. His hand has made the castle-like rocks and the towering mountains. The lofty trees grow at His command; He has spread earth's green velvet carpet, and dotted it with shrubs and

flowers. Why has He clothed the earth and trees with living green, instead of a dark, somber brown? Is it not that they may be more pleasing to the eye? And shall not our hearts be filled with gratitude as we read the evidences of His wisdom and love in the wonders of His creation?"¹

Have you ever looked deep within a flower, examining the stamens and pistils? Have you ever taken a magnifying glass to look at the detail of color? Have you ever unfolded a bud in the winter to see how it will come out of its little package to become a leaf in springtime? Have you ever taken time to notice that there is order and system even in the smallest things of life?

With all living things, there is a

fundamental cycle that must be passed through so that the steps do not reverse or get mixed up. In the plant kingdom there is first the seed, then the blade,



then the corn, then the full ear of the corn. System and order are demonstrated continually. Plants—from the simplest to the most complex—teach us many things, such as God's love of beauty, His attention to detail, His complexity of creation, and consequence to action. Creation is designed to obey its Creator. If it does not obey, ugly things result. If we fail to follow God's plan, there will be consequences to endure. If we obey God's plan, there are wonderful results to enjoy.

Day 4

Day 4 seems to be out of place, but we know it is not. On this day was the creation of sun, moon and stars. Isn't it interesting that plant life was created before sunshine! This proves that the creation day really is a 24-hour period. If it were symbolic as some profess, plant life would not have long existed without the sustenance of sunshine.

The sun rises and sets day after day, month after month, year after year, century after century, millennium after millennium. It does not change its course. What would happen if the earth, in its revolution around the sun in one year, strayed a few degrees closer or a few degrees further from the sun? Everything would die.

The orderly arrangement of the



stars is essential, too. Birds and navigators would not be able to find their way in the night without them. Stars do not collide and make new constellations—they remain the same. The moon shines in its brilliance, influencing the tides on earth with an orderly, dependable pattern continuing for as long as Christ wills that it should. New moon, first quarter, full moon, last quarter. Over and over again it shines. Do we take all these things for granted? Have you ever considered the lessons that the Lord wants to teach us? We should be thankful to God that everything that belongs to our life on earth was designed to fit into a system of order.

"The same creative energy that brought the world into existence is still exerted in upholding the universe and continuing the operations of nature. The hand of God guides the planets in their orderly march through the heavens. It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth continues her motion round the sun and produces her bounties. The word of God controls the elements. He covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth. He makes the valleys fruitful and 'grass to grow upon the mountains' (Psalm 147:8). It is through His power that vegetation flourishes, that the leaves appear and the flowers bloom.

"The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the things of God."²

"The heavens declare the glory of

God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the



heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (Psalm 19:1–6).

The creative power of God's word

"In the formation of our world, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter. On the contrary, all things, material or spiritual, stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, are not only the work of His hand; they came into existence by the breath of His mouth.

"While there is an individuality and variety in nature, there is a oneness in their diversity; for all things receive their usefulness and beauty from the same source. The great Master Artist writes His name on all His created works, from the loftiest cedar of

Lebanon to the hyssop upon the wall. They all declare His handiwork, from the lofty mountain and the grand ocean to the tiniest shell upon the seashore.

"He made the night, marshaling the shining stars in the firmament. He calls them all by name. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork, showing man that this little world is but a jot in God's creation."³

"The courtly robes of the greatest king that ever sat upon an earthly throne could not compare, in their artificial splendor, with the spotless beauty of the lilies fashioned by the divine hand. This is an example of the estimate which the Creator of all that is beautiful places upon the artificial in comparison with the natural.

"God has given us these things of beauty as an expression of His love, that we may obtain correct views of His character. We are not to worship the things of nature, but in them we are to read the love of God. Nature is an open book, from the study of which we may gain a knowledge of the Creator and be attracted to Him by the things of use and beauty which He has provided."⁴

Indeed, "the invisible things of [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Romans 1:20).

A complex system, a highly organized structure, such as the universe reveals—where a remarkable intelligent design is seen in its details—cannot be the result of blind chance. This is what the apostle Paul is seeking to explain. Therefore, he says, those who cannot see the hand of the Creator in the works of creation are left without excuse. And in looking to the orderly patterns of God's systematic world of nature, surely we get a compelling glimpse of His glorious character! ✎

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¹ *Special Testimonies on Education*, p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 59.

³ *The Faith I Live By*, p. 24.

⁴ *In Heavenly Places*, p. 115.



Leave Your Baggage at the Gate

By John Lausevic

At the entrance to our property, we have installed a large swinging gate that blocks wild animals from entering. This opening is a steel-meshed country-style gate over 3 meters (12 feet) wide, and it blocks the entire driveway. On many occasions our children have had to open and also close it, but many more times they have a good swing on it. Recently they have taken up a new hobby: They happily run to open the gate and then climb onto it to sit there and wave goodbye as one of us drives out the gate. If they catch sight of the car coming back home, they run off the house, shouting at the tops of their lungs that we have arrived. Their joy and enthusiasm is infectious and always brings a smile to one's face when you see their antics repeated over and over.

Many years ago, I asked a friend why she and her brother would run to the lounge room window to wave goodbye to a parent leaving for work. Her response was, "It might be the last time you see that person, and you want to have a good memory of that."


This makes me think of father and our

relationships in the home circle. Do we come home from a bad day at work or perhaps a long trip that made us tired and walk in the door with a sad expression on our faces? If so, what are we portraying? Are we always happy to come into our homes, where we should be glad to be, and our faces radiant with joy? Or do we come home with heavy burdens which really should be left at the gate? Do we enjoy our time with our families, or are we so busy with our lives that we consider our home life to be an interruption?

I recently read a quotation which went like this: "There are but few true fathers and mothers in this age of the world, and this is on account of the artificial lives we lead more than from any other cause."¹

I pondered about this and tried to see if I fit that bill. I definitely was an "artificial" father long ago, when a major portion of my day was dedicated to my business pursuits. I recall not knowing my children, not being an active part of their lives, and I have really regretted letting that time pass. I have tried to mend those broken fences, but they are always something that will be there. A patched fence will never look the same as an original one.





I recently read an article by a man who had lost his wife. His friend wrote the following very thought-provoking poem for him.

IF I ONLY KNEW

*If I only knew it would be the last time
I would be there to share your day,
Well, I'm sure you'll have so many more
So I can just let this one slip away.*

*For surely there's always tomorrow
To make up for an oversight,
And we always get a second chance
To make everything right, right?*

*There will always be another day
To say our, "I love you"
And certainly there's another chance
To say, "Anything I can do?"*

*But, wait a minute, just in case
I might be wrong,
And today is all I get,
I would like to say how much
I love you
And I hope we never forget.*

*That tomorrow is not promised
to anyone,
Young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance you get
To hold your loved one tight.*

*So if you're waiting for tomorrow,
Why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes,
You'll surely regret this day.*

*That you didn't take that extra time
For a smile, a hug, or a kiss.
And you were too busy to grant
someone,
What turned out to be their one
last wish.*

*So hold them dear TODAY!
Take time to say,
"I'm sorry, "please forgive me,"
"thank you" or even, "it's okay."
And THEN, if tomorrow never comes
You'll have no regrets about today.*

—Frank Rubio, III

"In forming a relationship with Christ, the renewed man is but coming back to his appointed relationship with God. . . . His first duty is to his children and his nearest relatives. Nothing can excuse him from neglecting the inner circle for the larger circle outside.

In the day of final reckoning, fathers and mothers . . . will be asked what they did and said to secure the salvation of the souls they took upon themselves the responsibility of bringing into the world. Did they neglect their lambs, leaving them to the care of strangers? . . . A great good done for others will not cancel the debt you owe to God to care for your children."²

Let us think about each action, each motive of our life, and how we perform our duties. Remember the little ones at home who are waiting for you at your "gate." Leave your monetary burdens, your work-related burdens—even your troubles—at the gate and place a cheerful smile upon your face as you walk through that door each and every day. *R*

¹ *The Health Reformer*, November 1, 1876.

² *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 162.

Macaroni and cheese, pizza, cheese burgers, and cheesecake are among America's favorite foods.



By L. Balbach

DON'T SAY CHEESE!

Cheese production in the U.S. is among the largest in the world. In 2008, about 10 billion pounds of cheese were produced in the United States.¹ America's love affair with cheese is increasing. Between 1910 and 2008 cheese consumption has risen from 4.3 pounds a person/year to 32.7 pounds a person/year. From 1970 to 2008 cheese consumption had tripled from 11 pounds to 32.7 pounds a year.² With more women in the work force, families are making more sandwiches, eating frozen meals, and eating out in fast-food restaurants. This has contributed significantly to increased cheese consumption.

Many consumers feel that calcium-

rich cheese is a nutritious food, but scientific evidence reveals that there are many health-related problems associated with its consumption. You would be much better off getting your calcium from dark green leafy vegetables like turnip greens with 240 milligrams(mg) of calcium in one cup or collard greens with 357 mg of calcium in one cup. Also fortified soy milk is another excellent source of calcium.³ The absorption of calcium from plant foods is the same or better than from milk. Let us look at the effects cheese has on our health.

What is cheese?

The Food and Drug Administration defines cheese as: "A product made

from curd obtained from whole milk, partly skimmed, or skimmed milk from cows, or from milk of other animals with or without added cream, by coagulating with rennet, lactic acid, or other suitable enzyme or acid with or without further treatment of the separate curd by heat or pressure, or by means of ripening ferments, special molds or seasonings."

Cheese is made by coagulating casein, a protein found in milk. Rennet, an enzyme used in the coagulating process, reacts with milk, separating the whey from the curd and producing cheese. Hard cheeses like cheddar and soft cheeses like cottage cheese and mozzarella are made with rennet. In the past, most of the rennet came from

the lining membrane of the fourth stomach of unweaned calves, lambs or goats. But due to the greater demand for cheese, and lower availability of slaughtered calves, other sources are being used including pepsins from pigs, cows, and chickens. Some cheeses are made with vegetable-derived rennet. Contact the specific cheese manufacturer to find out which type of rennet he or she uses. Salt, calcium chloride, and a yellow coloring agent are added to cheese. Some varieties are placed in a brine solution. To produce Swiss cheese, the milk is bleached. Few cheeses are eaten fresh; most cheeses are ripened or cured from one month up to two years.

High in calories and sodium

Cheese is high in calories, averaging about 100 calories an ounce. Cheese contains a lot of sodium.

The sodium content of cheese varies from less than 150 mg an ounce up to 550 mg an ounce. See Table 1. One cup of large curd cottage cheese has 911 mg of sodium. This is about half the amount people with hypertension can safely have on a 2 gm low-sodium diet for the whole day. Processed cheeses like American, Blue, Parmesan, and Roquefort have 350–500 mg. of sodium an ounce.

High in artery-clogging fat

Cheese is giving Americans heart attacks, says the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI). Cheese is the highest source of saturated fat in our diet. “Americans are eating far too much fatty cheese. Unfortunately, it’s everywhere: on sandwiches, on lean chicken, on salads, and even on fries. And it’s doing even more damage to our hearts than beef or butter,” according to Margo Wootan, Nutrition Policy Director for CSPI. “Heart disease is the leading cause of death for American men and women,” says Dr. William E. Connor, professor of Medicine and Clinical Nutrition at the Oregon Health Sciences University. “Anything Americans can do to reduce their intake of saturated fat and cholesterol, such as cutting back on cheese, would lessen the risk of heart disease.”

“Just one ounce of full-fat cheese can have as much as six grams of artery-clogging fat—a third of a day’s worth,” said Wootan. “An ounce isn’t much, just 1 ½ slices of processed cheese, or a 1 ¼ cube of cheddar or most other hard cheeses, or the cheese on a slice of a large pizza.”⁴

Protein content

Cheeses are also a high source of protein. One half cup of cottage cheese has about one fourth of an adult’s daily

protein requirement. Three and a half ounces of hard cheese provides up to 50% of the daily protein needs. A slice of pizza has 14.6 grams (g) of protein, but who stops at one slice? Three slices of pizza have 46 g of protein, which is 3/4 of the daily protein requirement for males and 100% for females. Daily Reference Intakes (DRI) for protein for an adult are 0.8 g for each kg of body weight; 56 g of protein for males and 46 g for females. The average American eats 90–120 g of protein a day, which is 1.5–2 times the protein that our body needs. If we continue eating high amounts of cheese and other protein-rich foods, we are at risk of developing health problems that result from protein-rich diets: decreased kidney function, increased gall stone formation, and osteoporosis.⁵

Fat, cholesterol, and oxidized cholesterol

Most cheeses are high in fat, averaging 6–9 grams an ounce; most of this fat is saturated. The fat content of fresh cheeses is about 12% of the total calories; ripened cheeses contain about 30% calories from fat. As a nation, we are already struggling with too much fat in our diets. About 40% of our calories come from fat. We need to limit our fat to less than 20% of the total

calories. The cholesterol content of 3 1/2 ounces of cheese varies from 30 mg to 120 mg. The American Heart Association recommends limiting our dietary cholesterol to less than 300 mg a day.

When cholesterol is exposed to the air for some time, it produces oxidized cholesterol, which in turn develops dangerous by-products. Some of these by-products are so toxic that they destroy the cells that line the artery walls in less than 24 hours. Even when eaten in small amounts, these “oxidation products”



can cause irreversible damage. Custard mixes, pancake mixes, lard, and parmesan cheese are the foods that contain oxidized cholesterol and produce damage to the blood vessels.⁶⁻⁸

Cancer connection

Scientists at the University of Ottawa in Canada set out to investigate the impact of diet on testicular cancer, the most common cancer in Canadian men, 20–45 years old. Michael, Garner, the lead researcher states: “Our results suggest that high dairy product intake, in particular high intake of cheese, is associated with an elevated risk of testicular cancer in Canadian males.” The authors suggest that the culprit may be the high amounts of female sex hormones (estrogen and progesterone) found in dairy products.⁹ Dairy products have also been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer in women and prostate cancer in men. Epidemiological studies at Loma Linda University found that men who were heavy users of milk, eggs, and cheese had three times the risk of developing prostate cancer.¹⁰

Hiding in the mold

Are you eating moldy cheese without knowing it? Researchers have found a yellowish discoloration on moldy cheeses where the *Aspergillus parasiticus* was growing. Although workers in the industry carefully wash off the surface mold to hide the toxin invasion, the cheese was discolored up to 10 millimeters (mm) on the inside.¹¹

We know that molds are dangerous toxins for animals and humans. Molds of the *Aspergillus* family produce cancer-causing chemicals called aflatoxins. Cheeses that take a long time to ripen at high humidity are ideal for growing aflatoxins. Since cheeses are not tested for aflatoxin content during manufacturing, you may be eating aflatoxins unknowingly.¹²

TABLE 1

NUTRIENT CONTENT OF CHEESES

Cheese Type	Weight (g)	Protein (g)	Total Fat (g)	Cholesterol (mg)	Sodium (mg)
1 oz American cheese, processed	28.3	6.37	8.97	27.3	411
1 oz American cheese spread	28.3	5.23	6.10	16.2	386
1 oz Bleu cheese	28.3	6.18	8.25	21.3	401
1 oz Brick cheese	28.3	6.50	8.52	27.3	161
1 oz Brie cheese	28.3	5.95	7.95	28.3	180
1 oz Camembert cheese	28.3	5.68	6.96	20.2	239
1 oz Caraway cheese	28.3	7.23	8.38	25.3	198
1 oz Cheddar cheese	28.3	7.15	9.52	30.4	178
1 oz Cheshire cheese	28.3	6.70	8.79	29.4	200
1 oz Colby cheese	28.3	6.82	9.21	27.3	173
1 cup Cottage cheese-crmd-sml crd	210.0	26.2	8.93	31.0	850
1 cup Cottage cheese-crmd-lrg crd	225.0	28.0	9.60	34.0	911
1 cup Cottage cheese w/fruit	226.0	22.4	7.68	25.0	915
1 cup Cottage cheese-dry curd	145.0	25.0	0.610	10.0	19.0
1 cup Cottage cheese-lowfat 2%	226.0	31.1	4.36	19.0	918
1 cup Cottage cheese-lowfat 1%	226.0	28.0	2.30	10.0	918
1 oz Cream cheese	28.3	2.13	10.0	31.4	85.0
1 oz Edam cheese	28.3	7.17	7.90	25.3	277
1 oz Feta cheese	28.3	4.56	6.28	25.3	320
1 oz Fontina cheese	28.3	7.35	8.75	33.4	-
1 oz Gjetost cheese	28.3	2.77	8.43	25.3	172
1 oz Gorgonzola cheese	28.3	7.09	9.11	25.3	519
1 oz Gouda cheese	28.3	7.16	7.83	32.4	235
1 oz Gruyere cheese	28.3	8.56	9.18	31.4	96.2
1 oz Liederkranz cheese	28.3	5.06	8.10	21.3	395
1 oz Limburger cheese	28.3	5.75	7.69	26.3	230
1 oz Monterey jack cheese	28.3	7.03	8.69	26.3	154
1 oz Mozzarella-Part skim-reg.	28.3	7.09	4.66	16.2	134
1 oz Mozzarella-whl milk-reg.	28.3	5.58	5.83	22.3	107
1 oz Muenster cheese	28.3	6.50	8.54	27.3	180
1 oz Nuefchatel cheese	28.3	2.86	6.79	22.3	114
1 oz Parmesan cheese-grated	28.3	11.9	8.62	22.3	535
1 oz Pimento processed cheese	28.3	6.35	8.95	27.3	410
1 oz Ricotta cheese-Dart skim	28.3	3.23	2.25	8.76	35.4
1 oz Ricotta cheese-whole milk	28.3	3.19	3.68	14.3	23.9
1 oz Romano cheese	28.3	9.13	7.74	29.4	344
1 oz Roquefort cheese	28.3	6.19	9.06	26.3	519
1 oz Swiss cheese	28.3	8.14	7.90	26.3	74.9
1 oz Swiss processed cheese	28.3	7.10	7.07	24.3	393

Microorganisms in cheese

Mold on cheese that's not part of the manufacturing process can also harbor harmful bacteria, such as listeria, brucella, salmonella, and E. coli. In 1984, 10,000 Canadians became ill from an outbreak of salmonellosis. The cause? They ate cheddar cheese which was contaminated with organisms from the *Salmonella* family.¹³

In 2005, cases of tuberculosis in New York City have been linked to consumption of queso-fresco-style

cheeses, either imported from Mexico or consumed in Mexico. The cheese was contaminated with *Mycobacterium bovis*. The FDA recommends that consumers do not eat any raw milk soft cheeses from Mexico, Nicaragua, or Honduras. Data show that they are often contaminated with pathogens. The FDA further advises that there is some risk of infection from a number of pathogenic bacteria for anyone who eats raw milk soft cheese from any source.¹⁴ Listeria is another microorganism that can be found in cheese

and in milk from healthy cows and goats. Infants and people with low immunity have trouble resisting this germ.¹⁵

The brain connection

Tyramine and tryptamine are two of the several major chemicals amines found in cheese. They can have a detrimental effect on our frontal lobes. Tyramine is found abundantly in cheese, wine, and other rich foods.¹⁶ When we eat tyramine in the cheese, it stimulates the body's stress hormone system, specifically the hormone called norepinephrine. This chemical triggers our body's stress response.¹⁷

Stress often interferes with the fine control of our thought processes needed for learning, creative thinking, and recall. Dr. Guyton states that the stress hormones can actually decrease blood flow to the brain.¹⁸ Tyramine has been called a false neurotransmitter because it confuses the brain cells. It acts like a brain chemical messenger, when it really comes from a food source.

Tryptamine is another chemical found in cheese that causes brain transmission problems. Tryptamine has been associated with nightmares and even classed with drugs like LSD and psilocybin due to its hallucinogenic effects.¹⁹ Foods that have these mind-altering elements include cheese, fish and sausages.²⁰⁻²² Early spoilage of poultry also produces these compounds. According to research,

significant spoilage can happen even at normal refrigeration temperatures.²³

How can you practically apply this information? First, it is believed that these biogenic amines may be one of the many factors influencing hyperactivity in children. So if you have children, make them one healthy cheese alternative or purchase soy cheese. Second, people who eat tyramine and tryptamine-rich foods in the evening may have a problem with nightmares.²⁴ Therefore, if you like to eat pizza late in the evening, beware!

Is a cheeseburger worth the migraine?

The worst culprits for a migraine headache are dairy products, but cheese is the worst offender.²⁵ People have reported severe migraine headaches and allergic-type symptoms from eating cheese.

Pesticides and chemical residues

"The FDA tested 16 samples of cheddar cheese from around the nation. There were one hundred pesticide and industrial chemical residues in the samples, . . . BHC, DDT, dieldrin, heptachlor, HCB, octachlor, and penta were found in at least a quarter of the samples. . . . This is serious contamination, the result of years of pesticide use, which has laced our soil with poisons. These poisons taint crops and are then concentrated in the milk of dairy cows that feed on those crops. The high fat

content of cheddar and other cheeses concentrates the toxins even more. The average cheese-eating American eats a little less than an ounce of cheddar cheese daily. Based on this consumption pattern, we can expect as many as thirty-six excess cancers in one million persons. That makes cheddar and any other high-fat nonorganic cheese a high risk food."²⁶

No cheese factories in Eden

Over one hundred twenty years ago, a prominent nutritionist commented about the effect of cheese on health:

"Many a mother sets a table that is a snare to her family. Flesh meats, butter, cheese, rich pastry, spiced foods, and condiments are freely partaken of by both old and young. These things do their work in deranging the stomach, exciting the nerves, and enfeebling the intellect. The blood-making organs cannot convert such things into good blood. The grease cooked in the food renders it difficult of digestion. The effect of cheese is deleterious."²⁷ "Cheese should never be introduced into the stomach."²⁸

Today, the evidence against cheese is tremendous, but the choice is yours. You can eat a high sodium, high saturated fat, high protein, and high cholesterol food. You may wish to eat this mind-altering food that is loaded with molds, cancer-causing toxins and amines, and artery-clogging fat. Or you may enjoy healthy cheese alterna-

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tives! We have included great recipes for healthful cheese substitutes. These are made from nuts and seeds and can be used in your favorite recipes. After all, there were no cheese factories in

Eden! Fruits, nuts, grains, legumes, and vegetables make up the ideal diet given by our Creator.²⁹ Don't you believe that He knows what is best for our health? Experiment with some of

our cheese substitutes and stop worrying about the disease-causing agents in cheese. It is not worth the migraine headache! *R*

Recipes

Pimento "Cheese"

3/4 cup cashews
2 tablespoons sesame seeds
14 ounces jar pimentos
1 heaping tablespoon nutritional yeast flakes
Salt to taste
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon dill weed
1 tablespoon agar agar
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 cup boiling water

Blend all ingredients with boiling water. For best results, pour cheese mixture into a cup and grate cheese when ready to use.

Nachos:

Eliminate agar agar and pour a hot mixture over the tortilla chips.

Sliced cheese:

Pour into a round can to set. Cut end and push out when ready to use. Slice

Spread:

Add diced celery, olives, onions, and/or other ingredients. Stir and spread.

Cheese used for entrees: Leave out 1/2 teaspoon salt.



White "Cheese" (Jack)

3/4 cup cashews
2 tablespoon sesame seeds
3 tablespoon nutritional yeast flakes
1 1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon dill weed
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon agar agar flakes
1 cup boiling water

Blend all ingredients with boiling water.

Mock Parmesan "Cheese"

1 cup lightly toasted sesame seeds
1/4 cup nutritional yeast flakes
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Lightly toast the sesame seeds at 300–350° F for 10–20 minutes. After the seeds are toasted, let them cool for a few minutes and then mix them with all the other ingredients in a blender. (Make sure that you add the sesame seeds while they are still hot.) The resulting "cheese" will be crumbly in texture, similar to grated Parmesan cheese, so serve in a shaker container as you would any grated cheese. Sprinkle on top of spaghetti, salad, and other dishes. Store in a cool place in a sealed container; if refrigerated, it can keep "for months." Yields 1 1/4 cups.



Macaroni & "Cheese"

2 cups macaroni
1 cup water
1 cup raw cashews
1 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup lemon juice
4-ounce jar pimentos or fresh red pepper
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic salt
3 tablespoon nutritional yeast flakes
1 medium chopped onion
1/4 cup green pepper

Cook macaroni in 6 cups of salted water. Place water, cashews and salt in blender. Whiz until nuts are thoroughly blended. Add lemon juice. Add pimento, seasonings, nutritional yeast, and blend thoroughly. Pour this over cooked macaroni. Sauté onion and pepper and add to mixture. Bake in casserole at 350° F. for 45 minutes. If it becomes too dry, add water. Add more salt if necessary. *R*

Why Rebaptism?

By Aron Belu

I believe this testimony will help other souls to be more faithful to Jesus now than at any other time of their life and will encourage a desire to seek Him wholeheartedly. Do not look to others but to Jesus only as your example.

I grew up in a Reform Movement family. Baptized when I was 22 years old, I was married in the same church. I have two sons. Most of my life, I was very strict in my Christian life until I started to become lukewarm or looked to others. I am a truck driver and my wife was my team driver for eleven years. We worked a lot. There was a period when we only came home five to seven times a year. During that time, we still returned our tithes and offerings but did not attend the church very often. Eventually we ended up having to be disfellowshipped. When this happened, I became more careless.

Six years ago, I started working for myself and was home every other week. I would either visit our church, the Adventist Church, or stay home. Then about three or four years ago, my family and I began visiting the Atlanta East SDA Reform Movement Church on a regular basis. Wherever you go or whatever you believe, there is no other place that has more light than the SDA

Reform Movement. There, the past, present, and future truth is preached.

The Atlanta East church is a small group with a warm heart. I take my faith seriously and therefore asked if I could become a member again. I talked with our church. . . . One Sabbath, Bro. Jeff Wiktoroski spoke with me a lot about being rebaptized—not just fellowshipped. I REFUSED IT! Quote: “I do not need to be rebaptized because I was member of the SDARM!” But I kept it on my mind. So I started studying, and it was very easy for me to look for what I needed because I have the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy on a CD. That helped me to find many quotes where the pen of Inspiration speaks about rebaptism for those who really give their heart to Jesus. So I called Bro. Evans Benjamin, the Field Leader, telling him I was ready to take a step forward. Being honest, however, I also told him I had one problem. . . .

Bro. Benjamin told me to resolve the problem first. Another six months passed, and I had not resolved the problem until Bro. Vernon Rankin visited me. He told me to read Matthew 5:43, 44 (first part). “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you.”

It was hard to accept, but I prayed a lot to God to help me make peace in my heart. It took a few weeks, but in my heart was only Jesus, and I wanted to be saved. My problem disappeared.

My family and the church supported me very much. My heart was open to Jesus. So I called Sr. Toni and told her, “I am ready to step forward.” My family was so happy with my decision. The Florida Camp Meeting was not far away. The decision was made for me to be rebaptized at the Florida Camp Meeting.

After my decision was made, Satan worked very hard to delay the baptism: On my last trip to California and back, I encountered many obstacles to stop me from getting there. Here’s the story: The trip takes 10–11 days. The first delay was in Louisiana, when the police stopped me on the side of the road for a routine inspection. I’ve never made mistakes on my log book, but that morning I did. The log book was behind about 8–10 minutes, so that put me out of service for 10 hours. I started then to be delayed from my plan. After that, the trip went okay to California. Then on the way back home, a light rain began to fall a few hours before dark. I had electrical problems, so I stopped to fix them. I checked all the connections for shortages and if the wires were touching each other. For 3 hours I found nothing.

In my mind was the fact that if I could not find the problem before dark, I would not be able to make it to Florida. So sitting between the truck and the trailer, I started praying to God to help me. After my earnest prayer, it came to my mind to check the plate on top of the 5th wheel. I took the plate out, never thinking that right there was an electric connection. When I moved the rubber covering, a fire started. Quickly I disconnected everything. I found the problem and did a temporary fix, thanking God for His help. The next day there was a strong dust storm in Arizona. I was driving slowly and the traffic stopped. About 1½ – 2 miles ahead of me, the dust storm was very heavy. A big accident occurred with a 22-vehicle pile-up—9 big semi-tractor trailers and 13 cars. Later, on national news, it was reported that 4 people had died and many were injured as a result. So God helped me not to be involved in that accident. The next day in Dallas, Texas, there was a cold heavy rain. I was thinking if this rain slowed down, it would freeze on the road causing icy conditions. A few hours later I called my friend to see where he was. I learned that his brother was in Dallas in freezing rain and traffic was moving 5 miles per hour. I thanked God again for helping me to pass the freezing rain. Again, the 3rd day in Louisiana, a very heavy storm slowed me down again and I prayed to God to help me to go through.

After all these things I made it home late Thursday night. By God's abundant grace, early Friday morning we left for Florida and arrived on time!

When is rebaptism really needed?

I want to share with you a few examples where the Spirit of Prophecy speaks of rebaptism—with the hope that God will work on your heart to make the right decision in case this applies to you. I am so glad that I made the right decision to be rebaptized because I prepared myself to be more than just fellowshiped. I was reconverted! This gave me a chance to truly reconsecrate my life to God.

These are the following quotations that were very helpful to me:

"Reconversion and Rebaptism of Seventh-day Adventists.—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. . . . 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."¹

"It is [the] baptism of the Holy Spirit that the churches need today. There are backslidden church members and backslidden ministers who need reconverting, 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."²

"Those who have been baptized can claim the help of the three great Worthies of heaven to keep them from falling, and to reveal through them a character that is after the divine similitude. This is what we claim to be—followers of Jesus. We must be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine pattern; and if you have lost your Christlikeness, my brethren and sisters, you can never, never come into communion with God again until you are reconverted and rebaptized. You want to repent and to be rebaptized, and to come into the love and communion and harmony of Christ. Then you will have spiritual discernment which will enable you to see those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."³

"God calls upon us to come into harmony with the divine pattern. He calls upon us, while it is called Today, to repent and be reconverted; and then His Spirit will dwell in us richly, and

there will be transformations of character little dreamed of. As His Spirit works with your spirit, there will be manifest a saving grace by which we shall be deeply convicted of the wonderful transformation that is taking place in your character. Others will notice it, and be influenced thereby. Thus a constant and progressive work will be going on in the church. Oh, my dear brethren and sisters, let us all come into line. We cannot afford to be out of line now—it is too late in the day.

"Again, we read: 'I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God' (Romans 15:17).

"'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."⁴

"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."⁵ ❧

References

¹ *Evangelism*, p. 375.

² *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 267.

³ *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 366.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, pp. 262, 263.



St. Lucia

Believers and friends at a baptismal service, February 2010.



Peru

Baptism (left) and Youth Congress (below) held by the Peruvian Union; around 2,000 people attended, January 2010.



Nigeria

*Health seminar and
youth convention,
November 2009.*



Angola

*Believers from
Huambo (right)
and Lubango
churches (below),
November 2009.*



MOVING? Please let us know.



Chameleon Christians



I hate being cooped up with this broken leg," Jason complained to Uncle John. "I can't play ball or do anything. I am sick of my crutches."

"Maybe the surprise I brought you will help you feel better," said Uncle John, handing Jason a package. Eagerly Jason opened it and found a little green creature about three inches long.

"It's a chameleon," explained Uncle John. "Here, let him out of the jar. He'll enjoy running around your mom's house plants."

Jason gently placed his new pet on the stem of a large plant. Suddenly, he looked closer. "He looks different, Uncle John!" exclaimed Jason. "His color is changing."

Uncle John chuckled as he said, "He's turning a brownish color because he is on a brownish stem."

"That's amazing!" exclaimed Jason.

"He can change to gray, brown, green, or yellowish brown. He changes color not only to blend with his surroundings

but also according to what

mood he is in or how

he feels," explained

Uncle John. Then he

turned to Jason and

said, "But I don't

want you to

learn his tricks!"

"I couldn't

change the color of

my skin, even if I wanted to," said Jason.

"Oh, but lots of people are like chameleons," replied Uncle John. "They act and look like Christians when everything is going their way, but when something unpleasant happens they *change their color* immediately. No one could tell by watching them that they have a loving Saviour and a wonderful home in heaven waiting for them."

Jason took a deep breath. He knew that he hadn't been acting much like a Christian lately. Ever since he had broken his leg, he had been pouting, and feeling sorry for himself. Neither of them said anything for a few minutes. Then Uncle John stood up and said, "I must get going. Enjoy your new pet. The feeding instructions are on the jar."

"Thanks," Jason replied. "I'll have fun taking care of him, and I've already learned something from him."

Boys and girls, do you act one way at church, but another way at school or at home? Do you *change color* according to your mood or circumstances? If you are willing to let Him, God will help you be a consistent, unchangeable Christian instead of a *chameleon*. Let this be your motto:

"I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. . . I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (Psalm 101:2). *R*

By L. Balbach

