



the  
**REFORMATION**  
*herald*

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21st General Conference Session See page 30.

Why Are We Still Here? / Clothed in His Righteousness / The Omega of Apostasy

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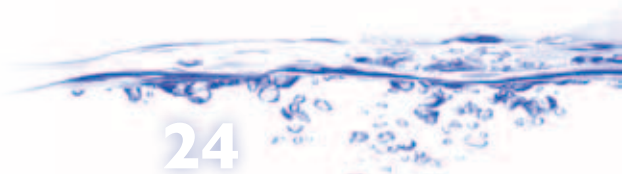
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"The age in which we live calls for reformatory action."  
—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 488.

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# THE MEASURE OF Success

The world measures success by fame, fortune, position, and influence. If these are possessed in abundance, a person is generally considered successful in this world. It means that he or she is renowned by erring mortals and has access to a larger proportion of this world's material goods than most people enjoy.

Not so in the realm of faith. The reward to be gained is not temporal; it's eternal. It is measured by how complete is our sacrifice to the meek and lowly Saviour, how deep our surrender to His perfect will, how pure the depth of our love and devotion. All this can be achieved only through the abundance of His merciful grace.

Genuine success requires an efficient use of talent and resources. When measured in the heavenly courts, it will be evident that there is a wholehearted appreciation of the heavenly light entrusted. Such light is necessary in the formation of Christian character, by which we all will be judged. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48).

## Meanwhile, a thief is on the prowl

The enemy of our souls wants to steal the light from heaven—and along with it, our only hope of success. He tried to rob Christ of His glory in the heavenly courts by grasping at posi-

tion—falsely claiming to be equal to Him as Creator. Now on earth he is continuing the same process of burglary by trying to snatch from Christ the glory of His heritage: His beloved children. By undermining our faith, the enemy is trying to rob us like a pickpocket would do. Yet this is being done on such a huge scale that it can be considered no less than grand larceny and embezzlement.

According to 2 Chronicles 20:20, the foundation upon which we are to be established is belief in the Lord our God. The archenemy is constantly seeking to disrupt that structure and cause it to crumble.

And, according to the same verse, what about our prosperity—real, genuine prosperity according to the value system of heaven? That prosperity comes from believing God's prophets. If the enemy cannot shake our faith in the gift of prophecy, he will distract and rob us of time to study and meditate upon the inspired writings. First he starts by causing us to neglect them. Then, if he can actually cause us to doubt and question them, his sinister strategic maneuver will have dragged us down a step further. Don't let him get away with it!

## Reclaim what is yours

God calls upon us to reclaim our precious hour of opportunity. "While so many are panting after honor and

greedy of gain, do you, my beloved brethren, be eagerly seeking the assurance of the love of God and crying: Who will show me how to make my calling and election sure?

"Satan carefully studies the constitutional sins of men, and then he begins his work of alluring and ensnaring them. We are in the thickest of temptations, but there is victory for us if we fight manfully the battles of the Lord. . . .

"Some have become almost lost in the mazes of skepticism. To such I would say: Lift your mind out of that channel. Fasten it upon God. The more closely faith and holiness bind you to the Eternal One, the clearer and brighter will the justice of His dealings appear to you. Make life, eternal life, the object of your pursuit.

"I know your danger. If you lose confidence in the testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth. I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I would warn you. How many will heed the warning? As you now hold the testimonies, should one be given crossing your track, correcting your errors, would you feel at perfect liberty to accept or reject any part or the whole? That which you will be least inclined to receive is the very part most needed."<sup>1</sup> *R*

## References

<sup>1</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 97, 98.

# Why Are We Still

*A study compiled from the spirit of prophecy, with an introduction  
by Brian Jaksic*

When my family members, by the Lord's grace, came to the knowledge of this wonderful message we were sure that Jesus would come in our kind and loving mother's lifetime. She was about forty-six years of age, and I was just sixteen. We read the Bible, we prayed, and we told to all we came in contact with that the Lord's

return was imminent. I am now 72 years old and my dear mother—if she were still alive today—would now be 102 years of age. It has now been more than twelve years since she fell asleep in Jesus, awaiting the resurrection of the just. I am praying to meet her again and be with my noble and faithful mother whose life principle was to love and serve. The question is how much longer shall we wait, and what are some of the

causes for the Lord's apparent delay?

For the rest of this article I will use the words from the pen of Inspiration to present some of the answers that we may have not thought much about.

## **It is not the Lord's will to delay His coming**

"It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them di-



# Here?

rectly to the land of Canaan and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But 'they could not enter in because of unbelief' (Hebrews 3:19). Because of their backsliding and apostasy they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the Promised Land."<sup>1</sup>

"To the early church the hope of Christ's coming was a blessed hope, and they were represented by the apostle as waiting for [God's] Son from

heaven, as loving His appearing. As long as this hope was cherished by the professed followers of Christ, they were a light to the world. But it was not the design of Satan that they should be a light to the world; and because iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed cold, and the unfaithful servant is represented as saying, 'My Lord delayeth his coming' (Luke 12:45). As a result of loss of faith in the appearing of Jesus,

the unfaithful servant begins to smite his fellow servant, and to eat and drink with the drunken. Satan was at work to cause apostasy in the early church; and in accomplishing his purpose, doctrines were introduced through which the church was leavened with unbelief in Christ and His coming. The adversary of God and man cast his hellish shadow athwart the path of the believers, and dimmed their star of hope, even their faith in the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup>

"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed and His people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out."<sup>3</sup>

## What is our most important work?

"Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings; and never before was its diligent study so important as now."<sup>4</sup>

## God's building

"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building' (1 Corinthians 3:9). This figure represents human character, which is to be wrought upon, point by point. Each day God works with His building, stroke upon stroke, to perfect the structure, that it may become a holy temple for Him. Man is to cooperate with God. Each worker is to become just what God designs him to be, building his life with pure, noble deeds, that in the end his character may be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by God and man. There is to be no flaw in the building, for it is the Lord's. Every stone must be perfectly laid, that it may endure the pressure placed upon it. One stone laid wrong will affect the whole building. To you and to every other worker God gives the warning: 'Take heed how you build, that your build-

*“We cannot afford to idle away our precious moments, or engage in busy activities that will bring forth no fruit for eternity.”*

ing may stand the test of storm and tempest, because it is founded on the eternal Rock. Place the stone on the sure foundation, that you may make ready for the day of test and trial, when all will be seen just as they are.”<sup>5</sup>

“[Christ] will shape and mold our characters according to His own will.”<sup>6</sup>

### Characters formed by obedience

“It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God’s law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me’ (Galatians 2:20). So Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you’ (Matthew 10:20). Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the

same good works—works of righteousness, obedience.”<sup>7</sup>

### Utterly unable by ourselves

“Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. **But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition.** The holiness that God’s word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man’s obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ’s righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. Constantly he is to pray to the Saviour to heal the disorders of his sin-sick soul. He has not the wisdom or the strength to overcome; these belong to the Lord, and He bestows them on those who in humiliation and contrition seek Him for help.

### A continuous, day-by-day work

“The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them.”<sup>8</sup>

### Build characters of a goodly fabric

“We are to build characters of a goodly fabric, spiritual, heavenly,

perfect. God bids us work for time and for eternity that we may grow after the divine likeness.”<sup>9</sup>

“Today many erect a standard of their own, thinking to gain heaven, even though they neglect to do God’s will. But all such are building upon the sand. They are hearers only. . . . Our salvation cost the life of the Son of God, and God demands of us that we build our characters upon a foundation that will stand the test of the judgment.”<sup>10</sup>

### Build for eternity

“Day by day we are building characters, and **we are building for eternity.** God desires us in our lives to give the people of the world an example of what they should be and of what they can be through obedience to the gospel of Christ. . . . If we build in cooperation with Him, the structure that we rear will day by day grow more beautiful and more symmetrical under the hand of the Master Builder, and through all eternity it will endure.”<sup>11</sup>

“We cannot afford to idle away our precious moments, or engage in busy activities that will bring forth no fruit for eternity. Let the time hitherto devoted to idleness, frivolity, worldliness, be spent in gaining a knowledge of the Scriptures, in beautifying our life, and blessing and ennobling the lives and characters of others.”<sup>12</sup>

### After the divine similitude

“‘Let not your heart be troubled,’ [the Saviour] said; ‘ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that were I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know’ (John 14:1–4). For your sake I came into the world. I am working in your behalf. When I go away, I shall still work earnestly for you. I came into the world to reveal Myself to you, that you might believe. I go to the Father to cooperate with Him in your behalf. The object of Christ’s departure was the opposite of what the disciples feared. It did not

mean a final separation. He was going to prepare a place for them, that He might come again, and receive them unto Himself. While He was building mansions for them, they were to **build characters after the divine similitude.**"<sup>13</sup>

### By beholding we become changed

"In beholding his God, the prophet [Isaiah], like Saul of Tarsus at the gate of Damascus, had not only been given a view of his own unworthiness; there had come to his humbled heart the assurance of forgiveness, full and free; and he had arisen a changed man. He had seen his Lord. He had caught a glimpse of the loveliness of the divine character. He could testify of the transformation wrought through beholding Infinite Love."<sup>14</sup>

### Do we want to be the last generation?

"Never was any previous generation called to meet issues so momentous; never before were young men and young women confronted by perils so great as confront them today."<sup>15</sup>

### Treasures for the last generation

"Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was ever prophesying the coming of the Lord. This great event had been revealed to him in vision. Abel, though dead, is ever speaking of the blood of Christ which alone can make our offerings and gifts perfect. The Bible has accumulated and bound up together its treasures for this last generation. All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, and are, repeating themselves in the church in these last days. There is Moses still speaking, teaching self-renunciation by wishing himself blotted from the Book of Life for his fellowmen, that they might be saved. David is leading the intercession of the church for the salvation of souls to the ends of the earth. The prophets are still testifying of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. There the whole accumulated truths are presented in force to us that we may profit by their teachings. We are under the influence of the whole. What

manner of persons ought we to be to whom all this rich light of inheritance has been given. Concentrating all the influence of the past with new and increased light of the present, accrued power is given to all who will follow the light. Their faith will increase and be brought into exercise at the present time, awakening an energy and an intensely increased earnestness, and through dependence upon God for His power to replenish the world and send the light of the Sun of Righteousness to the ends of the earth.

"God has enriched the world in these last days proportionately with the increase of ungodliness, if His people will only lay hold of His priceless gift and bind up their every interest with Him. There should be no cherished idols, and we need not dread what will come, but commit the keeping of our souls to God, as unto our faithful Creator. He will keep that which is committed to His trust."<sup>16</sup>

"Our conversation should not be exclusively of the world and worldly things; but our tongues should be trained to talk of the Christian's reward, and our eyes to discern the glory of that better country. It should be our daily work to gain a fitness for those mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for us."<sup>17</sup>

### None need remain in ignorance

"In the Scriptures are presented truths that relate especially to our own time. To the period just prior to the appearing of the Son of man, the prophecies of Scripture point, and here their warnings and threatenings preeminently apply. The prophetic periods of Daniel, extending to the very eve of the great consummation, throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire. The book of Revelation is also replete with warning and instruction for the last generation. The beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, portrays the fearful and thrilling scenes connected with the close of earth's history, and presents the duties and dangers of God's people. None need remain in ignorance, none need be unprepared for the coming of the day of God."<sup>18</sup>

### Jesus is coming

"Jesus is coming. Great and important events are just before us. Are we ready, waiting, and watching? Have we on the wedding garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness? Now is the time to secure this wedding garment. We must make no delay, but open the door of our hearts to the Saviour, who has long stood knocking for admittance. We must be in sympathy with Christ, and, as soldiers of the cross, make personal, interested efforts for the salvation of souls. What a privilege is ours that we may become colaborers with Christ, and that our efforts may be accepted of God. We may join the conquering army if we will, and may share in its conflicts and its triumphs; but if we refuse, they will move on to final victory, and leave us behind. We each have an account to render at the bar of God, and it is essential for us to cultivate spiritually, to think often of Jesus, and to keep faith alive. Let us ever remember that God sees us. We may say with the psalmist, 'I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved' (Psalm 16:8). The whole life should be molded after the divine Pattern, and then we shall see the King in His beauty, and live in His presence through the ceaseless ages of eternity."<sup>19</sup> *R*

### References

- <sup>1</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 458.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Great Controversy*, p. 458.
- <sup>4</sup> *Education*, p. 225.
- <sup>5</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 173.
- <sup>6</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 157.
- <sup>7</sup> *Steps to Christ*, pp. 62, 63.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532. [Emphasis supplied.]
- <sup>9</sup> *In Heavenly Places*, p. 165.
- <sup>10</sup> *Reflecting Christ*, p. 55.
- <sup>11</sup> *In Heavenly Places*, p. 31. [Emphasis supplied.]
- <sup>12</sup> *The Review and Herald*, June 15, 1886.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 663. [Emphasis supplied.]
- <sup>14</sup> *Prophets and Kings*, p. 314.
- <sup>15</sup> *Education*, p. 225. [Emphasis supplied.]
- <sup>16</sup> *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 339.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, August 18, 1887.
- <sup>18</sup> *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1883.
- <sup>19</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, May 22, 1884.



# CLOTHED IN HIS *Righteousness*

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments*  
BY VERNON RANKINE

**T**he ideas and concepts of fashion and clothing over the past centuries have greatly challenged the minds of Christians, placing us in a position of compromise. We are being robbed even of our basic covering with which the Lord so graciously clothed us.

In what direction are we traveling? Where are we going, brethren and sisters? Why are we still here, and

why are we not in heaven? The answer often given is that the gospel must be preached in all the world—and this is indeed true (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20). Yet there is also something more to be considered:

The answer involves a concept touched upon in the story of the Good Samaritan, where we read of a man who was robbed and stripped of his raiment (Luke 10:30). The man was headed away from Jerusalem to Jericho.

A tragic thought. Similarly, we are told, "it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief.'"<sup>1</sup> The people's hearts were filled with murmuring,



*“ [Christ] bore my soul’s disgrace, that in His name I might be an overcomer, and be exalted to His throne.’ Tell of His power, sing of His matchless love. In every trial He will be near you and will give grace and power according to your need.”*

rebellion, and hatred, so God could not fulfill His covenant with them. Like the victim in the story of the Good Samaritan, Israel had been robbed—in this case robbed spiritually by the archenemy of souls.

As people are trained for the secular enterprises of life, we do not know ahead of time all the answers to the specific questions that will come our way. However, the wonderful Saviour provides us with the opposite. He tells us exactly what is required. Jesus tells us why we are delayed and what we should do to complete our journey.

“The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. **It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.**

“We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.”<sup>2</sup>

The beloved apostle says in 1 John 3:2, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” We have been robbed, yet the psalmist David helps us understand who our great God is, and how He is clothed: “Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain” (Psalm 104:1, 2). Another prophet describes:

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels” (Isaiah 61:10). The question should then be asked concerning our ways of providing the clothing which will meet the standard of God. Is it possible for us to provide this garment? “Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. ‘I counsel thee,’ He says, ‘to buy of me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed’ (Revelation 3:18).

**“This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. ‘All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags’ (Isaiah 64:6). Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God ‘was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.’ Sin is defined to be ‘the transgression of the law’ (1 John 3:5, 4). But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law.”<sup>3</sup>**

### **What kind of righteousness or garment do we have?**

“We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6).

Yet thankfully, “your heavenly Father will take from you the garments defiled by sin. In the beautiful parabolic prophecy of Zechariah, the

high priest Joshua, standing clothed in filthy garments before the angel of the Lord, represents the sinner. And the word is spoken by the Lord, “Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. . . . So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments’ (Zechariah 3:4, 5). Even so God will clothe you with ‘the garments of salvation,’ and cover you with ‘the robe of righteousness’ (Isaiah 61:10).”<sup>4</sup>

“There is nothing in us from which we can clothe the soul so that its nakedness shall not appear. We are to receive the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven, even the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness. We are to say, ‘He died for me. He bore my soul’s disgrace, that in His name I might be an overcomer and be exalted to His throne.’ Tell of His power, sing of His matchless love. In every trial He will be near you and will give grace and power according to your need.”<sup>5</sup>

To trust in one’s own righteousness would be like seeking shelter from the scorching sun by thinking to hide beneath one’s own shadow. Even if we would stoop down to the very ground, our shadow would always be beneath us. It is only under the shadow of an object higher than ourselves—such as a wide-spreading tree or stately cliff—that we can find shelter from the midday sun.

Mere human merit is worth nothing. Christ alone—who is infinitely higher than we are—is able to cover and save all who come to God by Him.

### **What was the garment worn by our first parents?**

“The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they

were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. . . . A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair."<sup>6</sup>

This covering is ready and available for all who are willing to be led by Jesus, and here is the proof:

"God has made ample provision that we may stand perfect in His grace, wanting in nothing, waiting for the appearing of our Lord. Are you ready? Have you the wedding garment on? That garment will never cover deceit, impurity, corruption, or hypocrisy. The eye of God is upon you. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We may conceal our sins from the eyes of men, but we can hide nothing from our Maker."<sup>7</sup>

Therefore what we need is to take all the initiatives given by God in the scriptures. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from

all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

"There is a heaven before us, a crown of life to win. But to the overcomer only is the reward given. He who gains heaven must be clothed with the robe of righteousness. 'Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure' (1 John 3:3). In the character of Christ there was no discord of any kind. And this must be our experience. Our lives must be controlled by the principles that controlled His life."<sup>8</sup>

The prophecy is given: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:7, 8).

### The wedding garment

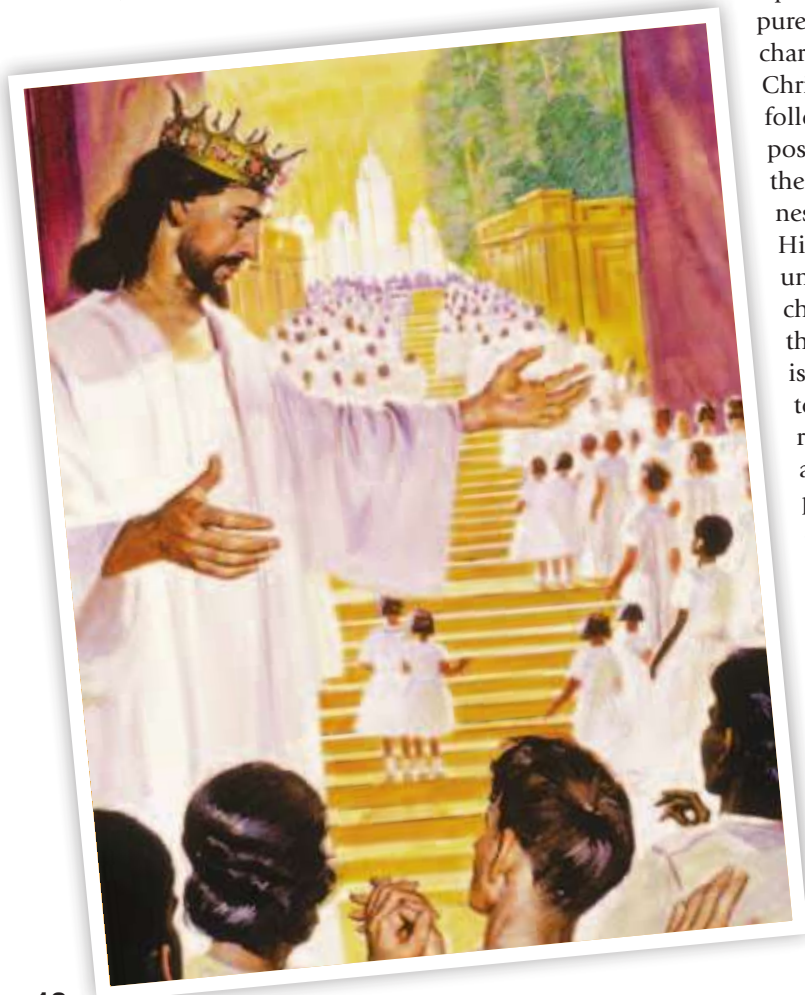
"By the wedding garment . . . is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. . . . It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour."<sup>9</sup>

The parable of the wedding garment in Matthew 22 reminds us that this garment is a mandatory requirement for the kingdom of heaven.

"The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. **The gift of God in His beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of His law and still save the transgressor.** Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of His shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin. **There are many who will be lost because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.**"<sup>10</sup>

"When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. . . .

*"Christ's own spotless character is freely offered to every human being. But all who receive it will receive and wear it here."*



“Righteousness is rightdoing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do.

“Let the youth and the little children be taught to choose for themselves that royal robe woven in heaven’s loom—the ‘fine linen, clean and white,’ which all the holy ones of earth will wear. This robe, **Christ’s own spotless character, is freely offered to every human being. But all who receive it will receive and wear it here.**”<sup>11</sup>

Clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ’s righteousness, these holy ones have a place at the King’s feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng.

**“It is privilege of the children of God to be filled with all the fullness of God.**” Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end” (Ephesians 3:20, 21).<sup>12</sup>

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:24–26).

Just as in the story of the Good Samaritan, a man was robbed and stripped of his clothes, so, after their transgression, Adam and Eve “were naked, for the garment of light and security had departed from them.”<sup>13</sup> We are not altogether hopeless; we are given a chance to reclaim this wonderful robe at no cost to us—it is all on Jesus. If you don’t believe me, just ask the prophet Isaiah who urges us to buy without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1). Just ask John the Revelator who quotes the saying of the Lord, “Buy of me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear” (Revelation 3:18).

## What is this garment or raiment?

The raiment offered is the righteousness of Christ. It is a garment of light, which will attract the world to Christ. This will clothe all the redeemed who are living on the earth when Christ appears. It is a reflection of the holiness of God, and it comes only to him, who lives in constant communication with the Lord of life. The life of him who is in touch with heaven is like the glow of the incandescent light. When this counsel is heeded, the loud cry of Revelation 18:1 will sound throughout the world.

The glory of God which had rested upon our first parents, and its holy light which had clothed them as with a garment, departed with the advent of sin. As a result of their guilt and shame, they became afraid of God and hid themselves from His presence. When innocent, they had loved to be with Him, but sin separates the soul from God, and fills it with a dread of His approach. Righteousness, on the other hand, binds the soul to God, delights in the fullness of His presence, and basks in the sunlight of His divine glory.

## Can we show outward evidence of this covering of Christ?

The answer is a clear and resounding Yes! “Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hardhearted and unsympathetic, but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory.”<sup>14</sup>

“When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God.”<sup>15</sup>

“When a man is converted to God, a new moral taste is created; and he loves the things that God loves; for his life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises, to the life of Jesus. His heart is drawn out after

God. His prayer is, ‘Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law’ (Psalm 119:18). In the immutable standard he sees the character of the Redeemer and knows that, though he has sinned, he is not to be saved in his sins but from his sins; for Jesus is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”<sup>16</sup>

“The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control of the apostate churches. But here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy.”<sup>17</sup>

## An appeal

Dear brethren and sisters, Christ’s victory is clear and sure. Bright crowns are awaiting us. Will you and I be able to help secure this victory? Let us by the grace of Christ allow His character to be perfectly reproduced in us, and the world gazing on will see Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27.) John the Revelator saw this group standing on Mount Zion with their Father’s name written in their foreheads and no guile in their mouths. These follow the Lamb wherever He goes. May this be our prayer. Amen. *R*

## References

<sup>1</sup> *Evangelism*, p. 696.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Faith I Live By*, p. 113. [Emphasis supplied.]

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>5</sup> *The Review and Herald*, July 19, 1892.

<sup>6</sup> *God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *My Life Today*, p. 272.

<sup>10</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889. [Emphasis supplied.]

<sup>11</sup> *My Life Today*, p. 272. [Emphasis supplied.]

<sup>12</sup> *The Review and Herald*, July 19, 1892. [Emphasis added].

<sup>13</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 96.

<sup>14</sup> *The Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, March 18, 1890.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, June 21, 1892.

<sup>17</sup> *Maranatha*, p. 213.

# It Is Time for JEZEBELS to Die & ABIGAILS to Live!

By Shelley Newman

**A** challenge question for my fellow sisters: Are all of us Abigails and none of us Jezebels? Let's be sure it is a decided YES!!! This is the answer that we, as a Christian organization who believe in upholding the standards of God, should be able to give to such a question.

But before we go any further, I just wish to remind you who Abigail and Jezebel were.

Abigail was a woman who lived in the time of David and was the ultimate example of a Christian woman. Wise, understanding, humble, godly, meek,

and respectful, Abigail was truly an incredible woman.

Jezebel, on the other hand, was the exact opposite. Jezebel was the wife of King Ahab in the time of Elijah the prophet.

Jezebel was cruel, wicked, evil, a murderess who was completely ungodly. She was the ultimate example of a worldly woman. You can read all about her and her wicked deeds and acts in the book *Prophets and Kings*, starting in chapter 8.

So in summary we have:

- Abigail: the ideal woman of God.
- Jezebel: the ideal woman of the world.

## Beware!

Being like Jezebel is definitely not desirable at all. . . . And yet, without knowing it, we **may actually be** like her!

"How is that?" we women ask. "We are not like Jezebel. We don't commit murder. We don't openly defy God and try to kill His servants or worship idols."

Ah! But let us look at what happens when we turn our eyes and mind away from God. Who is the first person we look at when we turn away from God?

That's right. We begin to look at and study ourselves.

We look in the mirror and this is what we say:

"Ugh! I have a few freckles on my skin."

"Oh no! I am getting grey/white hairs in my hair, and I'm only 28!"

"My eyelashes are too light."

"My eyes are pale and don't stand out."

A cosmetic catalogue then gets put into our letterboxes, and we flick through it "just to have a look." We see beautiful women posing attractively (usually in tight or low-cut clothing, showing off as much of their chest as possible), advertising makeup, hair dye, and jewelry.

"Oh, look at the girl's skin," we say. "Maybe I'll just buy one of those foundation creams, and if I just put it on lightly to cover my freckles and blemishes; no one will notice."

"Ooh, look at that woman's hair! Maybe if I just buy one packet to dye my grey hairs that would be okay—especially if it's labeled 'natural.' After all, I am SO young. And it's not fair that I should look old when I am not."

Ladies, do you know who we are being like when we succumb to these temptations?

Is it Abigail that we are imitating? Really and truthfully?

No, of course not. Do you honestly think that Abigail who trusted in God and lived a godly life would have needed to wear all this stuff? The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that Abigail was a woman after the order of Christ. She didn't need to wear all this "goo." Her face radiated the love of Jesus which would have given her appearance a much more attractive image than anything artificial that we are putting on.

Just imagine that being said of us—that we are women after the order of Christ. What an honor!

But instead, sad to say, do some have to admit the awful truth that we are actually being like that horrible woman, Jezebel. Do you know that she is the first woman mentioned in the Bible who wore makeup? And when we put this stuff on our faces, change the color of our hair or of our nails, we are imitating Jezebel, and we are actually telling God that we are dissatisfied with His creation and are

*"Let us search our hearts and ask Jesus to come into them to clean out every bit of Jezebel and help us to be more like the truly beautiful woman as was Abigail of old."*

defying Him by trying to change the way He made us. Isn't that just awful? It makes me shudder to think what God must be thinking of our poor little efforts to "improve" His wonderful creation.

And wearing makeup does not just consist of wearing foundation, eyeliner, or eyelash tint.

Makeup includes everything that you put on yourself to cover up what you don't like about yourself. Yes, it includes dyeing of the hair, eye enhancer, creams to cover freckles and blemishes, lipstick, nail polish, and jewelry.

Ladies, let's face it. Do we really want to be like Jezebel? Do we really want to copy someone who

is known as a murderess, a woman who defied God?

In Revelation 2:20, God says that He had something against the church of Thyatira because they had women like Jezebel in their congregation and even allowed them to hold positions in the church. These women were influencing the younger girls in the wrong way as well as setting stumbling blocks in the paths of newcomers.

And do you know that that message is for our church TODAY!! Yes, our very own SDARM!! Isn't it shame-



ful to think that in our organization we might need to have a message like that given to us? But let's face facts—we are living in the Laodicean era when lukewarm Christianity is the typical norm and worldly pride and vanity are rampant.

Especially, older women—please consider something. You don't realize how much of an influence you exert over the younger ones. It may not seem like it, but they do watch and imitate everything you do. If they see you dying your hair or wearing makeup, even though it might only be a tiny bit and hardly noticeable (and you seem to get away with it), your girls are watching you. If you wear your dress or skirt shorter than your healthy conscience allows (the Spirit of Prophecy says it should be 8 to 10 inches from the floor<sup>1</sup>), just wait and see: The younger generation will wear their dresses even shorter until you are shocked. And guess what? You started the trend.

And do you know that when there is no difference between you and other moms in the world, soon there will be no difference between your girls and the girls of the world. But, just remember, **GOD KNOWS.**

"The power of example is great. Sister A. ventures to wear small hoops. Sister B. says, It is no worse for me to wear hoops than sister A., and she wears hoops a little larger. Sister C. imitates the example of sisters A. and B., and wears her hoops a little larger than A. and B., but all contend that their hoops are small."<sup>2</sup> Yes, of course we know that hoops are not used today, but the same timeless principle certainly applies. Plunging necklines, skin-tight clothes, and padded un-

dergarments are commonly worn to accentuate certain body parts and incite lust. It's amazing how the power of self-justification and imitation of others so often governs our choices in fashion instead of a simple, firm, faithful reliance on God's word and the pen of Inspiration!

### A much more beautiful picture

So now, let us imagine something really wonderful.

Let us imagine that we are all Abigail's.



Our eyes are continually looking upward to God and away from ourselves. When we look in the mirror in the morning, instead of saying, "Oh no, my hair is grey. I look so old," we will smile and say, "The Bible has nothing but good to say about grey hair (in Leviticus 19:32 and Proverbs 16:31). If found in the path of righteousness, it is a crown of glory! Today I am going to put on meekness. Maybe I'll add to it a calm and quiet spirit, and I think I'll mix a little wisdom in along with some kind words and actions." "Today my makeup artist is going to be Christ."

And just imagine that when we walk into the church and greet all the women we find that their faces are clean and natural, their hair has its natural color (without artificial chemically-induced curls or straightening), their nails are free from color and polish, their lips are not shining with gloss, and the contours of their bodies are modestly covered, not on display.

Sisters whose adorning is a meek and quiet spirit just like the holy women of old (1 Peter 3:3–5) are candidates for a place in the kingdom of glory.

Christ promises us that with His help we can do ANYTHING (Philippians 4:13)!!! How wonderful is that!

So women, young ladies, and girls, let us take our banner (which is sagging heavily) and hold it straight and high for the Lord. It takes two hands to hold it high. It is impossible to hold it with one hand while the other is weighed down with cosmetics and worldly vanity. We want to be women after the order of Christ, NOT of the world.

And just think how much easier it would be for the ministers and Bible workers to be able to concentrate on reaching souls who have never heard the message instead of having to fight Jezebels as did the prophet Elijah!

It is interesting to note what the end results were for these two women:

Abigail ended up becoming the wife of one of the most favorite kings of Israel (1 Samuel 25:39–42).

Jezebel ended up becoming food for dogs (2 Kings 9:30, 35–37).

Abigail's story had a happy ending.

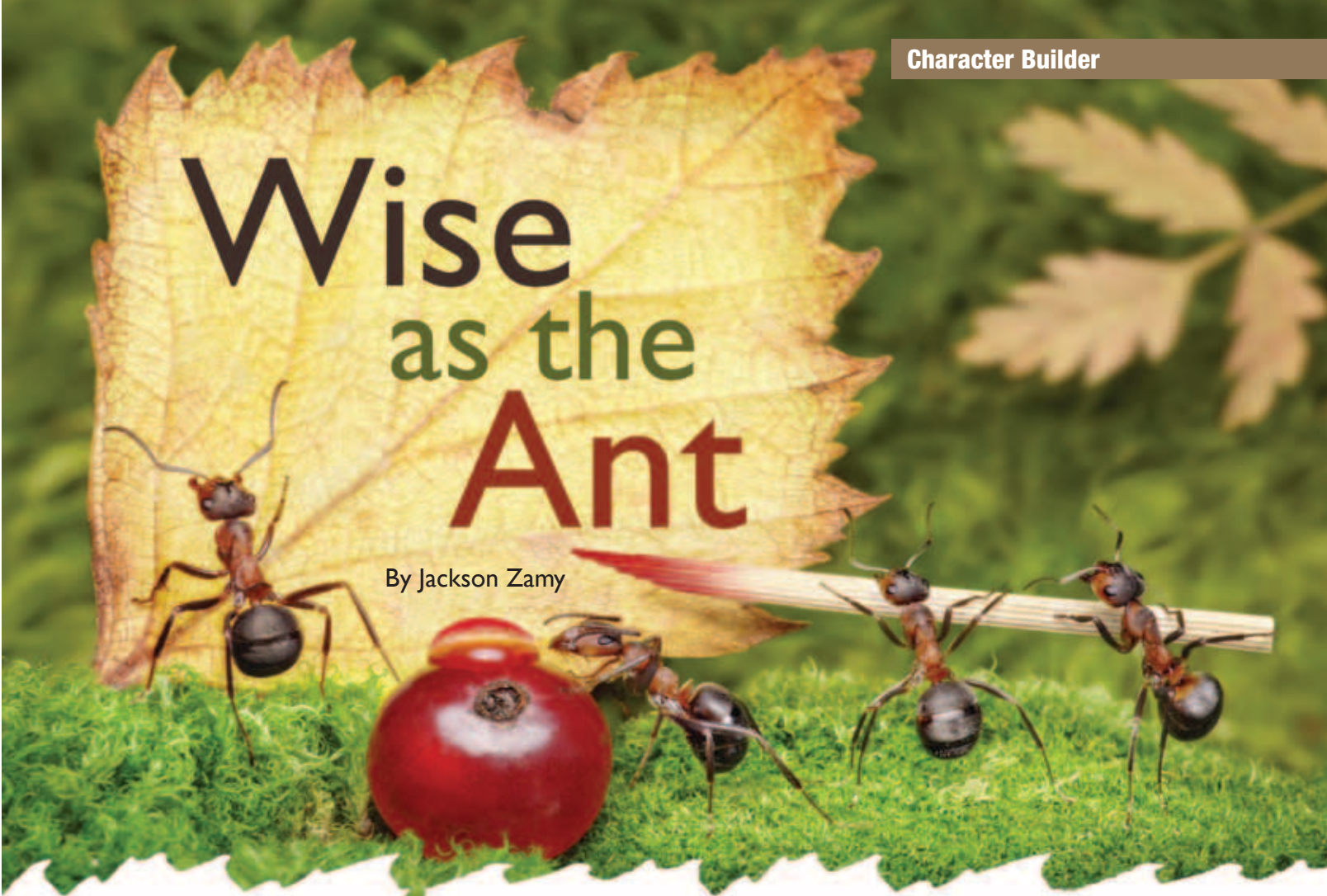
Jezebel's story had a dreadful ending.

I encourage each and every woman, young lady, and girl to search our heart. Let us ask Jesus to come into our life and help us clean every bit of Jezebel out. Then we will be more like the truly beautiful woman as Abigail of old was. *R*

### References

<sup>1</sup> *The Review and Herald*, October 8, 1867. (See an abridged version in *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, pp. 277–279; see also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 521–525.)

<sup>2</sup> *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4b, p. 69.



# Wise as the Ant

By Jackson Zamy

**A**nts are ranked among the smallest animals on the earth. But their arts and instincts are so remarkable that human beings can learn many things from them. The unity, order, and perseverance that exist among them have been the object of study of many scientists. God Himself, knowing the amount of lessons to be found in the life of these tiny beings, declared through the wise Solomon: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Proverbs 6:6–8). Following the counsels given us by the great Maker, let us briefly consider the ways of the ants, and, from their life, draw the lessons that are kept in store for us.

## Unity

One of the secrets of success among ants is found in their unity. When one

of them finds food, it goes back and alerts the others so they may come and help to gather it. Their working in unity does not only consist in securing their food but also in facing their enemies. This attitude of the ants shows us how important it is for us to work in unity—for through lack of this precious quality, we may lose great advantages and open doors to the enemy to gain an advantage over us. Jesus said: "Every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Matthew 12:25). And we are also advised to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:3). Therefore, our goal, as described in the Bible, is that we come into the unity of the faith (verse 13).

Jesus, before leaving this earth, prayed for the disciples that they may be one as He and the Father are one. This had to be a proof to the world that God sent His Son to die for us in order to bring us back to the unity that has always existed between Jesus and His Father.

The apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians exhorts the believers to unity, bidding us to avoid divisions and "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). These admonitions apply to us today.

We cannot hope to live together in heaven if we are not united here. There may be differences in our individual personalities, and our dispositions may be different, but we all have the duty to unite in Christ. We need to understand that this perfect unity "can never be until we all draw our strength from Him who can supply every need."<sup>1</sup>

## Order

Scientists have considered that the organization and discipline existing among ants are of such an advanced order that it can be said that, in this respect, they have a civilization similar to that of humans, and their discipline is very similar to that of the military. In

fact, it is very hard to explain how the ants have maintained this order without any problems, considering the vast area in which they live.

These things should help us turn our focus toward the ideal that God has set for us in having a disciplined life that will be manifested in the family, in the church, and in society. The inspired word says that “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33). Therefore, it is required that “all things be done decently and in order” (verse 40). The will of God is that heaven’s plan and divine order be carried out and prevail in every family, in every church, and in every institution.

The fact that God is a God of order leads us to the full understanding that heaven is a place where order dwells. The inspired word says that order is the law of heaven.<sup>2</sup> Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order. The angels are all governed by this law. Success can only be attained by order and harmonious action. Therefore, if we do not practice order and do not live a disciplined life on this earth, we cannot expect to be accepted in heaven. The characters we form in this life will determine our future destiny.

But this work must begin at home. The very habits we manifest at home will be seen in the society and in the church. Therefore, habits of order and discipline are to be cultivated. Some young men and young women take the habit of getting out of bed and leave it for someone else to make it for them, and their whole room is a mess. Their lives are marked by disorder. This state of things leads them to have a lack of respect for order in the things of God.

Jesus left us a great example at His resurrection. We have the record in the Bible that when Peter went to the sepulcher, he found that the napkin that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head was folded together in a place by itself (John 20:7). Order and discipline should be practiced in everything that we do in life.

## Perseverance

Ants are very perseverant. They may sometimes fail in their attempts to accomplish a certain task, but they never give up. At times, human beings, willingly

or unknowingly, destroy the ants’ home that these tiny creatures have worked so hard to build. But they never give up; they get back to work and quickly get it rebuilt.

Many times we are frustrated in life when facing disappointments and failures. And instead of trusting in the Lord to move forward, we let ourselves get carried away by the circumstances of this life. We need to keep in mind our objective to perform a Christian character and, through faith in Christ, persevere until the end, whatever the circumstances. “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved,” said Jesus (Matthew 24:13).

## Little but strong

If we consider the amount of work that ants can perform, we are thrilled with amazement. They can build hills 30 cm high and 60 cm wide, or they can dig big tunnels that can go 1.5 meters deep under the ground. Another type of insects that do amazing works are the termites, also known as “white ants.” These can build houses so tall that it may appear incredible to human eyes.

This shows us that we do not have to think for one moment that we are too old, too young, or too insignificant to work for the Lord. Everyone can perform a great task in the Lord’s vineyard if connected with the One from whom we get our strength. (See 1 Chronicles 29:12; Isaiah. 45:24.)

This applies to our labor for the Lord. Often we indulge the thought that it is not entrusted to us to do missionary work. So we neglect the sharing of the gospel with the general idea that this work is appointed only to the ministers, Bible workers, or the leaders of the churches. But the inspired word considers even the youth as an army for the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

All who are willing to cultivate their initiative to witness for God should not hesitate to do so. Are you preparing yourselves for this task? Are you preparing yourself and encouraging fellow believers around you to catch the vision?

There is a great work to be done by everyone—young, old, strong, weak, male, female. The apostle of love, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, specifically addresses the

children and youth in 1 John 2:13, 14, encouraging them in God’s call for their lives. Likewise in Titus 2:2–4 the tireless apostle of zeal bids the elderly to use their abilities in instructing others. That’s right—such apparently weak, frail persons can be teachers of good things. There is something for everyone! The messenger of the Lord wrote: “I saw that the strength of the children of God is in their humility. When they are little in their own eyes, Jesus will be to them their strength and their righteousness, and God will prosper their labors.”<sup>4</sup>

## Great foreseers

Among all the remarkable traits found in the ants is their ability to foresee the future and get ready to face times of hunger and protect themselves from the storms. As the ants make preparation for the future, we have to learn the lesson that we need to make a spiritual provision for the future. If we want to face the times that are coming upon us, we need to make adequate preparation. The words that we hear from the pulpit are not enough. We need to read the Bible for ourselves that we may be “approved unto God” (2 Timothy 2:15). We need to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to us and leading us in the truth which will work out our sanctification (John 17:17, 15:3).

Now is the time for us to “seek God more earnestly. The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>5</sup> Terrible times are coming upon the earth. The day of the Lord is near. Are you taking enough time to search the scriptures and consecrate your life through communion with Christ and the reading of the Bible? “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Isaiah 55:6). And let your communion with Christ grow deeper and deeper, that you may be able to stand before Him when He comes. *R*

## References

<sup>1</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> See *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> See *Christian Service*, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 307.

<sup>5</sup> *Messages to Young People*, p. 89.



# The Omega of APOSTASY



*A study from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compiled*

**by Peter D. Lausevic**

## Dealing with apostasy

How has God dealt with His people in the past when they were in apostasy?

"[The Children of Israel] served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets" (2 Kings 17:12, 13, emphasis added).

How did the sin-loving people and their leaders react when the prophets showed them their real standing with God?

"Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchant-

ments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger" (verses 14–17).

What happened as they continued to reject the message that the Lord sent through His prophets?

"Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight" (verse 18–20).

## What warning was fulfilled as a result?

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Proverbs 29:18).

## What ensured prosperity to those who were delivered from Egypt?

"And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved" (Hosea 12:13).

## Vital instruction for us

The Scriptures contain a record of those who accepted and of those who rejected the instruction which the Lord sent by His prophets. This is especially written for us as we approach the close of time. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Since we as an Advent people have been blessed with a last-day prophet, what can we expect to be the very last deception that Satan will introduce to this people? "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God."<sup>1</sup> **This does not say that people will be deceived into completely tossing out the spirit of prophecy. Rather, they are simply going to make it of none effect!**

## The alpha and omega

The "alpha" of this apostasy began in the beginning of the 20th century with John Harvey Kellogg. "In the book *Living Temple* there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given."<sup>2</sup>

How do those who drift away from the truth react toward the writings of Ellen G. White? Referring to some in her day who felt that God had not spoken through Paul—regarding their own judgment equal to that of the apostle, the servant of the Lord made a comparison: "So it is with many among our people who have drifted away from the old landmarks and who have followed their own understanding. What a great relief

it would be to such could they quiet their conscience with the belief that my work is not of God. But your unbelief will not change the facts in the case. You are defective in character, in moral and religious experience. Close your eyes to the fact if you will, but this does not make you one particle more perfect. The only remedy is to wash in the blood of the Lamb."<sup>3</sup>

Whose work are we repeating if we even lessen our confidence in the spirit of prophecy?

"If you seek to turn aside the counsel of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."<sup>4</sup>

What is the cause of rejecting Christ as our leader? "The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. **The testimonies are unread and unappreciated.** God has spoken to you. **Light has been shining from His word and from the testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded.** The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us."<sup>5</sup>

## Answering three objections to the writings of Ellen G. White

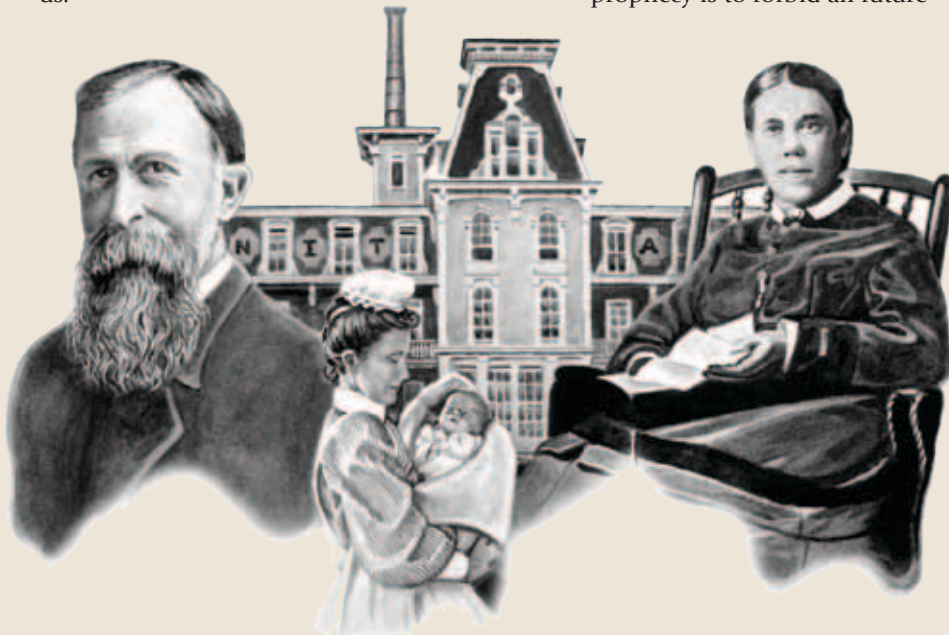
1. **Some claim that the writing of prophets was closed after the book of Revelation was written.**

Such use the following as an alleged proof: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18, 19).

But compare this startling verse: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2).

The Lord inspired this great prophet of the first writing of the scriptural canon to pen a similar statement at the very beginning as that written by John at its close. Compare the statements and see! "If any man shall add unto these things. . . . And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy." This is what John wrote.

Moses wrote: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." So then, if the meaning of John's prophecy is to forbid all future



prophecies, then Moses' statement must mean the same. If that is true, then we would have to join with the Samaritans and disbelieve the rest of the Old Testament. Then we would not have all the great prophecies of the Messiah's advent.

Therefore, the meaning of that statement in the book of Revelation is simply that no true prophet or true child of God will contradict the previously recognized prophets' messages. For that reason "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Corinthians 14:32).

**2. Some claim there is no need for prophets any more since we have "all scripture," as mentioned in 2 Timothy 3:16, as being "given by inspiration of God, and . . . profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."**

But, as Roswell F. Cottrell wrote in his foreword to *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 9, "if Paul, in saying that the Scriptures were able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly-furnished unto all good works, meant that nothing more should be written by inspiration, why was he, at that moment, adding to those Scriptures? At least, why did he not drop the pen as soon as that sentence was written."<sup>6</sup> Was it not because Paul was indeed a prophet who had the authority to write these things? It is interesting to reflect at this verse a bit more carefully. The only Scriptures the disciples used were the Old Testament writings. The New Testament was then considered the "spirit of prophecy" for their day.

How did they regard their "spirit of prophecy"? The apostle wrote, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

Was their "spirit of prophecy" thought of as being "second class" to the writings of the other prophets? Not at all! However, their "spirit of prophecy" could obviously benefit only those

*"Light has been shining from [God's] word and from the testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us."*

that believed. "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe" (1 Corinthians 14:22).

So when the believers in the New Testament times read their spirit of prophecy, they did not regard it as the words of the apostle Paul, or of Peter, or of another. Rather they did receive it as the Word of God. So, they then had their Bible (the Old Testament Scriptures) and they also had their spirit of prophecy (the New Testament Scriptures) from which they were free to quote among themselves and to receive it as the Word of God even as we Christians do it now.

We have a similar situation today. Ellen White explains:

"Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions, judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published *Testimonies*, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others; but must see and have the evidence for themselves. Such must not be set aside, but long patience and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, of which they have no knowledge; if they carry their opposition so far as to oppose that in which they have had no experience, and feel annoyed when those who believe that the visions are of God speak of them in meeting, and comfort themselves with the instruction given through vision, the church may know that they are not right. God's people should not cringe and yield, and give up their liberty to such disaffected ones. God has placed the gifts in the church that the church

may be benefited by them; and when professed believers in the truth oppose these gifts, and fight against the visions, souls are in danger through their influence, and it is time then to labor with them, that the weak may not be led astray by their influence."<sup>6</sup>

For the rest of the Jews who didn't believe in the New Testament's spirit of prophecy, the disciples used only the Old Testament Scriptures to prove their points.

**3. Some assert that God spoke in times past through the prophets, and that He speaks now only through Jesus Christ, using this text as their alleged proof: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1, 2).**

We have just observed that the very person who wrote the book of Hebrews wrote it under the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy. So then, who reestablished that spirit of prophecy in the Christian church—since during that time it flourished? "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:28). It was none other than God Himself who did so.

It is quite interesting that many Christians today would like to keep the apostles, the teachers, and those with other spiritual gifts, yet rid themselves of the prophets. I have wondered where is the proof in God's word that they were abolished? In the same chapter where the Jewish Sabbath is thought to be "abolished" and the

## Do you want true spiritual prosperity? “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper” (2 Chronicles 20:20).

so-called Christian Sabbath instituted! Do you know where that is? It is in a special chapter which speaks of the mystery of iniquity, and the man of sin, (2 Thessalonians 2:3–8). This mystery of iniquity abolished the Bible Sabbath and instituted Sundaykeeping in its place. At the same time, this religio-political power thought to replace the spirit of prophecy with human decrees.

### Prophecy needed until perfection

Can we truthfully say that a time will come when we will no longer need the spirit of prophecy while we are still in this wicked world? “Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail. . . . But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away” (1 Corinthians 13:8, 10).

We are still living in a sinful world, in a sinful body. Only when Christ is come will we be able to say this verse has been fulfilled. But for now, the same apostle under inspiration says: “Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. . . . But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort” (1 Corinthians 14:1 (NIV), 3.)

Why do we need prophecy until Christ’s return? Because “that which is perfect” is not yet come.

### Test the prophets

For all future generations, the apostle gives us the guideline regarding the spirit of prophecy. “Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:19–21).

If prophecy was to be done away with when the apostles finished their work, why did they tell us to prove all things, including the prophets?

Why did Jesus, in Matthew 24:24, when specifically referring to these last days, warn us of false prophets? “For

there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

If there are false Christs and false prophets, there must be also true ones. And we must be able to distinguish between both.

Christ said: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:15, 16).

“The deeds of a man’s life are the fruit he bears. If he is unfaithful and dishonest in temporal matters he is bringing forth briars and thorns; he will be unfaithful in the religious life and will rob God in tithes and offerings.”<sup>7</sup>

### Conclusion

We need to make a serious decision regarding the attitude we take towards the Spirit of Prophecy. “We have warned of danger as God has presented before us the perils of His people. Our work has been given us of God. What, then, will be the condition of those who refuse to hear the words which God has sent them, because they cross their track or reprove their wrongs? If you are thoroughly convinced that God has not spoken by us, why not act in accordance with your faith and have no more to do with a people who are under so great a deception as this people are? If you have been moving according to the dictates of the Spirit of God you are right and we are wrong. God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The

Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. In arraying yourself against the servants of God you are doing a work either for God or for the devil. ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ What stamp does your work bear? It will pay to look critically at the result of your course.”<sup>8</sup> Do you want true spiritual prosperity? “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper” (2 Chronicles 20:20). *R*

### References

<sup>1</sup> *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217 (emphasis supplied).

<sup>6</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 328, 329.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 311.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 230.



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# Enjoying an Orderly Home

Our God is a God of order. He has demonstrated this principle in creation, in the sanctuary, and in our body temple. If we are preparing to live in an orderly Heaven, where do we practice? In our homes. Does it really matter how our homes are inside and outside?

How many of you feel like you are ready to step into heavenly places and just feel at home? What about your earthly home? Do you like it? Are you satisfied with its atmosphere, its order and organization? Is it a place where love dwells and angels delight to visit? Do you still want to improve in your habits of self-disci-

pline or in teaching your children? Are you seeking to glorify the Lord in all things, and do you want to be more efficient? Then this may be the help you are praying for.

Being born into a family with an organized mother is definitely a plus. Before I recognized organization as a quality, I remember wanting things to look nice. Even as a teen, while visiting the mechanic shop with friends, I would organize tools, work benches, and floors, not understanding what drove me to want to see everything as neat as I could put it in a limited amount of time. Except during the teen

By Pam Stemmler

[Emphasis supplied throughout.]





cultivated and nurtured.

Creation teaches order, but there is something very interesting that our daughter told us specifically about beehives.

A beekeeper can actually tell the condition of the queen (the leader of the hive) by the pattern of the brood (eggs). If the queen is alive and well, the pattern will be very neat and orderly. If she is getting old and weak, this pattern is disconnected, erratic, disorderly. If she is dead, there is no brood pattern (no eggs laid).

I see a parallel to the homes in our generation. It was very unusual to find messy, disorganized homes a couple of generations ago, at least in my sphere. Women understood their role in housekeeping and child training and did their best to keep things well-ordered and clean.

Now, I see a change, and, unfortunately, it is not for the better. Fewer mothers are home, caring for it and for their children. Schedules are busier than ever, and yet we have more time-saving devices and conveniences. Fewer and fewer homes manifest order and cleanliness. What is wrong? Every homemaker thinks she is fine, and that order is a relative word. Is it possible that God has some definite specifics that will help us have a standard by which to judge? I find that He does, and we wish to examine some of those here.

### What has God specified as His desire?

**“Order is heaven’s first law, and the Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts. Truth never places her delicate feet in a path of uncleanness or impurity.”<sup>3</sup>**

years, when confusion seems to be the best word to describe that period of time, I have liked order.

Many times, my friends would give me a hard time for wanting things neat. I would be told to loosen up, not worry about it, and so forth. I began to think maybe this was just me, some quirk of my personality. But then, after making my decision to follow Christ, it became more important.

I still struggled, especially when I met other “Christians” who thought that order was too restrictive. Yet I saw many other Christians where order permeated their lives, their homes, and I thought they set a good example. Then I found my challenge text:

“One well-ordered, well-disciplined family is a greater power in demonstrating the efficiency of Christianity than all the sermons in the world.”<sup>1</sup>

I was studying this particular subject and was greatly surprised to find out what heaven’s first law is. “Order is heaven’s first law.”<sup>2</sup> Heaven’s first law of order is coupled with heaven’s first law of love.

God is love. Plain and simple! And, God is a God of order. Straightforward! This has posed some questions in my mind: Can love exist without order? Can order exist without love?

It has been observed that disorder is usually the result of feelings from lack of love, rejection, and so forth, from the past. It has also been observed that, without order, there can be a lot of irritation that is not good for love. Order is the best atmosphere for love to be

**“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.... Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40).**

If we desire to be in harmony with God’s will and ways—and to prepare for a beautiful place beyond earth, known as Heaven, we need to prepare now. We need to implement laws of order in our own lives and in the lives of our children. Orderly habits now will bring us several blessings. We will be happier here.

“Happiness is not found in empty show. The more simple the order of a well-regulated household, the happier will that home be.”<sup>4</sup>

By being orderly, we will be better prepared for Heaven. In fact, without cultivating a love for and a habitual working towards Heaven, we will not enter there.

“In heaven there is perfect order, perfect obedience, perfect peace and harmony. Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline. The characters formed in this life will determine the future destiny. When Christ shall come, He will not change the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. To remove the stains of sin requires the work of a lifetime. Every day renewed efforts in restraining and denying self are needed. Every day there are new battles to fight and vic-



tories to be gained. Every day the soul should be called out in earnest pleading with God for the mighty victories of the cross.”<sup>5</sup>

And we will be better witnesses to others:

**“It is the privilege of all to give to the world in their home life, in their customs and practices and order, an evidence of what the gospel can do for those who obey it. Christ came to our world to give us an example of what we may become. He expects His followers to be models of correctness in all the relations of life. He desires the divine touch to be seen upon outward things.**

**“Our own homes and surroundings should be object lessons, teaching ways of improvement, so that industry, cleanliness, taste, and refinement may take the place of idleness, uncleanness, coarseness, and disorder. By our lives and example we can help others to discern that which is repulsive in their character or their surroundings, and with Christian courtesy we may encourage improvement. As we manifest an interest in them, we shall find opportunity to teach them how to put their energies to the best use.”<sup>6</sup>**

No better time is there to teach these things than when the children are young. Yet even if they are older and we have not learned all that we would like to in these lines, there is still hope. We can still be students in the school of Christ.

Order in our life is simply the result of routine and discipline. We will thrive when we have an established schedule and routine in our day-to-day life. This still will allow for flexibility when needed but all will be happier knowing what is to take place. Studies have shown that when children are given routine tasks and scheduled events along with lovingly placed boundaries, they are much happier and more obedient, as well as being less fearful. They are also better students.

People who have no schedule, no boundaries, and no responsibilities actually become more lethargic, fretful, discontented, and fearful. Which would you like for your children? And/or for yourself?

It seems clear to me that God wants things in order in our homes and in our lives in general. Let us study to find out more specifically what He has in mind.

### What does God mean by order?

a. Teach the difference between having specific things to play with and not touching those which are not to be played with.

**“Education must be all-round and uniform. Every mother needs to be diligent. She must allow nothing to divert her mind. She must not allow her children to follow their uneducated will in handling things in the home. They should be taught that they are not to keep the house in perpetual disorder by handling things for their own amusement. Mothers, teach your children from their earliest years that they are not to look upon everything in the home as playthings for them. By these little things order is taught. No matter what fuss the children may make, let not the organ of destruction, which is large in babyhood and childhood, be strengthened and cultivated. ‘Thou shalt,’ and ‘Thou shalt not,’ God says. Without loss of temper, but decidedly, parents are to say to their children, No, and mean it.”<sup>7</sup>**

b. Order means to keep things tidy. That means clean (without dirt), nice-smelling (without body odor or other unclean scents), and looking nice (that means with taste). We are to have no disorder in the home, meaning everything should be in a specific place.

**“As the guardian and teacher of your children, you are in duty bound to do every little thing in the home with nicety and in order. Teach your children the invaluable lesson of keeping their clothing tidy. Keep your own clothing clean and sweet and respectable. . . .**



**“You are under obligation to God always to be patterns of propriety in your home. . . . Remember that in heaven there is no disorder, and that your home should be a heaven here below. Remember that in doing faithfully from day to day the little things to be done in the home, you are a laborer together with God, perfecting a Christian character.”<sup>8</sup>**

c. Our homes should show how to be industrious and the results of it. We can also see the qualification of refinement (not rough, unclean, or distasteful).

d. Order means having clothing folded and put away, dishes cleaned and put in orderly places; it means having our bodies washed and neat daily; it means furniture is placed tastefully. It means that there is not “stuff” all around making things look untidy, messy, and unrefined.

How can all of this be accomplished? Practical steps will be provided in the next issue of *The Reformation Herald*. Remember, our Lord is available to be our Help & Guide! *R*

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- <sup>3</sup> *Counsels on Health*, p. 101.
- <sup>4</sup> *The Adventist Home*, p. 150.
- <sup>5</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 429.
- <sup>6</sup> *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 196.
- <sup>7</sup> *Child Guidance*, p. 101.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

# Help From Hydrotherapy

*Adapted from the writings of  
Antonio Thomé*

**H**ydrotherapy is a powerful agent in the recuperation and conservation of health—"hydro" relates to using water. Why can water be so helpful?

The answer is easy to see—the human body is composed of approximately two thirds of this precious liquid. We can live several days without food, but it is not possible to live for such a length of time without water. Water is, from the period of infancy to seniority, an excellent means of maintenance and recuperation to conserve the body's health and vigor.

Water is indispensable to purification. Sickness is often caused by "internal filth"—and since filth is washed away by water—it stands to reason that water is an essential element for the internal cleansing of the body. It dissolves and eliminates impurities and gives vitality and equilibrium to the nervous system, regulating the entire organism. Thus, various types of baths can help to detoxify and relieve a host of physical and mental ailments.

## Forms of water

Water can be used effectively in all three of its natural states:

**Solid:** Ice can be useful in cases of inflammation, phlebitis, and so forth.

**Liquid:** Water can be applied using specific temperatures in a variety of ways, including immersion, trunk baths, vital baths, and sitz baths.

**Gas:** Sauna and steam baths, local applications of vapor, and inhalations are all useful hydrotherapeutic applications.

## How does it work?

Physical changes are produced in the body as a result of hydrotherapeutic processes. These can be classified as thermal, mechanical, and chemical.

**Thermal** effects are produced by administering water in temperatures hotter or colder than that of the body. The greater the extreme of range higher or lower than the body's temperature, the greater will be the physiological effect produced.

**Mechanical** effects on the body are produced by the impact of water on the skin in a whirling or circling motion,

as a spray or jet of water with rubbing or friction is employed.

**Chemical** effects are produced when water is used for drinking or for an intestinal water bath.

## Cooling and calming "the battle in the belly"

Even though all three of the above effects are worthy of mention, the thermal effect is the most important one. Disease in general is due to the digestive system being overtaxed by trying to cope with an unbalanced diet through either incompatible food combinations or nutritionally inadequate food. Illnesses are much more severe when the foods ingested have no nutritional value. Some such foods are digested with difficulty by the body, and what is left will obstruct the colon. When already overloaded by excrement, this organ is unable to function properly. Constipation is the result, bringing with it all kinds of ailments. In the intestines is where the processing of food substances occurs—separating those that can be assimilated from those that will be eliminated. When



“There are many ways in which water can be applied to relieve pain and check disease. All should become intelligent in its use in simple home treatments.”



many impurities are circulating around the system, they become dangerous and deadly. The body then tries to rid itself of these impurities by causing a constant fermentation; when this fermentation is too strong, fever is the result.

Many diseases originate in the intestines; therefore, it is common to see a continuous state of internal congestion, inflammation, and fermentation. There is a never-ending “battle” in the body to disentangle itself from deadly matter. When the abdomen is immersed in cold water during baths, a reaction is formed between the cold water from the outside and the great heat from the inside of the body. The contact of the water provokes the flow of blood to the extremities. The organs of excretion finally become free of the overload of blood and their activities decrease. These organs that usually never experience rest, they actually come to a restful state during the bath. This is why the temperature of the water should be cold enough to provoke a reaction. The welcome period of “refreshment” will stop or diminish the

fermentation of the deadly substances in the intestines. The low temperature of the water penetrates the body, giving it new vigor and energy, thus bringing a better health condition to the entire organism.

In hydrotherapy, no part of the body is as important as the abdomen because that is where the main organs of elimination are located. However, it is well to emphasize that the beneficial use of water is not limited to the abdomen only, but extends itself to the whole body, to all the nervous system.

The reaction of cold water benefits the flow of the blood and restores the circulation. The digestive system feels the benefits, and the digestive functions are activated and return to their regular pattern. After several baths, the real hunger which has not been felt for many years returns, for these baths not only eliminate impurities from the body but also reeducate the whole system to its normal and regular functions.

During the bath it is good to remove worries from the mind, keeping calm,

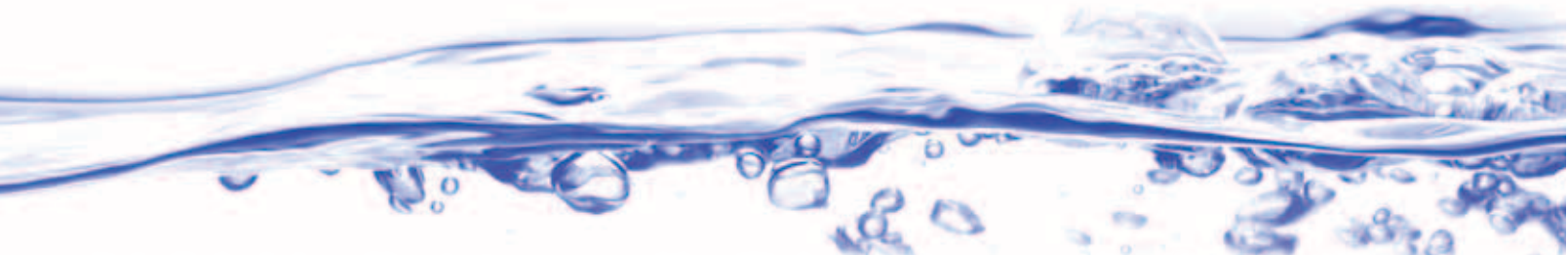
and focused on the benefit to be enjoyed.

If after the bath we are curious to examine the water, we may observe that it has become rather “oily.” This means that it is full of toxins. We will notice also that the water has decongested the intestines and absorbed the feverish internal heat of the digestive organs. The natural bath acts powerfully in the body and brings rest. It decongests the abdomen and activates the circulation of the blood, giving vital energy. After the bath, the wet body parts should be dried and rubbed vigorously with a heavy cloth to reactivate the circulation. When the bath is completed, a sensation of lightness and well-being is felt. If this feeling is not present, the bath may not have been done exactly according to the therapist’s instructions. It is necessary to follow his or her directions carefully.

### **The spinal connection**

Through the sacrum (tailbone) the lower part of the spinal cord branches off; there ends the “marvelous tree” that encases the spinal cord. In certain

“The external application of water is one of the easiest and most satisfactory ways of regulating the circulation of the blood.”



kinds of baths, the base of the spine is submersed in water. What happens? Just for comparison, the same as what happens when we water plants at their roots. The roots absorb and transmit vitality to the whole tree, even to the uttermost leaf. This is what occurs in the bath; the spinal cord absorbs the potential of the thermophysical properties of the water and transmits it to the whole nervous system, bringing it renewed life, energy, and strength. By acting on the spinal cord, the bath water works on the brain, which is the center of the intellect, on the thought processes, on the will, and on the cranial nerves.

Many baths are powerful remedies for a weakened and imbalanced nervous system. Through the ramification of the nervous system, every part of the body will be benefitted.

Fresh natural water diffuses its invisible benefits to all the nervous system and gives vital restoration to the whole body. Trunk baths, vital baths, hot-and-cold foot baths, and many other hydrotherapeutic measures are easy to learn and can usually be done in the convenience of the home. It is worthwhile to study more of this subject to be able to appreciate more fully the wonders of water for the body.

### From the pen of Inspiration

“The external application of water is one of the easiest and most satisfactory ways of regulating the circulation of the blood. A cold or cool bath is an excellent tonic. Warm baths open the

pores and thus aid in the elimination of impurities. Both warm and neutral baths soothe the nerves and equalize the circulation.

“But many have never learned by experience the beneficial effects of the proper use of water, and they are afraid of it. Water treatments are not appreciated as they should be, and to apply them skillfully requires work that many are unwilling to perform. But none should feel excused for ignorance or indifference on this subject. There are many ways in which water can be applied to relieve pain and check disease. All should become intelligent in its use in simple home treatments. Mothers, especially, should know how to care for their families in both health and sickness.”<sup>1</sup>

### A spiritual parallel

“Every worker in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life. Christ came as the Great Physician to heal the wounds that sin has made in the human family; and His Spirit, working through His servants, imparts to sin-sick, suffering human beings a mighty healing power that is efficacious for the body and the soul. ‘In that day,’ says the Scriptures, ‘there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabit-

ants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness’ (Zechariah 13:1). The waters of this fountain contain medicinal properties that will heal both physical and spiritual infirmities.

“From this fountain flows the mighty river seen in Ezekiel’s vision. ‘These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live. . . . And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine’ (Ezekiel 47:8–12).


“Such a river of life and healing God designs that, by His power working through them, our sanitariums shall be.

“Our sanitariums are to show forth to the world the benevolence of heaven; and though Christ’s visible presence is not discerned in the building, yet the workers may claim the promise: ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’ (Matthew 28:20).”<sup>2</sup> ❧

### References

<sup>1</sup> *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 227, 228.



# Operation Oikos

*K*nocking at the door of an unknown person's house to make a missionary contact seems very difficult, doesn't it? There is a strong chance that the door will not be opened. If you persevere by going to several houses, sometimes you will find someone who will open the door but will not let you in. The people will not offer their chair, and most probably their heart will not be opened to let our Lord Jesus Christ in.

However, if you knock at the door of the house of your relative or friend, there will be a greater probability that he or she will open the door. Such persons will let you in, offer their chair to you and sometimes even offer some food to eat. Yet, as in the case of the strangers, the hearts of these persons are usually closed to receiving any kind of religious messages. Nonetheless, here you do have a greater advantage. That

is why a missionary method known as Operation *Oikos* is recommended.

What is an *Oikos*? *Oikos* is a Greek word which means *house*. When we say Operation *Oikos*, we are referring to a strategy of evangelism whereby missionary contacts are made by taking advantage of the close social ties made through family and/or friendship connections. These would include relatives, **friends, neighbors, and others who are very close to us** and know very well who we are, yet do not know Christ. The resistance of this class is often minimal and therefore it is a fruitful field for evangelism.

"One of the most effective ways in which light can be communicated is by private, personal effort. In the home circle, at your neighbor's fireside, at the bedside of the sick, in a quiet way you may read the Scriptures and speak a

By Rolly Dumaguit



## Often a person will join the church not only because of the doctrine we uphold but because of ties of friendship.

word for Jesus and the truth. Thus you may sow precious seed that will spring up and bring forth fruit."<sup>1</sup>

### A classical biblical example of Operation *Oikos*

"And as [Jesus] passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him" (Mark 2:14, 15).

Another worthy example was when John the Baptist brought his disciples to Christ. As you know, Christ and John were cousins. One of the Jesus' disciples, Andrew, conducted his brother Simon to the Saviour. Andrew and Simon connected Philip with Jesus, and he did the same to Nathaniel (see John 1:35-50).

In the book of Acts we find Cornelius, the Roman centurion. He was a military leader who was faithful and fearful unto the Lord with all his house. He had a vision in which an angel of the Lord told him to send men to Joppa to bring forth the man named Peter. The Bible tells us that "the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends" (Acts 10:1-5, 24).

"This was the way the Christian church was established. Christ first selected a few persons and bade them follow him. Then they went in search of their relatives and acquaintances and brought them to Christ. This is the way we are to labor. A few souls brought out and fully established on the truth will, like the first disciples, be laborers for others."<sup>2</sup>

Referring to Paul, we read that "the apostle's efforts were not confined to public speaking; there were many who could not have been reached in that way. He spent much time in house-to-house labor, thus availing himself of

the familiar intercourse of the home circle. He visited the sick and the sorrowing, comforted the afflicted, and lifted up the oppressed."<sup>3</sup>

### The effectiveness of Operation *Oikos*

If we ask the members of our church how they heard of the present truth for the first time, we observe something interesting. It seems that around 60 to 75% of all the members will answer that his or her first contact with the Reform Movement Church was through a family, a friend, a relative, or a neighbor. Following are some approximate results achieved through various typical methods of missionary contact.

#### How does a person join the church?

- |                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| • Special needs         | 1-2%   |
| • Curiosity             | 2-3%   |
| • Pastor                | 5-6%   |
| • Visitation            | 1-2%   |
| • Christian schools     | 4-5%   |
| • Evangelistic programs | 8-10%  |
| • Church programs       | 1-3%   |
| • Friends/relatives     | 60-75% |

#### Identifying your *Oikos*

"The first missionary that Jesus sent to the region of Decapolis was the man

out of whom he had cast the legion of devils. The man had begged to accompany Jesus constantly, but Jesus 'suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee' (Mark 5:19). This man bore in his own person the evidence that Jesus was the true Messiah. He related his own experience, telling how great things God had done for him, and thus the way was prepared for the message of truth from the lips of Jesus Himself."<sup>4</sup>

Let us illustrate how Operation *Oikos* works. One example we can show is the *Oikos* of Roque Soria in action:

**Roque Soria** heard the Reform message in 1960.

He brought the message to his father Tomas and his mother Eleuteria and his four brothers: Gualberto, Porferio, Eustaquio, and Diosdado in the same year.

Gualberto shared the message with his father and mother-in-law and with his brother and sisters-in-law.

All the family of Roque, Gualberto, Diosdado, Porferio, and Eustaquio received the message.

Gualberto brought the message to some of his Adventist friends.

Finally, over the course of some three years, most of them had become members of our church by 1963. The first church was then erected in their neighborhood.



“Our work for Christ is to begin with the family, in the home. . . . There is no missionary field more important than this.”<sup>5</sup>

“Let it be your object to make those around you better, to elevate them, to point them to heaven and glory, and lead them to seek, above all earthly things, the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, the riches which are imperishable.”<sup>6</sup>

### The ties of friendship

Remember that often a person will join the church not only because of the doctrine we uphold but because of ties of friendship established between us and them. If you bring people to the church, they are also observing the relationships between the members. Thus the manner we treat our family, relatives, and friends who don't know about Christ determines our potential to bring them to Christ. Every member has the ability to contact his or her friends. We call this evangelistic potential. Let us see how to utilize this enormous potential.

### Evangelistic potential (EP)

Every married couple has the evangelistic potential to contact the husband's family, the wife's family, their closest neighbors, their work companions, the children's classmates and schoolmates, the husband's friends and the wife's friends who do not yet know about Christ.

If the person is single, then he or she has the potential to contact his or her family, relatives, close friends, work companions, and neighbors.

It is estimated that every member may know 50 or more persons. To calculate the EP of the church, we will take the average of 5 very open and nearest

## Methods and implementation

1. Each member must select five best friends or closest relatives who don't yet know about Jesus (determine your *Oikos*).
2. Take the list of your *Oikos* and pray for these souls every day before engaging in your missionary contact with them.
3. The local missionary leader should give a seminar for all members on the art of contacting people.
4. Define the special day where the church will go out to contact their *Oikos*. Sabbath afternoon is the best time to do it, or during free time in the week.
5. During the Sabbath afternoon program, give everyone the chance to relate his or her work.
6. Introduce all the names of your *Oikos* to the local missionary department for visitation and Bible studies. You must be present at their Bible studies to give moral support.
7. Invite them to your house on special occasions.
8. Invite them to the church.
9. Invite them to be baptized as soon as they are ready.
10. Invite them to look for their *Oikos*, explaining how this principle works.
11. Do not leave your *Oikos* alone until these souls mature spiritually.

friends among the 50 persons known.

If your church has 20 members, multiplying by five special friends or relatives, the EP of your church will be 100 persons. The next time you launch your evangelistic program, utilize the powerful evangelistic potential of your church.

### Methods and implementation

The methods should be implemented with fidelity, perseverance, and steadfast follow-up (see chalkboard).

“If the families around you are opposed to the truth, strive to lead them to yield to the claims of Christ. Work patiently, wisely, considerately, winning your way by the tender ministry of love. Present the truth in such a way that it will be seen in all its beauty, exerting an influence that can not be resisted. Thus the walls of prejudice will be broken down.”<sup>7</sup>

### Conclusion

“Educate yourself to be able to appeal to families around the fireside. You can accomplish even more in this direction than by your pulpit labors alone. Watch for souls as one that must give an account. Give no occasion for unbelievers to charge you with remissness in this duty, by neglecting to appeal to them personally. Talk with them faithfully, and beseech them to yield to the truth. ‘For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life.’ As the apostle views the magnitude of the work and the weighty responsibilities resting upon the minister, he exclaims: ‘And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of

God speak we in Christ’ (2 Corinthians 2:16, 17).”<sup>8</sup> *R*

### References

- <sup>1</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 428, 429.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Review and Herald*, December 8, 1885.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 250.
- <sup>4</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, October 12, 1891.
- <sup>5</sup> *Christian Service*, p. 206.
- <sup>6</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 594.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 11.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

# Sibiu 2011, Romania

Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement

- 📍 **Event:** **Spiritual Meetings**
- 📅 **Date:** **August 18–21, 2011**
- 📍 **Venue:** **Sala Transilvania  
Str. Octavian Goga, Nr. 1  
Sibiu, Romania**
- 📍 **Theme:** **“He Is Coming”**

You are cordially invited to join us in Sibiu for the **spiritual meetings** open to the public preceding the **21<sup>st</sup> General Conference Delegation Session** of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement.

Come, feast on the rich spiritual blessings the Lord has to bestow!



# 21st General Conference Session



This will be a wonderful opportunity to fellowship with believers from around the world. Delegates representing over 100 countries will be attending the session, and the spiritual meetings will likely draw visitors from many of these countries.

The city of Sibiu has a population of approximately 155,000. It is located in the very center of Romania and enjoys the benefits of an international airport. It is also an ancient city that is rich in historic and multicultural attractions for tourists.

On Monday, August 22, 2011, you are also invited to attend the dedication of the *International Youth Convention and Family Retreat Center* in Porumbacu, Romania, where the delegation session will be held.

■ Please visit: <http://gcsession.sdarm.org> for more information.



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# Turning in Trinkets



One night in her youth, Ellen Harmon (later White) had a dream. In it she tells how she wanted so much to see Jesus. She describes:

“Just then the door opened, and a person of beautiful form and countenance entered. He looked upon me pityingly and said: ‘Do you wish to see Jesus? He is here and you can see Him if you desire to do so. Take everything you possess and follow me.’

“I heard this with unspeakable joy, and gladly gathered up all my little possessions, every treasured trinket, and followed my guide.

He led me to a steep and apparently frail stairway. As I commenced to ascend the steps, he cautioned me to keep my eyes fixed upward, lest I should grow dizzy and fall. Many others who were climbing up the steep ascent fell before gaining the top.

“Finally we reached the last step and stood before the door. Here my guide directed me to leave all the things that I had brought with me. I cheerfully laid them down; he then opened the door and bade me enter. In a moment I stood before Jesus. . . .

“The sound of His sweet voice thrilled my heart with a happiness it had never before experienced.”<sup>1</sup>

## Notice one thing

In this beautiful story, young Ellen was to lay down all the little things she owned—as she says, “every treasured trinket.” This was needed before entering the door.

Later in life, she had another dream about the narrow path to heaven. The faithful people had to give up more and more as the path became narrower and narrower. The things to be left behind were not necessarily bad things, but they finally had to be given up before crossing into heaven. It helped the people to see that God and faith in Him alone would be their source of everything needed.<sup>2</sup>

Dear children, most of the world is going on a wide superhighway headed the wrong way. People have lots of baggage that cannot be taken to heaven. But not only that: Many of the things they are carrying may even be stopping them from becoming the kind of person that will be ready for heaven! We will have to give up many things in order to stay on God’s path. The way will become more and more narrow. But do not be sad about having to give up anything. Always remember, God has something better in store for you! “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). “Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:14). *R*

## References

<sup>1</sup> *Early Writings*, p. 80 [Emphasis supplied.]

<sup>2</sup> *Life Sketches*, pp. 190–193.

By B. Monteiro

