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ORDER & ORGANIZATION

IN THE

Church of God

The Need of Self-Surrender / Stop the Silent Killer / New Campus in Romania

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

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NOT
"I"

"me" generation.

Today we live in a culture that lures

people into a spiritual stupor that gradually desensitizes people to true spiritual and moral values. The main cause for this "me" religion is pride of life.

The word **pride** in Greek is *huperephanos*, which signifies "to show oneself above." It does not imply that others look up to the person, but that he or she stands on a self-created pedestal. Psychologists tell us that pride is actually a mark of inner inferiority and uncertainty, and such people compensate by over-emphasizing and flaunting the qualities they think they possess that will cause others to think well of them. A Christian must guard himself or herself strongly against becoming caught up in the stupor-inducing spirit of the times of which Paul forewarns us.

If you want to impress God, it is not the pride of life that impresses Him, but it is humility. Pride gets between us and God, and without realizing it, we actually shut Him out of our life. The Bible clearly shows that our spiritual well-being is dependent upon acknowledging, with our life, our reliance upon the revealed will of God.

Peter says that we must "be clothed with humility." We must put on humility. In this phrase, the apostle is

recalling the example of Jesus at the last Passover, when He clothed Himself as a servant and knelt down before His disciples, washing their feet as a pattern of His mind and attitude toward them. He girded himself and performed this humble act. He took no reputation upon Himself. That is the reason why the apostle Paul says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

We are all under one or the other of two great captains. We all should be under the great captain, the Creator of all. We owe Him the allegiance of our whole being, the devotion of our affection. If our mind is given to His control, we will receive new moral power to bury the pride and self in the dust. And there will be a new birth.

"We need to be constantly filling the mind with Christ and emptying it of selfishness and sin. . . . Just as surely as you empty your mind of vanity and frivolity, the vacuum will be supplied with that which God is waiting to give you—His Holy Spirit. Then out of the good treasure of the heart you will bring forth good things, rich gems of thought, and others will catch the words and will begin to glorify God. Then you will not have the mind centered upon self. You will not be making a show of self; you will not be acting self; but your thoughts and affections will dwell upon Christ, and you will reflect upon others that which has shone upon you from the Sun of Righteousness."¹ *R*

References

¹ *The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1892.

In the parable of the two worshippers, the Pharisee glories in what he is, what he does, and what he gives. Here comes "Self" as a prominent feature of his prayer. He uses the personal pronoun "I" five times, showing his great passion for himself and presents a high opinion of his piety, full of self-praise. He does not pray for others—and honestly, he has no interest in them, other than to point out their faults. Not contented with extolling himself, he places contempt upon others, when he should have been interceding for them before God. His prayer shows that he thinks of God as being impressed with pettiness and rigorousness in the hope of securing favor with God and men. Luke 18:11, 12.

These Pharisees substituted their ideas of how life should be lived in place of what God would consider important. Their judgment was divergent and **self-centered**. "My money, my house, my reputation, my power, my morals" became their religion. Someone else's money, house, or reputation was only important to them as much as it would affect their own standing. It was truly a

ORDER & ORGANIZATION

IN THE *Church of God*

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation, with comments
by A. C. Sas*



Christ's organization on earth

When our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth during His ministerial work, He established the apostolic church and appointed the officers of the first organized church in the Christian era. Jesus departed from the organized Jewish church and laid the foundation of the organization of the Christian church. The twelve disciples whom the Lord ordained were the first officers of the new church founded in A.D. 27. The Bible tells us:

"It came to pass in those days, that [Jesus] went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles" (Luke 6:12, 13).

"The first step was now to be taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to be His representative on earth."¹

After His death, resurrection, and ascension, these disciples of Jesus—who became apostles—continued the work of preaching the gospel.

The apostolic church

The early church was well organized, as we can see by the election of the seven deacons in Acts 6:1–6. When Saul, before his conversion, was persecuting the members of the church of God, the same Jesus who had organized the church appeared unto Him in vision. When Saul asked the Lord, "What wilt thou have me to do?" the answer was given: "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6).

Saul could have logically reasoned that he certainly knew the Scriptures very well, and even in the city it was likely that no one else knew the Scriptures better than he. Besides, the Lord Himself who had just commu-

nicated with him by an audible voice could easily have told him straightaway what he was to do next. But no, Jesus specifically directed Saul to contact the established organized church, and its representatives would be the ones to tell him what he must do.

“Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.

“Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. Jesus is the friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world.”²

Later on, as the church progressed and the persecutor himself joined the ranks of the persecuted, the Lord used Paul as His representative and revealed to him many mysteries which other apostles did not understand. But even then, Paul still recognized and respected the authority of God’s organized church.

“Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was personally taught by God, he had no strained ideas of individual responsibility. While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel, and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions.”³

In every age God has had His embassy on earth—His church. Although the church was sometimes made up of only a few souls, the Lord has always maintained a channel of light on earth.

The gates of hell could not blot out “God’s fortress”⁴—“His city of refuge”—amidst the trials and persecutions that rose throughout the centuries.

In modern times

When the Seventh-day Adventists were first established as a church, they were not well organized and had much confusion among them. Ministers went out to preach, baptize, and administer the church ordinances on their own account. There was no order, no organization. By the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy, however, they soon understood the need of organizing the believers in church capacity. The Testimony reads:

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.

“Yet there was strong feeling against it among our people. The first-day Adventists were opposed to organization, and most of the Seventh-day Adventists entertained the same ideas. We sought the Lord with earnest prayer that we might understand His will, and light was given by His Spirit that there must be order and thorough discipline in the church—that organization was essential. System and order are manifest in all the works

of God throughout the universe. Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God’s people on earth.”⁵

Notice the main reasons for having an organization:

- For the support of the ministry.
- To carry the work in new fields.
- For protecting the churches and the ministry from unworthy members.
- For holding properties.
- For publishing the truth through the press, and so forth.

The conclusion to which they came was in accordance with Bible truth.

Offices in the church

The apostle Paul mentions the various offices in the church:

“[Christ] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which



every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:11–16).

In 1863 the Seventh-day Adventists organized their General Conference. The highest—or heaviest—responsibility in the church falls on the officers of the General Conference. God provided means by which this could be carried out. We read about this arrangement:

“Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences choose the officers of the union conferences, and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference.”⁶

We learn from this testimony that delegates should come together to elect the leaders of the church in its highest (most weighty) offices. When these delegates come together from all parts of the world, they do not only nominate the leaders, but also discuss doctrinal points, administrative problems, and so forth. The decisions taken there which are not contrary to the Bible and the Testimonies should be received and accepted by the people as the voice of God. If the church maintains itself loyal to the commandments of God, its decisions are sanctioned in heaven.

“I have often been instructed by the

Lord that no man’s judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decisions of the general body.

“At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God’s work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work.”⁷

Why is church organization so important today?

In the culture in which we are now living, it is quite common for self-sent messengers to arise and interpret the Bible to suit their own taste. The only way to be secure is not to advocate independency. Private opinions should not prevail when delegates from all parts of the world make a decision. No new light, no new interpretation of the Scriptures should be accepted if it does not come through the right channel. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us:

“There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see not light in it, yield to their judgment: for ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety’ (Proverbs 11:14).”⁸

It is the plan of Satan to incite people to act independently and without due regard for their fellow believers. He tries to convince people that church organization is not necessary, yet this essential element is a key safeguard of the church.

“Oh, how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and



order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time."⁹

Just as the human body has many members—but one depends on the other—so it is also in the church.

Christ is the head, and we are the member of His body, the church. No members can live if cut off from the body. So it is also in the spiritual sense. Independent individuals cannot live spiritually if they do not belong to the organized body, whose head is the Lord. The different offices in the church represent the different positions of the members in the body. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–28. In verse 28 Paul is speaking specifically of the different offices that should exist in the church. All members working together have the same goal—the perfection or unity in the faith.

Clear words of caution for the last days

“The spirit of pulling away from fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. By some, all efforts to establish order are regarded as dangerous—as a restriction of personal liberty, and hence to be feared as popery. These deceived souls regard it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They declare that they will not take any man’s say-so; that they are amenable to no man. I have been instructed that it is Satan’s special effort to lead men to feel that God is pleased to have them choose their own course independent of the counsel of their brethren.

“Herein lies a grave danger to the prosperity of our work. We must move

discreetly, sensibly, in harmony with the judgment of God-fearing counselors; for in this course alone lies our safety and strength. Otherwise God cannot work with us and by us and for us.”¹⁰

The Spirit of Prophecy does not suggest that in these last days people should think and act as they please. No independency is allowed. The servants of God should act “subject to the sanctified mind of the whole” (the organized church, whose members come together in a general council), and their decisions should be respected. So it was in the past and so it must be today.

“When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility.”¹¹

“The council which decided this case was composed of apostles and teachers who had been prominent in raising up the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches, with chosen delegates from various places. Elders from Jerusalem and deputies from Antioch were present, and the most influential churches were represented. The council moved in accordance with the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. . . .

“The entire body of Christians was not called to vote upon the question. The ‘apostles and elders’, men of

influence and judgment, framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches. Not all, however, were pleased with the decision; there was a faction of ambitious and self-confident brethren who disagreed with it. These men assumed to engage in the work on their own responsibility. They indulged in much murmuring and faultfinding, proposing new plans and seeking to pull down the work of the men whom God had ordained to teach the gospel message. From the first the church has had such obstacles to meet and ever will have till the close of time.”¹²

“Some have advanced the thought that, as we near the close of time, every child of God will act independently of any religious organization. But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man’s being independent. The stars of heaven are all under the law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And, in order that the Lord’s work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together.”¹³

This is a very important point which should be understood: The church as an organized body must teach and obey the commandments of God at all times and in all circumstances. As it does, it is the highest authority of God on earth. If it does not, it cannot be God’s embassy. Therefore we have to be sure which one is the organized church that keeps the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. By being a member of it we receive nourishment and are guided by the head of the body, even the Lord Jesus Christ. *R*

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- ¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 291.
- ² *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 122.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ⁵ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 26.
- ⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 236, 237.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 260, 261.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 293.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 257, 258.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 257.
- ¹¹ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 96.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 196, 197.
- ¹³ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 258.



By Tony Maraizu

Must the People of God Be Rich?

Must the people of God be rich? Are riches a sign that one is very faithful to God, or do riches show that God loves the rich person and favors him or her more than others? This subject has caused great confusion in Christendom and has also paved the way for many false prophets to deceive people. According to the teachings of popular churches today, God's people have to be very rich because "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). Based on this, some find themselves in a great dilemma, and others are almost ready to cast off their faith because God prospers others and has not prospered them.

Many are quite conversant with certain Bible verses which speak of God's promises to bless those who walk diligently in His ways. For instance, Deuteronomy 28:1, 2: "It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God" (emphasis supplied).

To those who delight in the Sabbath, God promises, "I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the

earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:14, emphasis added).

Many are also conversant with many of God's faithful ones in the Bible who were very rich—people like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, and others. Thus they think that God who never changes will still prosper all His people who serve Him faithfully in these last days.

It is true that the Bible is full of passages where God promises to bless His people. In fact, chapter 28 in the book of Deuteronomy makes this very clear. Our God is the One who made the promises; and He cannot lie. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). The Lord knows what blessing is appropriate to those who walk faithfully before Him. Now the question is, Was He actually saying that all who walk faithfully before Him automatically become wealthy in a material sense? Let's find out.

A lesson from the time of Elijah

"[Elijah] arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he,

and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah" (1 Kings 17:10–16).

It was hunger that brought Elijah to the woman of Zarephath. Why? Because he did not have food. But wasn't he a faithful servant of God? He was, in fact, not just a servant, but actually a prophet who communicated with God. Yet, amazingly, he did not have riches. Even when God blessed the woman of Zarephath by multiplying her food, we do not have any account that she became rich. Nonetheless, the woman, her son, and Elijah had just enough food to be able to eat throughout the period of famine.

Similarly, Elisha the servant of Elijah, another prophet of God, and his servant Gehazi were depending on others for shelter and food. (See 2 Kings 4.)

you may forfeit many worldly riches and honor.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:23–26).

When Peter reminded his Lord that he and the other disciples had abandoned every earthly thing to follow Him, he asked what would be their reward.

Here is the answer of Christ, "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of

Are riches really a sign that one is very faithful to God?

The life of Christ on earth

When Christ came to this earth, did He promise material riches to those who served Him faithfully? Was He Himself a rich man? Let's find out: "A certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:19, 20).

Christ made it plain to the man that the One he was deciding to follow did not have even a place to lay His head, let alone other material things. In other words, Christ was trying to educate the mind of His people away from the riches of the world, meaning that the moment you make up your mind to serve God,

man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (verses 28, 29).

Here Christ made it plain to the disciples that their great reward would be everlasting life. As a matter of fact, there is no blessing or riches one can ever compare to everlasting life. A life where we never grow old and have no sickness, pain, diseases, or death is more than material wealth. Why? Because material riches cannot guarantee these things in this present world. A very rich person can become ill, grow old, be attacked by robbers, be involved in an accident and, of course,

eventually die even if spared the rest of those troubles. Basically, Christ was not interested in material riches but eternal riches. That is why He asked, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36, 37).

Christ is telling us not to focus on this temporal life, but rather to follow Him: "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (verses 34, 35).

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Corinthians 11:23–27).

Christ made it plain to the disciples that their great reward would be everlasting life.

The early disciples of Christ

Were Christ's first disciples very rich? Let us recall the experience of Peter and John in Acts chapter 3. Before taking the hand of a lame beggar to lift him up to walk, Peter told him, "Silver and gold have I none" as an explanation as to why he would not be giving him alms—but rather, in the name of Jesus Christ, something even better: restoration.

Undoubtedly, Peter and John were men who served God faithfully all their life and did many miracles through the power of God, but when it came to the issue of riches, Peter clearly had none.

In truth they did not have any riches; these were men who were depending on God for their daily supplies. But, were they faithful people? Yes, indeed.

The apostle Paul

Let us take heed to the testimony of the apostle Paul:

Certainly, no rich person relishing a life of ease can pass through all these painful experiences. The apostle Paul often suffered from hunger because there was no food, from cold because there were not enough clothes to keep him warm.

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8).

Paul was in a very good position to acquire wealth, but the primary goal of his life was in line with the challenging question: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26). Jesus explained:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot

serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matthew 6:24–26).

Some people may misunderstand this assurance if they overlook 2 Thessalonians 3:10–12.

Since our God shall supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19), we should not be so ambitious about worldly things as the unbelievers who do not know God. We are assured that if we serve Him faithfully, He will give us everything we need, though not necessarily all that we want. "The spirit of gain getting, of making haste to be rich, of this all-absorbing worldliness, is painfully contradictory to our faith and doctrines."¹

Is wealth wrong?

At this point we also need to ask another question: Is being rich a sin? No indeed; the word of God explains that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10).

Please notice that the problem is not the money but the LOVE of money. Money itself has great value when acquired in God's own way and used for the advancement of the gospel and for blessing humanity.

"Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God's children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of Christ."²

It is not a sin to be rich, but sin may come in when one who professes to serve God and keep His commandments desires to be rich. "A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent" (Proverbs 28:20).

I heard of a pastor who had told his members: if you are not rich, you should ask yourself a question, "Am I serving a living God or a dead god?" Great danger exists in churches with such mercenary aims.

Abraham had great riches, but he dwelt in tents and booths, "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10).

Did men and women serve God anciently because they expected to be blessed with riches?

When Satan destroying all Job's wealth and tempted him with the thought that Job was serving God because He had given him riches, Job did not abandon his trust in God. The word of God records: "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all these Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:20-22).

"Then said [Job's] wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job 2:9, 10).

Job felt ready to be laid to rest—he never knew that God was going to restore anything to him. He declared, "Now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest" (Job 3:13).

God can bless His children in whatever way He wants. He knows whom to make rich, whom to give little, and whom to make poor. But for one to come to God because he or she wants to be rich would be a very great mistake. God cannot honor such ambition. Our God is so good to them that put their trust in Him (Psalm 145:9) that the psalmist says: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25).

The Lord wants us to understand that He made us, and only He knows what is the best for us. Therefore He will give us exactly what we need and not all we want. This is why He inspired the apostle Paul to admonish Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

"Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (verses 6-12).

"Paul in this letter to Timothy would impress upon his mind the necessity of giving such instruction as should remove the deception which so easily steals upon the rich, that because of their riches they are superior to those who are in poverty, that because of their ability to acquire they are superior in wisdom and judgment—in short, that gain is godliness. Here is a fearful deception. How few heed the charge which Paul commissioned Timothy to make to the rich! How many flatter themselves that their acquisitiveness is godliness! Paul declares, 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.' Although rich persons may devote their whole lives to the one object of getting riches, yet as they brought nothing into

the world, they can carry nothing out. They must die and leave that which cost them so much labor to obtain. They staked their all, their eternal interest, to obtain this property, and have lost both worlds."³

The word of God says, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:3, 4).

These two verses explain to us what God will do in His kingdom. Now, if we have everything we want and live comfortably here on earth, what tears shall God wipe away? The truth is that the tears show that this earth is not a very comfortable place for any sincere child of God. We cannot start building mansions and pursue worldly riches because we are pilgrims traveling up the narrow path to a better land.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

Real faith in God gives joy, peace, and contentment; and anyone who trusts in the Lord experiences true happiness, and he or she is very grateful to God for any blessing He sends.

But "he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." *R*

References

¹ *Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 231, 232.

² *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 351.

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 541.

The Need of

Self-Surrender

By Ellen G. White

will be elevated, refined and perfected in character under the Holy Spirit's working. Humble and contrite, they submit to the moulding and fashioning of the Spirit, and they will know what His eternal fullness means.

Need for enlarged faith

We need an enlarged faith. The Lord desires His will to be done in the hearts of all who believe in Him. But many who might be laborers together with God will never be, because they cling to their imperfections of character. One clings to a cherished fault. Still another enjoys his hereditary and cultivated defects, and makes it his lifework to build himself up and glorify himself, until at last he is found to be filled, not with the Holy Spirit, but with self.

The great day of the Lord is right upon us, and God calls for messengers who will be worked by the Holy Spirit, who will not want to work the Spirit. Such messengers will be guided by the Spirit, molded, refined, and beautified in righteousness because they are willing to be worked. But those who are satisfied to carry with them a vast amount of selfishness, faultfinding, suspicion, distrust, and strife, will be so deceived that they

will not know their short measurement. They are filled with their own doings. They have not the least idea of what it means to be crucified with Christ. To humble self is an experience strange to them. Before they can serve God acceptably, self must die. Christ's words, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (verse 3), must come home to them with power.

Nicodemus, to whom these words were addressed, was a master in Israel, a member of the Sanhedrin; and a learned counsellor. Yet when Christ told him of the new birth, he said, "How can these things be?" Christ answered, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (verses 9, 10) [verses 11-16 quoted.]

Why do we not have more of the faith that works by love and purifies the soul? There is a work to be done in every one of our institutions. Genuine conversion is needed, conversion of heart, mind, soul, and body. Self should die daily. Said the great apostle, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Into this work every

We have the assurance that in this age of the world the Holy Spirit will work with mighty power, unless by our unbelief we limit our blessings, and thus lose the advantages we might obtain. . . . In times past holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In ancient times the prophets searched what the Spirit of God which was in them signified. The Spirit was not then given in power because Jesus was not yet glorified. Dating from the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was to be poured forth on sons and daughters, on servants and handmaidens. In every hill country, every lowland, every valley, humble workmen for the Lord are to be raised up. The divine, sacred influence of the Holy Spirit working in our world is to be as signs and wonders, because God's people are a peculiar people, an holy nation, shining amid moral darkness as living stones in the Lord's building. The weakest and feeblest, if they exercise faith in God, and improve their entrusted powers,

individual needs to put all the intensity of his entire being. Personal religious experience is needed in every church. Why? Because those who are not under the working of the Holy Spirit will not stand amid the perils of the last days.

Need for conversion

Genuine conversion is needed. . . . God's Word declares, "He that gloryeth,

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let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (verses 17, 18). The success of the ministry of Elias was not due to any inherited qualities he possessed, but to the submission of himself to the Holy Spirit, which was given to him as it will be given to all who exercise living faith in God. In his imperfection man has the privilege of linking himself up with God through Jesus Christ.

Candidly and seriously we are to consider the question, Have we humbled ourselves before God, that the Holy Spirit may work through us with transforming power? As children of God, it is our privilege to be worked by His Spirit. When self is crucified, the Holy Spirit takes the brokenhearted ones, and makes them vessels unto honor. They are in His hands as clay in the hands of the potter. Jesus Christ will make such men and women superior in mental, physical, and moral power. The graces of the Spirit will give solidity to the character. They will exert an influence for good because Christ is abiding in the soul.

Unless this converting power shall go through our churches, unless the revival of the Spirit of God shall come, all their profession will never make the members of the church Christians. There are sinners in Zion who need to repent of sins that have been cherished as precious treasures. Until these sins are seen, and thrust from the soul,

until every faulty, unlovely trait of character is transformed by the Spirit's influence, God cannot manifest Himself in power. There is more hope for the open sinner than for the professedly righteous who are not pure, holy, and undefiled.

I am instructed to bear a message to those who minister by holding forth the Word of God to others. You must be converted. This is surely what you need. The spiritual anointing of the Lord will never come to self-sufficient men and women. Many who are in God's service, proclaiming the truth by pen and voice, are not worked by the Holy Spirit. Self has grown to large proportions. Until the soul is emptied of self and the Holy Spirit takes possession, you will be unready for the coming of Christ. You will certainly be weighed in the golden scales of the heavenly sanctuary and be found wanting.

God's promise is to us and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. We may claim this promise for ourselves, and receive the Holy Spirit in His fullness. Then shall not we who preach the word be clothed with the power of God? Shall we not be in truth His messengers?

Who is willing to take himself in hand? Who is willing to lay his finger upon his cherished idols of sin, and allow Christ to purify the temple by casting out the buyers and sellers? Who is prepared to allow Jesus to enter the soul and cleanse it from everything that tarnishes or corrupts? The standard is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). God calls upon men and women to empty their hearts of self. Then His Spirit can find unobstructed entrance. Stop trying to do the work yourself. Ask God to work in and through you until the words of the apostle become yours: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

The whole being must hunger and thirst after righteousness. The soul's desire must be to be drawn to God, to be bent in perfect conformity to His will. Then the cold, hard heart will be melted by the grace and love of God, which will appear in power. God will

be glorified through the human instrumentalities. Self is the great hindrance to this work. . . .

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. . . . Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:1-10).

"If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:14-18). These lessons every church member should learn. There is need of close self-examination in the light of the Word of God, that we may do the work essential to be done.

Having complied with the Word of God, do not depend on your feelings for evidence of acceptance with God. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). If you have complied with the conditions, believe God, whether or not you feel any different. Christ declared, "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. . . . If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide

in his love" (John 14:31; 15:10). Let all who understand the abiding claims of the law of God, yield implicit obedience to every requirement given in the Word. The convictions of the Holy Spirit are warnings which it is dangerous to disregard.

The two houses

Christ declares that those who do His words are like a man who built his house upon a rock. This house the tempest and flood could not sweep away. Those who do not do Christ's words are like the man who built his house upon the sand. Storm and tempest beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. It was an entire wreck. The result of professing to keep the law of God, yet walking contrary to the principles of that law, is seen in the wrecked house. Those who make a profession while failing to obey cannot stand the storm of temptation. One act of disobedience weakens the power to see the sinfulness of the second act. One little disregard of a "Thus saith the Lord" is sufficient to stop the promised blessing of the Holy Spirit. By disobedience the light once so precious becomes obscure. Satan takes charge of the mind and soul, and God is greatly dishonored.

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword" (Isaiah 1:19, 20). These words are true. Exact obedience is required, and those who say that it is not possible to live a perfect life throw upon God the imputation of injustice and untruth.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). A neglect to feed the hunger of the soul leaves it weak and strengthless, unable to do the will of God. The life of such a one is like the barren fig tree, destitute of fruit. Rely upon no human being for words of comfort. Seek the Lord most earnestly, while you read His rich promises and apply them. Then you will not be consumers but providers.

The indwelling Saviour is always revealed by the words. The Holy Spirit does not abide in the heart of the man

who is peevish if others do not grasp his ideas and plans, which appear to him to be the sum and substance of everything desirable. From the lips of such a man there come scathing remarks, which grieve the Holy Spirit away, and produce attributes which are satanic rather than divine. The Lord would have those connected with His work speak at all times with the meekness of Christ. If you are provoked, do not become impatient. Manifest the gentleness of which Christ has given an example in His precious life. Christ took our nature that He might set us an example, showing those who receive Him the fruit they must bear.

The Lord requires those who serve Him to show by word and action that they are sons of God. To show by the daily life that we are members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King, is of more value in God's sight than all learning, all wisdom, all high attainments. Any other course of action is dishonesty to the family of God, and will certainly be divorced from it.

When a man is filled with the Holy Spirit, the more severely he is tested and tried, the more clearly he proves that he is a true representative of Christ in word, in spirit, in action. Christ declares, "He that believeth on me, the words that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). What is the promise to every true believer? "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). Might we not better, my brethren and sisters, take ourselves to task for our unlikeness to Christ? He says, "Ye are my witnesses" (Isaiah 43:10). What kind of witnesses are we for truth and righteousness? Are we striving with all our God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for His fullness, ever reaching higher and higher, trying to attain to the perfection of His character?

When God's servants reach this point, they will be sealed in their foreheads. The recording angel will declare, "It is done." They will be complete in Him whose they are by creation and by redemption.

There is nothing in the natural world that has life but what grows and produces fruit. And in the spiritual world there is no life without growth in grace. Spiritual impulse is not growth. Impulse is feeling, and to depend on feeling is to be as changeful as circumstances. The professed Christian who does not draw life from Christ's life is not a doer of the Word. He is a paralyzed member, only connected in name with the body. At times fitful, convulsive movements will be seen, with no permanent activity. Let no one think that the grace of Christ inspires these shortlived, impulsive actions.

Many people are the subjects of impressions which are not reliable. Many have what they think are good impressions, wonderful exaltation of feeling, but the life does not represent an abiding Christ. They do not draw life from the Source of all life. They are not drinking of the living Water, which springs up into eternal life. God's grace is the living water of which we must drink. It quickens the whole being into spiritual life, the life of the Son of God.

Personal religion means perfect conforming to the life of Christ. When we possess this religion, we shall show sound, spiritual growth, because we are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Advance is the watchword. There are no idlers in the Lord's vineyard. We must be laborers together with God, else we shall fail in the work of overcoming, and our irreligious influence will cause other souls to fail. No soul is lost that does not draw other souls down with it. Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from all iniquity, that Christ may not be ashamed of us.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I appeal to church members to arise and closely criticize themselves. Feel that this work is so important that you cannot engage in criticizing others. Reveal an indwelling Saviour. Then you will understand what it means to be a true missionary. You will bring a Christlike intensity into your work, and many souls will be saved through your earnest prayers and interested labors.—1MR 364–371. *R*



Expanding Jerusalem's Border



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).

In this *Reformation Herald* series, we have seen the need for the fulfillment of the above prophecy recorded in Isaiah. The big question is how to enlarge the tent? **The servant of the Lord inquires:**

"How long shall the apathy remain that is upon the people of God? **The words in the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah are for us.**"¹

A promise follows:
"Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called" (verses 4, 5).

Christ explains how this can happen through the Great Commission:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

PART 3

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments by
J. P. Jean-francois
[Emphasis supplied throughout.]*



“Not upon the ordained minister only rests the responsibility of going forth to fulfill this commission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men. ‘The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come’ (Revelation 22:17). The charge to give this invitation includes the entire church. Everyone who has heard the invitation is to echo the message from hill and valley, saying, ‘Come.’

“It is fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul-saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the

be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. ‘This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come’ (Matthew 24:14).”²

“This liberality on the part of the believers was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The converts to the gospel were ‘of one heart and of one

“Our burden for the ‘regions beyond’ can never be laid down until the whole earth shall be lightened with the glory of the Lord.”

Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities. Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour’s commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands.

“Hundreds, yea, thousands, who have heard the message of salvation are still idlers in the market place, when they might be engaged in some line of active service. To these Christ is saying, ‘Why stand ye here all the day idle?’ and He adds, ‘Go ye also into the vineyard’ (Matthew 20:6, 7). Why is it that many more do not respond to the call? Is it because they think themselves excused in that they do not stand in the pulpit? Let them understand that there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit by thousands of consecrated lay members.

“Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall

soul’ (Acts 4:32). One common interest controlled them—the success of the mission entrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for their brethren and the cause they had espoused, was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth.

“Thus it will ever be when the Spirit of God takes possession of the life. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ will follow the example of Him who for our sake became poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. Money, time, influence—all the gifts they have received from God’s hand, they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.”³

How can such a wonderful spirit be promoted in our midst?

“The leaders in God’s cause, as wise generals, are to lay plans for advance moves all along the line. In their planning they are to give special study to the work that can be done by the laity for their friends and neighbors. The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.

“The salvation of sinners requires earnest, personal labor. We are to bear to them the word of life, not to wait for them to come to us. Oh, that I could speak words to men and women that would arouse them to diligent action! The moments now granted to us are few. We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world. We have no time to lose. Every moment is golden and altogether too precious to be devoted merely to self-serving. Who will seek God earnestly and from Him draw strength and grace to be His faithful workers in the missionary field?”⁴

“Ministers should impress upon the people the necessity of individual effort. No church can flourish unless its members are workers. The people must lift where the ministers lift. I saw that nothing lasting can be accomplished for churches in different places unless they are aroused to feel that a responsibility rests upon them. Every member of the body should feel that the salvation of his own soul depends upon his own individual effort. Souls cannot be saved without exertion. The minister cannot save the people. He can be a channel through which God will impart light to His people; but after the light is given, it is left with the people to appropriate that light, and, in their turn, let it shine forth to others. The people should feel that an individual responsibility rests upon them, not only to save their own souls, but to earnestly engage in the salvation of those who remain in darkness. Instead of looking to Brother and Sister White to help them out of their darkness, they should be earnestly

engaged in helping themselves. If they should begin to hunt up those worse off than themselves, and should try to help them, they would help themselves into the light sooner than in any other way. If the people lean upon Brother and Sister White, and trust in them, God will humble them among you or remove them from you. You must look to God and trust in Him. Lean upon Him, and He will not forsake you. He will not leave you to perish. Precious is the word of God. 'Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life' (Matthew 5:39). These are the words of Christ. The words of inspiration, carefully and prayerfully studied and practically obeyed, will thoroughly furnish you unto all good works. Ministers and people must look to God."⁵

What steps can we all take?

"Jesus said unto [the people], Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (John 12:35). "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8).

"If we walk in the light, as [God] is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

"Those today to whom the Lord has given great light will find their only safety in walking in the way of the Lord, placing themselves where He can carry out His will through them. God will do large things for those who will learn of him, not taking counsel of themselves, but of Him who never makes a mistake. Our safety, our wisdom, is in recognizing and heeding God's instructions. The most valuable knowledge that we can obtain is the knowledge of God. Those who walk humbly before Him, loving Him supremely and obeying His Word, will be blessed with wisdom. They will be given the knowledge of heaven to impart to others. Wisdom is God's gift, to be kept pure from all contamination. Its possession lays

upon everyone on whom it is bestowed a peculiar obligation to glorify God by blessing his fellow men. He is ever to keep before him the fear of God, enquiring at every step, 'Is this the way of the Lord?'

"God desires to have upon this earth righteous representatives, through whom He can communicate to His people His peculiar favor. These representatives are to be men who honor God by keeping His commandments—wise, true men, who can act as leaders, walking circumspectly, showing to the world the meaning of true loyalty to God."⁶

Time to wake up!

"Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:11-14).

"Our time for work is short. We have not a moment to lose. Let us do something for Christ, and do it now."⁷

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (John 4:35, 36).

"All who receive Christ as a personal Saviour are to demonstrate the truth of the gospel and its saving power upon the life. God makes no requirement without making provision for its fulfillment. Through the grace of Christ we may accomplish everything that God requires. All the riches of heaven are to be revealed through God's people. 'Herein is My Father glorified,' Christ says, 'that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples' (John 15:8)."⁸

Now is indeed the time to get on with the Lord's work. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 40:3-5).

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isaiah 60:1, 2).

"God's people have a mighty work before them, a work that must continually rise to greater prominence. **Our efforts in missionary lines must become far more extensive.** A more decided work than has been done must be done prior to the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. **God's people are not to cease their labors until they shall encircle the world.** . . .

"And still our General, who never makes a mistake, says to us: 'Advance. Enter new territory. Lift up the standard in every land. 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee' (Isaiah 60:1).

"Our watchword is to be, Onward, ever onward. The angels of God will go before us to prepare the way. Our burden for the 'regions beyond' can never be laid down until the whole earth shall be lightened with the glory of the Lord."⁹ *R*

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¹ *The Review and Herald*, December 17, 1901.

² *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 110, 111.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71.

⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 116, 117.

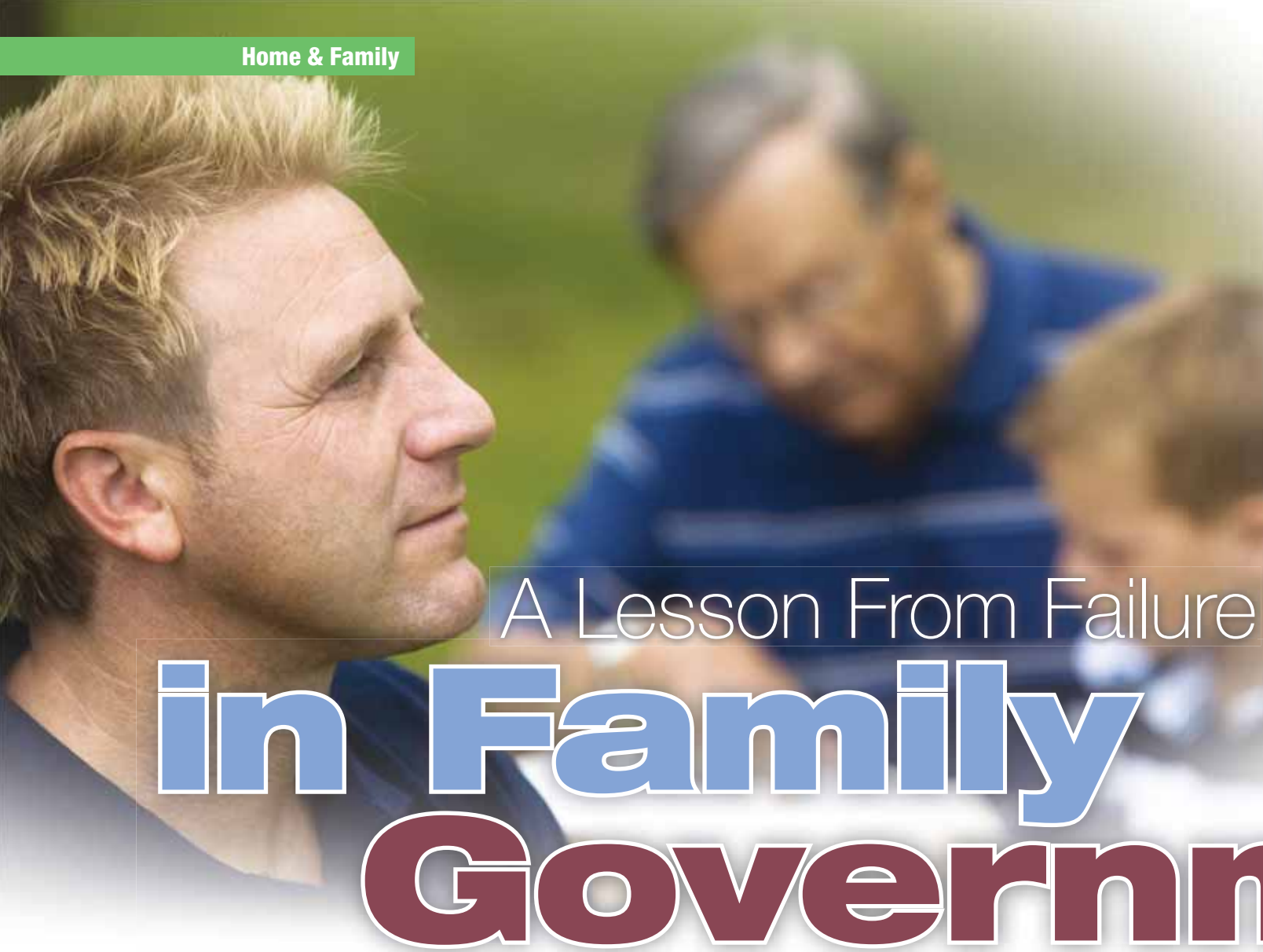
⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 120, 121.

⁶ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 2, p. 1032.

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⁸ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 301.

⁹ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 23-29.



A Lesson From Failure in Family Governn

By A. Balbach

*A*fter the patriarch Jacob and his company left Padan-aram, where he had spent twenty years of his life, they traveled for many days until they were able to cross the Jordan River. How happy he must have felt to be back in his own land—the land of Canaan!

When they reached the valley of Shechem, Jacob bought a piece of land, where he put up his tents and dug a well—the well by which, many centuries later, Jesus offered “living water” to the Samaritan woman. He also built an altar there. These things indicate that he was planning to reside there for some time.

The town of Shechem (later called

Sycar) was not far off. The inhabitants of that place were all heathen. And it was Jacob’s duty to enlighten them, to talk to them about the true God, Creator of heaven and earth, and to show them the way to the eternal kingdom. How was he supposed to do that? By suiting his good actions to his profitable words. And by the example of his people. But, instead of being a “savour of life unto life,” they were a “savour of death unto death.” The deportment of three of Jacob’s children was so disgusting that the memory of what they did could only be held in abomination. And, as a rule, when two or three members of a group of people do the wrong thing, the consequential bad reputation rests upon the entire group.

How did the problem start? With restless boredom and discontentment in the home life!

Dinah, Jacob's daughter, was getting more and more curious about the town of Shechem and its inhabitants. Staying home day after day, day after day, around her mother, helping her do the cleaning, washing, cooking—that was too boring for her. One day she yielded to the temptation to leave home for just a few hours—to mingle with the people in the neighboring town—a pagan town. I take it for granted that she must have said to herself: "I do not need counsel, or warnings, or permission from Mom and Dad. I'm old enough to know what I'm doing."

So, "Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land" (Genesis 34:1).

The readers of the Bible may think: "It's hard to believe that she wanted to see only the girls. What would have prevented her from casting an eye also

they ever consider what might creep into the conversations among them? Do we ever stop to consider such things? We should. These are things of which parents should be aware. Yes, be harmless as doves, but be wise as serpents as well.

Meanwhile, in the case of Dinah, the males in that pagan town must have certainly looked at her with covetous eyes. Having a godly background, the mystique surrounding Dinah must have carried a certain attraction. And sure enough, before long, the girl fell prey to one of the young men.

"When . . . the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her" (verse 2).

How frequently does this story repeat itself today?

Are we, as parents, naïve to the dangers that face our youth in today's profligate society? The Spirit of Prophecy warns: "The young are bewitched with the mania for courtship and marriage. Lovesick sentimentalism prevails. Great vigilance and tact are needed to guard the youth from these wrong influences. Many parents are blind to the tendencies of their children. Some parents have stated to me, with great satisfaction, that their sons or daughters had no desire for the attentions of the opposite sex, when in fact these children were at the same time secretly giving or receiving such attentions, and the parents were so much absorbed in worldliness and gossip that they knew nothing about the matter."¹

"A terrible picture of the condition of the world has been presented before me. Immorality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin of this age. Never did vice lift its deformed head with such boldness as now. The people seem to be benumbed, and the lovers of virtue and true goodness are nearly discouraged by its boldness, strength, and prevalence. The iniquity which abounds is not merely confined to the unbeliever and the scoffer. Would that this were the case, but it is not. Many men and women

who profess the religion of Christ are guilty. Even some who profess to be looking for His appearing are no more prepared for that event than Satan himself. They are not cleansing themselves from all pollution. They have so long served their lust that it is natural for their thoughts to be impure and their imaginations corrupt. It is as impossible to cause their minds to dwell upon pure and holy things as it would be to turn the course of Niagara and send its waters pouring up the falls."²

Let us not suppose that without great care our young people will be immune to the perils to a society which Christ compared to the days of Noah, when the thoughts of people's imagination was "only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

The unbeliever actually tried to make things right

Meanwhile, back to the story: Word soon reached Jacob that his daughter had been put to shame. The young man who had raped her assumed the responsibility for his action. Now he wanted to marry her. (This step was actually the most decent thing to do under the circumstances, according to Deuteronomy 22:28, 29). So he urged his father to go and talk to Jacob.

Prince Hamor arrived at the place where Jacob's tent stood and met Dinah's brothers, who were just coming in from the fields. When they heard

ment

on the boys?" Regardless of whether or not she thought of that, why was she even so curious about the ways of the heathen? Hadn't her parents guided her values and priorities in this regard? Weren't her family members interested enough in her to notice that she was wandering off? Normally, such a wayward habit does not suddenly appear overnight. Usually there is a pattern that precedes it—symptomatic of a rather casual, relaxed attitude of negligence on the part of the parents. Dinah's behavior shows that it is quite possible that she had lacked supervision for a long time. Her parents had evidently become a bit presumptuous in assuming that everything would be fine with her as she began mingling with the worldly-minded girls. Did



what had happened, they were shocked and angry, because the shameful act was regarded as a great insult against the whole group under the leadership of Jacob. Such a thing, today, is often overlooked, but in those days it was looked upon as an inexcusable “folly in Israel” (Genesis 34:7). Now they were all thinking of a solution—how to find a way out of the problem.

Hamor made a proposal: “Ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein” (verse 10).

“And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you” (verse 9).

Apparently, from a human standpoint, Hamor’s suggestion was the best arrangement to satisfy both parties. But could Jacob, in good conscience, accept that plan, since he was well aware of the reason why his grandfather Abraham had had to leave his country (Genesis 12:1)? Abraham had obeyed God and cut off all idolatrous associations, and so did Isaac. And Jacob did the same.

Distinctly separate to preserve purity

Since the days of Abraham, God’s representatives in this world had been a separate people. And, today, separation from Babylon is one of the main conditions of our acceptance before God (2 Corinthians 6:16–18; Revelation 18:4). However, without consulting their father, Jacob’s sons took the matter into their own hands, as if they were able to bring the right solution.

daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people” (Genesis 34:14–16).

Trying to make things right—the wrong way

The counterproposal of the sons of Jacob was accepted in good faith. Hamor and his son Shechem (who had the same name as the town) appeared before the “city council,” talked to the

Weren't Dinah's family members interested enough to notice that she was wandering off?

With deceitful intentions already formed in their minds, they said to Hamor and his son:

“We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us: But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised; then will we give our

men about the plan that had been discussed in Jacob’s tent, and they at once agreed to it.

“And every male was circumcised” (verse 24).

However, on the third day, when their wounds were sore and sensitive, and when they were running a fever, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, car-

Food for thought from *Jacob's Experience*

How could the whole tragedy in Jacob’s family have been prevented—beginning with the restlessness of the daughter? Are we supplying our children and teenagers with productive, useful activities with which to occupy their energies—or do we too often just nonchalantly leave them for their “friends” to entertain? Do we simply assign chores to the teens—or do we actually provide them with some of that special companionship they crave by doing chores together instead—with the cheerful, animated spirit they relish?

How much time are we actually spending with our young? Are we blindly naïve as to their exact whereabouts? By neglecting our families through preoccupation with our own work and the cares of this life—might we be laying the groundwork for poor associations and evil influences that can lure our youth into the snares of the enemy? Let us be sure that our families have the hedge of God’s protection

so vitally needed in the wicked era in which we live. Might your family be tottering on the very brink of such a catastrophe as it struck the family of Jacob? Is it time for a serious family reformation in your home? Head off the peak of the crisis before it hits! Don’t wait any longer!

In Genesis 35:1–4 we read the details that, in response to the great crisis in



ried out their carefully concealed plan, which filled the heart of Jacob their father with horror and fear.

"[Simeon and Levi] took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out" (verses 25, 26).

"The beginning that led to results so terrible was the act of Jacob's daughter, who 'went out to see the daughters of the land,' thus venturing into association with the ungodly. He who seeks pleasure among those that fear not God is placing himself on Satan's ground and inviting his temptations."³

May all young people and their parents take the warning!

Time for a family reformation!

When Jacob saw what two of his sons had done, he feared that he and all his people would be killed by other groups of Canaanites as soon as the news about the massacre could leak out to them. Filled with dark apprehension, he said to his sons: "Ye have troubled me to

make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house" (verse 30).

The old patriarch realized that he and his family had to move away from that place immediately. But where should they go under the dangerous circumstances that the reckless act of his sons had created? He did what even some atheists do at the end of their wits. He poured out his heart before God and entreated His help. And God instructed him to move on to Bethel, south of Shechem, and settle there. And not only that: God detained the would-be avengers after a reformation had been made in the household of Jacob (Genesis 35:2).

"The terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob" (verse 5).

Once again Jacob saw, in his experience, what we have also seen, or will see, in our experience. If we put our

confidence entirely in the Lord and get down on our knees before Him, imploring His help, we can boldly say: "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:6).

Jacob and his family must have spent many sleepless nights thinking about the tragic incident. Now that they saw that the hand of God was with them in spite of what they had done, they must have asked themselves: "As soon as Dinah got into a mess, why didn't we appeal to the hand of God instead of appealing to the sword?" They must have thought of better options. And they must have learned to be wiser in future emergencies.

In any emergency situation, the best thing we can do is to ask the Lord for wisdom that we may be able to choose wisely—out of two or three options, the most convenient one; and out of two or three evils, the lesser one. *R*

References

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 346.

³ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 204.

Jacob's family—when the patriarch realized that the characters of some of his children were way out of harmony with God's will—the Lord spoke to him. The same Saviour who had heard Jacob's prayer many years before—in the hour of the patriarch's own personal distress, back when he was single—now heard this struggling servant once again. As a result, Jacob promptly directed his household to:

1. Put away the idols that had crept in.

What were these idols? Do our young people today likewise have certain worldly idols that they are cherishing? Might they even have acquired them through our influence? Let us prayerfully search our heart to see what evils may have crept into our home life, whether it be poor choices of music, DVDs—whatever—and eliminate them immediately! Their influence is stronger among the youth than we may realize.

2. Be clean and change garments.

Have we become too lax in our dress and deportment—inadvertently adopting the styles of the world? It's time to reexamine ourselves carefully in this regard. Clothing today is specifically designed to incite lust in both the wearer and

the beholder. Don't be ashamed to get back to God's blueprint found in the Testimonies—avoid today's dangers!

3. Make a fresh altar to God.

Has the altar of morning and evening worship become too rushed or hurried in your family—or worse yet, too often skipped altogether? How can we expect God to honor His promise of protection if we fail to do our part in keeping His hedge carefully maintained?

The amazing result of Jacob's reformation was clearly seen. What a magnificent indication of God's abundant mercy to the repentant!

Yes, we too can enjoy the same mercy experienced by Jacob. It is not too late for a family reformation. If we and our dear ones have suffered through a wrong course of action, it is still possible to redeem the time. Do not give up hope. Let us each solemnly beseech the Lord for wisdom and guidance in order that "our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace" (Psalm 144:12). This may require a higher level of vigilance and care, but surely the rewards are well worth it! *R*



"An Enemy Has Done This!"

By Pam Stemmler

*I*n the midst of perfection, the original pair of humans enjoyed all that could possibly make them happy in the Garden of Eden. But something foreign entered the picture. You know the story. A rebellious angel of the highest rank had decided that he could do things better than God Himself and coveted the position of the Creator.

Through subtlety and deceit, this being had promoted his rebellious thoughts to the angels in heaven, finally causing it to be necessary for him

and his cohorts to be thrown out of heaven. Why? Because rebellion is disobedience against God and His laws. This would result in chaos, God knew, but some of the created beings weren't so sure. Time and place had to be given to show the results of this other philosophy of "doing your own thing." That place was Earth; the time has been over the last 6,000+ years.

We have the explanation shown on planet Earth of what happened as soon as Adam and Eve chose to listen to this being—the devil or Satan—and to disregard both the warnings and instruction of their loving Creator. Destruction began immediately. Leaves began to wilt and die, thorns and thistles now entered the beauty of that pristine place. Envy, jealousy, and hatred manifested in the offspring of



Adam and Eve and eventually caused the death of one of their sons.

The results of Satan's philosophy

Rebellion is bad. Scripture plainly tells us why all the bad things are happening around us. We see what is going on behind the scenes whenever we read the first chapter of the book of Job.

Jesus also illustrated this point with a well-known parable, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the household-er came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" (Matthew 13:24-28).

What a picture! It is not at all pleasant, but it is effective indeed in showing the results of Satan's ways. As we consider the disruption of the element of order—Heaven's First Law—we see that it is not a matter of opinion, but the very basis of the great controversy that began in heaven and continues on earth. When will it end? I believe very soon. How will it end? That will depend upon a people who give all to their Creator and submit to His ways. This is why it is so important to study God's Law of Order. So, what is the remedy to the problem we face?

The remedy for chaos

As those first evidences of the results of rebellion were seen in the lives of Adam and Eve—first shame, coldness, and fear, there was also something

very precious given to them. It was a promise—the promise of a Redeemer who would save them from the power of this rebellion. You know His name. It is Jesus. We know this now because of all that was revealed since that time, but Adam and Eve were given the message in types or symbols, and this continued for thousands of years as a visual aid shall to educate God's creation to understand His plan.

Adam and Eve were given a very basic sacrificial ceremony to show the Redeemer's mission. Patriarchs of old had the same lesson. Notice what was required for Israel to meet with God at Mt. Sinai. This was no casual meeting which the people could attend in whatever manner they pleased.

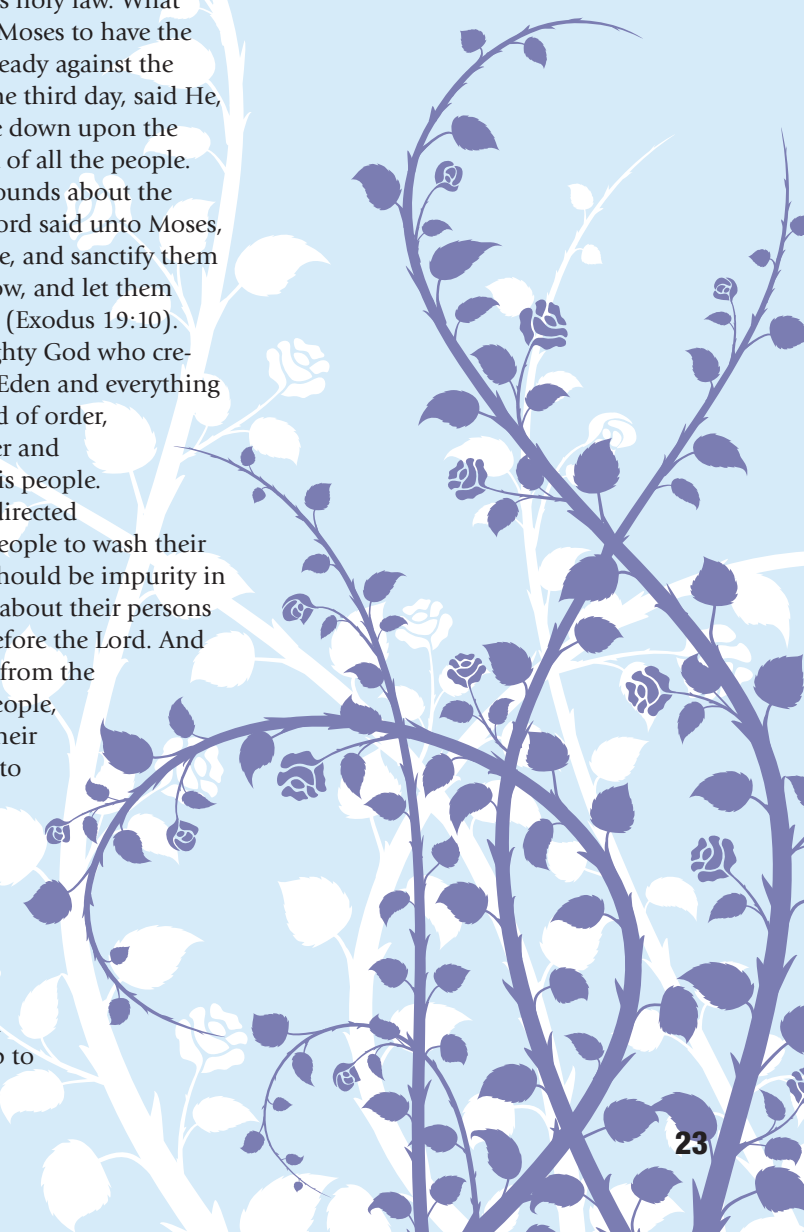
"Read the directions that were given to Moses to be made known to the children of Israel as God was about to come down upon the mount to speak in their hearing His holy law. What did He command Moses to have the people do? To be ready against the third day; for on the third day, said He, the Lord will come down upon the mount in the sight of all the people. They were to set bounds about the mount. 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes' (Exodus 19:10). That great and mighty God who created the beautiful Eden and everything lovely in it is a God of order, and He wants order and cleanliness with His people. That mighty God directed Moses to tell the people to wash their clothes lest there should be impurity in their clothing and about their persons as they came up before the Lord. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and they washed their clothes, according to the command of God."¹

Learning from the sanctuary service

As Israel became a nation that would be raised up to

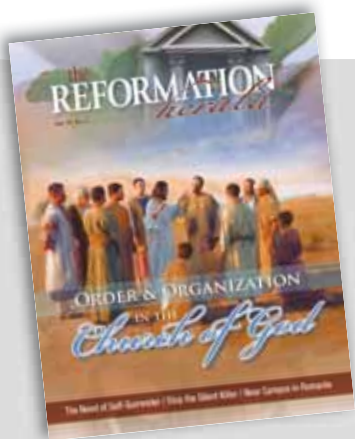
proclaim God's plan to all nations, a more detailed ceremonial system was instituted. This was the sanctuary service. Also known as the ceremonial law, it provided many lessons. Every detail—and I mean **every** detail—was given to Moses from the pattern of the heavenly sanctuary to be replicated in the sanctuary on earth. It would be a moveable tabernacle at first, finally being replaced by a permanent structure. It was beautiful in design and each little part had significance in symbolizing the work of the Redeemer.

The sanctuary was a symbol of the dwelling place of God. No uncleanness could enter there. No disorder, no chaos, no rebellion—only peace and harmony should be there. Precious woods, metals, fabrics, colors, were intricately designed to teach wonderful lessons, the foremost being the exceeding holiness of God.



"To show how careful [the children of Israel] were to be in regard to cleanliness, Moses was to put a laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, 'and put water there, to wash withal.' And Moses and Aaron, and Aaron's sons that ministered before the Lord, were to wash their hands and their feet thereat when they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they went in before the Lord.

"This was the commandment of the great and mighty God. There was to be nothing slack and untidy about



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those who appeared before Him when they came into His holy presence. And why was this? What was the object of all this carefulness? Was it merely to recommend the people to God? Was it merely to gain His approbation? The reason that was given me was this, that a right impression might be made upon the people. If those who ministered in sacred office should fail to manifest care, and reverence for God, in their apparel and their deportment, the people would lose their awe and their reverence for God and His sacred service. If the priests showed great reverence for God by being very careful and very particular as they came into His presence, it gave the people an exalted idea of God and His requirements. It showed them that God was holy, that His work was sacred, and that everything in connection with His work must be holy; that it must be free from everything like impurity and uncleanness; and that all defilement must be put away from those who approach nigh to God."²

Since the scriptures make it clear that our God is exceedingly holy, how should a people approach Him? It could never be carelessly, or thoughtlessly, but with prayer, humility, reverence and care for their body, their spirit and their mind.

The sanctuary was not just a building or tabernacle. It was a system of ceremonies. Each specific service was designed to impress the beholders that sin was ugly and sin cost life. That is why there was death. Not because our God needs appeasing—for this is what paganism teaches—but because sin brings death as its sure result. God was seeking to teach the people the bitter results of rebellion. Even when the loving Creator would take on human form and come and do only good for the people, sin would kill Him. This is what was demonstrated in the sanctuary service.

Picture the scene: the true Lamb of God

"The Lord of glory was dying, a ransom for the race. In yielding up His precious life, Christ was not up-

held by triumphant joy. All was oppressive gloom. It was not the dread of death that weighed upon Him. It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony. Christ was the prince of sufferers; but His suffering was from a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that through familiarity with evil, man had become blinded to its enormity. Christ saw how deep is the hold of sin upon the human heart, how few would be willing to break from its power. He knew that without help from God, humanity must perish, and He saw multitudes perishing within reach of abundant help."³

"It was not the spear thrust, it was not the pain of the cross, that caused the death of Jesus. That cry, uttered 'with a loud voice' (Matthew 27:50; Luke 23:46), at the moment of death, the stream of blood and water that flowed from His side, declared that He died of a broken heart. His heart was broken by mental anguish. He was slain by the sin of the world."⁴

"Sin is the opposite of holiness; sin crucified the Son of God. If men could see how hateful sin is, they would not tolerate it, nor educate themselves in it. They would reform in life and character."⁵

The sanctuary service did not stop there however, thank God. It also illustrated through type and symbol that the Redeemer would remove the guilt of sin and its power and would grant the life and ability or power to live a new life through Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord! We have hope.

When Christ, the Redeemer, gives new life, then rebellion and chaos will be put away. May we experience this in our daily living. *R*

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¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 611.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 611, 612.

³ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 752, 753.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 772.

⁵ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 145.



STOP

the Silent Killer

By Liliane Balbach, M.S., R.D.

100,000 people are killed each year by a silent killer! That is like one jetliner full of people crashing each day of the year. What is this silent killer? "Salt is the single most harmful element in our food supply, silently killing 100,000 people each year," says Dr. Michael Jacobson, executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

In 2005, one in six deaths in the United States were due to high blood pressure according to a new report from the Institute of Medicine.¹ A panel of scientists urged the government to gradually reduce the maximum amount of sodium that manufacturers and restaurants can add to foods, beverages, and meals. High blood pressure increases your risk of dying of a heart attack or **stroke more than** high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, or any

other risk factor. And too much salt in the diet is the major cause of high blood pressure. In fact, salt can cause more health havoc than trans fat, sugar, saturated fat, and food additives.

Less salt, lower blood pressure

Studies in adults and children that compare higher versus lower-salt diets show that cutting salt lowers blood pressure.^{2,3} A recent analysis of thirteen studies found that people who cut their salt intake have a lower risk of heart attacks, strokes, and other cardiovascular events.⁴

Why worry about salt?

"I don't have high blood pressure, why should I worry about salt?" The fact is that "over time, 90% of the people in this country will develop hypertension," according to Dr. Havas,

former Vice President of Science, Quality, and Public Health at the American Medical Association. Blood pressure rises as we age. "Blood pressures drift upward as people get older and they're exposed to long-term excess sodium. That's why almost all adults are going to get blood pressures that put them at higher risk for heart disease and stroke," says Dr. Havas.⁵ Now that's a wake-up call!

What is "too high?"

What is considered high blood pressure? What "people don't realize that blood pressure higher than 120/80 is associated with increased risk," says Dr. Havas. "Between 'normal' and 'hypertension' you have a huge number of heart disease and stroke deaths attributable to excess blood pressure," he explains. One out of three Americans

has “prehypertension.” Another one out of three has hypertension.

There are several theories why sodium increases blood pressure. The most obvious one is that it makes us retain fluids, and that retention elevates blood pressure, which injures blood vessels and leads to heart disease and stroke.

Hypertension harms many organs

Hypertension harms not only the heart but also the brain and kidneys. Besides raising the risk of heart attacks and strokes, high blood pressure also increases the risk of heart failure, which can affect 6.8 million Americans. High blood pressure is also the leading cause of chronic kidney disease which strikes one in nine Americans. Also there is growing evidence that hypertension raises the risk of dementia.

High blood pressure causes damage to the kidneys. Some studies show that people who consume more salt excrete more protein in their urine.⁶ That shows that their kidneys are under stress. “The presence of protein in the filtering surfaces of the kidneys is associated with inflammation and damage,” explains Dr. Kaplan. For people with kidney disease, “a reduction in sodium can reduce protein in the urine.”⁷

High blood pressure can thicken the muscle in the chamber of the heart that pumps blood throughout the body. This contributes to most cases of heart failure according to Dr. Kaplan, author of *Kaplan’s Clinical Hypertension*, a reference book for physicians.

Uncontrolled hypertension

Forty-two million Americans have uncontrolled hypertension. Why? Because 28% of the people who have high blood pressure don’t know it; 11% know they have it but aren’t getting treatment; and 26% are being treated with drugs, but not enough to lower their blood pressure below 140/90. This is why 65% of Americans with high blood pressure don’t have it under control.⁸

Why are people so careless with this silent killer? That’s because “hypertension is a chronic condition that doesn’t

Table 1

Know your Numbers

Blood Pressure Levels for Adults*

Category	Systolic (mmHg)**	Diastolic (mmHg)**	Result
Normal	Less than 120 and	Less than 80	Good for you!
Prehypertension:	120–139 or	80–89	Your blood pressure could be a problem. Make changes in what you eat and drink. Be physically active and lose extra weight. If you also have diabetes, see your doctor.
Hypertension:	140 or	90+	You have high blood pressure. See your doctor.

*For adults ages 18 and older who are not on medicine for high blood pressure and do not have a short-term serious illness.

** Millimeters of mercury.

Source: The Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of high blood pressure; NIH Publication No. 03-5230. *National High Blood Pressure Education Program, May 2003.*

make the patient feel anything,” says Dr. Kaplan. “People with hypertension don’t experience anything obvious,” so they stop taking their medication.

Assume you are salt-sensitive

“Some people react to sodium more quickly than others,” says Dr. Havas. “But 90% of the people in this country develop hypertension and the principal cause is the exposure to excess sodium, so most people over time don’t do well with high salt loads.” Since there is not test of salt sensitivity, he says, “almost all of us have to assume that we are sensitive to long-term sodium exposure.”

How much salt can we have?

Americans are now consuming about 3,400 milligrams (mg) of sodium each day or about 1 ½ teaspoons of salt according to government data. The average human consumes more than 4,000 mg of sodium per day. The recommended levels are 1,500 mg of sodium each day for people over 50, African-Americans, and those with high blood pressure. All the rest—30% of the population—should limit their sodium to 2,300 mg/day.

Saving lives and money

What are the benefits of reducing our sodium intake? If Americans reduced their average sodium intake to 2,300 mg/day, it may decrease the cases of high blood pressure for 11 million; better yet improve the quality of life

for millions of people, and save about \$18 billion in annual health care costs according to an analysis by the Rand Corporation.⁹

Where’s the salt hiding?

Most of the sodium in the American diet comes from processed foods and restaurant food. In fact, 75–80% of the sodium we take in is added to food before we even open the package or walk into a restaurant. Foods such as spaghetti sauce, cereals, cheeses, soups, canned vegetables and beans, bread, crackers, and pizza are high in sodium. Some restaurant entrees have 2,000 mg sodium or more in a single dish.

How to cut the salt

Take the salt shaker off the table.

Always taste your food before you salt it, and you’ll be surprised how you can get by with less salt.

Eat fresh foods. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables with no added salt; avoid canned vegetables. Better yet, make your own fresh vegetables and dry lentils, peas and beans food from scratch. By preparing your own fresh food, you can decide how little salt to add.

Select unsalted nuts or seeds.

Avoid salty snacks such as chips and pretzels.

Add fresh lemon juice instead of salt to vegetables.

Learn to use spices and herbs to enhance the taste of your food. Garlic, onion, ginger, citrus, turmeric, fresh basil, Chile peppers, and lemon juice

Table 2 Salt Bombs in Restaurants and Processed Foods

Food	Serving Size	Sodium (mg)
Linguine a la Marinara, Olive Garden Restaurant	1	900
Lasagna Classico, Olive Garden Restaurant	1	2,830
Eggplant Parmigiana & pasta, Romano's Macaroni Grill	1	1,450
Greek salad with Greek dressing, Panera	1	1,670
Broccoli Cheddar Soup, Panera	1 cup	1,020
Vegetables, frozen	1 cup	2-180
Potato chips	1 ounce	120-180
Pretzels	1 ounce	290-560
Salad dressing, regular fat	2 tablespoons	110-505
Salsa	2 tablespoons	150-240
Tomato soup, reconstituted	1 cup	700-1,280
Tomato juice	1 cup	340-1,040
Tortilla chips	1 ounce	105-160
Ketchup	1 tablespoon	175
Cottage Cheese, creamed	1 cup	851
Cottage Cheese, low fat	1 cup	918
Cheese, Provolone	1 ounce	248
Ice Cream, vanilla	1 cup	106
Pancakes, from mix	1	239
Italian Salad Dressing	1 tablespoon	243
Thousand Island Salad Dressing	1 tablespoon	135
Cream of Mushroom soup, canned, reconstituted	1 cup	881
Soy sauce	1 tablespoon	902
White flour, self-rising	1 cup	1,588
Baking soda	1 teaspoon	1,259
Olives, green	5 large	550
Olives, black	5 large	200
Catsup	1 tablespoon	175

are some excellent sodium-free flavor enhancers.

Fill half of your plate with fruits or vegetables. This will increase the potassium in your diet and shift the sodium-potassium balance in your favor. Our body needs more potassium than sodium.

Retrain your taste buds. Cut your salt intake gradually but consistently. Start by reducing your salt intake by 25%. This small reduction won't decrease your enjoyment of food. After 10 days, you will be accustomed to the low-sodium diet.

Check the label. Look for foods with less than 5% of sodium each serving.

Choose brands with lowest sodium content.

reversal of high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and other lifestyle diseases. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall

Compare the sodium levels of processed foods between brands. There is a great variation.

Other lifestyle changes help reduce hypertension

Increase the intake of potassium by eating a 3-4 fruits and 6-9 vegetables each day. Keep at your ideal body weight, and exercise daily. All these lifestyle changes will help keep your blood pressure low, but decreasing salt is still the key, says Dr. Havas.

The optimal diet

Our Creator has given us the perfect diet for the prevention and

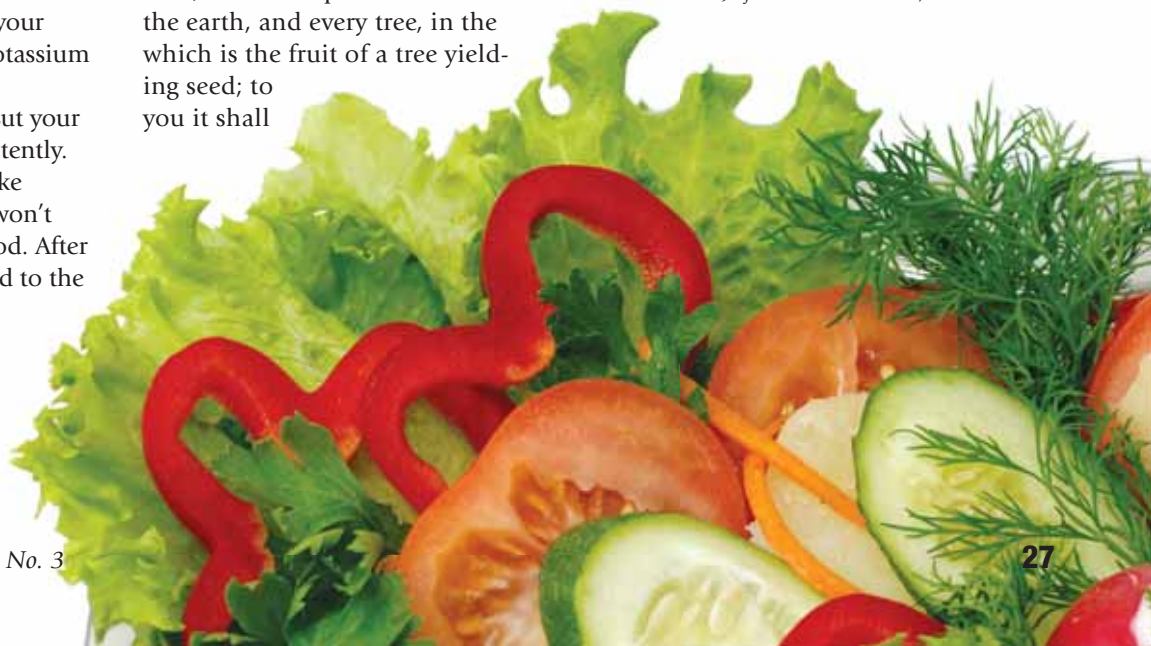
be for [food]" (Genesis 1:29).

Take charge of your health! Choose to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and a few nuts. Prepare your meals from fresh vegetables, legumes, nuts, and fruits. Season them with herbs and minimal amounts of salt, and enjoy the delicious natural flavors that God has put into each food. Fill half of your plate with vegetables, one fourth with whole grains, and one fourth with beans or legumes. Or fill your plate with half fruit, one fourth whole grains and a handful of nuts. Exercise daily, keep your weight down, and be temperate in all things. Then you too will enjoy the blessings of good health that God has in store for you. If you have trouble with motivation, ask Him for help, and He will give you the power to stay on a health program for life. Bless His holy name!

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalm 103:2-5). *R*

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New Campus in Romania

Romania is a country in the southeastern part of Europe with a rich landscape, which includes plains, hills, woodlands as well as high rocky mountains. It is bordered by the Danube River to the south and has access to the Black Sea to the east.

Due to the beauty of the scenery, this picturesque jewel of a land is still a favorite travel and vacation destination for many tourists.

In our history, Romania is known as a country from which some of the SDARM pioneers went abroad to spread the message of the Reformation.



The church in this country was sorely tried for more than 40 years by the oppression of the Communist regime, and, after the revolution of December 1989, it had to face the even more dangerous temptations of liberty, a privilege to which the people had not been accustomed.

This time of freedom was not easy for the church either, and unfortunately some who had remained firm in the face of the Communist persecution could not withstand the trials of liberty.

Nonetheless, Romania is still one of the largest unions in the Reform Movement and still has a quite considerable human potential.

Being an ex-communist country and a younger member of the European Union, Romania is being confronted with the effects of the global economic crisis which affects most countries in the region.

Yet the gospel continues to be preached, books continue to be canvassed and sold to interested people, sermons and appeals are broadcast over the internet, and a Missionary School with over 30 students is run by the union.

Cooking classes and special evangelistic programs, as well as children and youth camps, are being organized, and the sanitarium staff keeps offering to their patients physical and spiritual assistance, directing them to the Great Physician and the simple healing methods He has provided in our natural environment.

Due to the relatively high number of church members, regional conven-

tions are pretty well attended, and the available facilities are most of the time insufficient to accommodate all the attendants. So, the need to have our own Convention Center became more and more evident year by year.

By the grace of God, an appropriate plot was finally purchased for this purpose in the very center of the country, in a mountain region bordered by a mountain river on one side and by a fir-tree forest on the other side.

Among the other resources of the place is the wonderful fresh air, a beautiful lake and two water springs, with most healthy and refreshing water flowing incessantly.

The access by car is quite easy in all seasons, and there are manifold possibilities and trails for hiking in the neighboring Carpathian mountains, which are highly appreciated by both Romanian and foreign mountain-lovers as well.

It is on this spot that the Romanian Union in agreement with the General Conference decided to build a Convention Center to be able to host the 2011 Delegates Session of the General Conference, as well as any other further Youth Conventions, Children Camps, Classes, Courses and Seminars that might be organized at the local, national or international level, so that our young people may have plenty of chances to get to know one another, to make friends, and have fellowship with peers of their own faith.

The Missionary School as well as manifold counseling sessions are planned to be organized in the same location.

The place is also intended to function as a retreat and vacation center for members and families of believers from all around the world who might choose to spend their holidays in a facility run by our church, where they can enjoy all the instructive, educational, and recreational programs offered by the brethren and sisters.

The kitchen staff will offer healthy vegetarian meals so that the visitors, and especially the mothers in the families, can even be free from the burden of cooking, at least during their holidays.

Since last winter was quite a long one, the actual work at the building site could not be started before the second week of April 2010. But once it started, it went forward rapidly in spite of the magnitude of the very solid foundation structure that had to be made.

A dedicated team of construction workers and of church members have been working intensively to get the building erected on time so that the preparations for the hosting of the 2011 GC session can be finished according to schedule, and the work is going on.

Since it is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, we will let the pictures tell more about this project. More details about the unfolding of the project and updated pictures will be posted on our website:

<http://www.campus.azsmr.ro>

which has a dedicated page in English as well. *R*





Germany

Top: Evangelistic outreach in Hamburg, North Germany, from April 7–11, 2010.



Left: North German Field Spiritual Conference, held from March 12–14, 2010. The main theme was: “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling” (2 Timothy 1:9).



Australia

Missionary school graduates, Sydney, June 2010.

U.S.A.

Brethren and sisters at the West Virginia camp meeting, East Central U.S. Field, June 2010.



Italy

Baptism of new souls, July 2010 (right).

Spain

Baptism of new souls, June 2010.



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Elijah's Listening Ears

Many children have heard the story of Elijah. Remember—he was the great prophet whose prayers were answered by God on Mt. Carmel. On that fateful day, Elijah had to face 850 false prophets and priests who were jumping around and dancing to the sun-god to answer them by fire and send rain. But nothing had happened! There was no answer! Why? It is because the sun-god is not real—there is really no such thing. The sun has no ears to hear, nor eyes

By B. Monteiro

to see, nor mind to understand. It is simply one of many tools in the hands of the true and living Creator.

This God to whom Elijah prayed is different—the only One in the entire universe. He created and sustains the heavens, the earth, and all that is in them. And when Elijah prayed, he knew that he was very small and not very important compared to the great Almighty. Even after he prayed six times for the rain to come, nothing happened. Yet each time he had prayed, Elijah came closer and closer to the Creator. Finally, he came to the point that he felt that God was everything

and he was nothing. Then when he prayed the seventh time, the cloud appeared and

by faith he heard the tremendous sound of rain coming.

Do you or I always have such faith that our prayers start or stop the rain? Elijah's prayers were heard partly because he listened to the still, small voice inside of him, teaching him God's will and how to do right.

There is an old poem about this still, small voice. It actually works like an alarm clock:

*It's something that isn't wound up with a key,
As many alarm clocks are;
It is not to be seen on a table or shelf,
And its ring is no sounded afar.
And only one hears it and that is the one
Who owns this alarm clock true.
It cannot be bought and it cannot be sold,
And it cannot be given to you.*

*It's a delicate piece of machinery, too,
Which never should suffer abuse;
If it should in time (and it wouldn't take long),
It would gradually get out of use.
And what's the alarm clock of which I now tell,
That isn't wound up with a key?
It's that which says, "Don't!"
When one starts to do wrong—
Why, it is your conscience, you see!*

Dear children, always listen to your conscience that helps you carry out the things you learn from the Bible. This little "alarm clock" will wake you up to stay close to God and His will. Then many of the blessings that Elijah enjoyed can be yours, too! *R*

