

The background of the cover is a vibrant blue. A hand from the left points towards a large, transparent globe. Inside the globe, a series of wooden dominoes are shown in a state of falling, creating a sense of motion. Below the globe, a large crowd of people, mostly men in suits, is depicted. A thick, coiled rope lies across the bottom of the image, partially obscuring the crowd. The overall composition suggests a global impact or a chain reaction.

# the REFORMATION *herald*

Vol. 61, No. 1

## THE DOMINO EFFECT

One violation of a single commandment  
leads to the violation of another commandment.



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Volume 61, Number 1

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### Changing of the Guard

*At this time, we would like to introduce the new Editor of **The Reformation Herald** magazine, Liviu Tudoroiu. He was elected at the 23rd Delegation Session of the SDA Reform Movement to serve in this capacity and we trust that the Lord will utilize his special talents and passion for Bible prophecy in a mighty way in these last days. We also would like to thank very much our previous Editor, Davi Paes Silva, for the dedicated service that he faithfully rendered during his two terms in this capacity from 2012–2019.*

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"The greatest want of the world is the want of men—  
men who will not be bought or sold."—*Education*, p. 57.

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# What do people believe about . . . Everything that Really Matters?

Editorial

**Emancipation hysteria is a pandemic** that regulates the dynamics of our society. A new phone, a new iPad, a new adventure, a new movie, a new house, a new car, a new kitchen, new furniture, or a new life partner and so many other unfulfilled desires for the new and sensational, stimulate the progress of humanity towards the inevitable EXIT to . . . THE END.

Tired of apathetic Christianity, people are turning to **Eastern religions** that have not been able to solve the misery of starvation in their countries of origin. Those of this philosophy tend to regroup their forces in order to seek shelter in the Western world. They are taking over the spiritual markets of America. The package comes with the gurus that are craving for recognition. The holistic signs, multicolored with the esoteric images lit up in city windows invite you to experience the transcendental. Many of these mentors, dressed in a spectacular white robes, tempt society to bite from the forbidden tree, while the Christian church chameleons itself in a yoga club. Prayer is replaced by "meditation." Moreover, under the garment of innocence, taverns invite you to indulge in relaxation through marijuana as a psychic experience.

"Unisex fashion" is rapidly being bypassed by the new flipping gender fashion. Morality is assimilated gently by evolutionary thinking, and human psychology shifts the responsibility of our present actions to past personal traumas lost somewhere in time. Everything that happens is supposedly somebody else's fault. Relativism atrophies the moral compass, and so we see evil well explained and documented becoming necessary good. And the good we have advocated based on the

Scripture for so long is now viewed as socially rejected evil.

## THE WEST IS GOING WILD

The United States is turning into a new wild west but it's a bigger and faster Wild West than in the pioneer days. "To be or not to be." That is the question. Do we have freedom to violate the morals—or do we have freedom to obey the morals? Cause and effect will consequently impact society.

Another peculiarity of our time is the fact that no one seems to have the courage to take the responsibility for what goes wrong in our fragile world. Everybody blames everybody.

Money talks to people across the world and is becoming the "god" of the century. We are becoming more and more of a money-oriented society. It really seems that most people would abandon their moral principles if circumstances pressure them enough.

In the political arena, China is flexing its muscles, engaging in a provocative economical dispute against the USA, calling the attention of the world. On the other side of the world, the Pope defends climate change and proposes how we may save the planet.

Many don't know how to answer this specific dilemma of climate change. Who is to be blamed for global warming? Obviously it is not considered to be the great corporations that produce huge amount of glass, plastic, and aluminum, bottles which result in trash, or the enterprises that dictate the tempo of our smog and pollution. It is supposedly the individual that buys the "canned cancer foods" that have so many additives, barely readable. We are to be blamed for global warming—we eat too much, we drink too much, and we are too many.

This new concept that makes us guilty that we exist, brings us to the long-time advocated philosophy of the evolutionary thinking called "natural selection," a very dangerous road of depopulating the world supposedly for and in behalf of the "common good."

For preserving the planet, it is thought that some of us have to disappear, because we are too many. So, if we are too many, what criteria will be used to select who is destined for life and who is for extinction? Maybe the Georgia Guidestones can give us a clue in this direction—when we read the statements engraved in that massive granite structure often referred to as the American Stonehenge: "Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature. Guide reproduction wisely improving fitness and diversity. Unite humanity with a living new language. . . . Be not a cancer on the earth—Leave room for nature—Leave room for nature."

We all agree that we have to preserve nature. But to force a man to make a law to extinguish humans to protect what they often refer to as "mother" nature, looks very suspect and grotesque.

Dear reader, I urge you to consider carefully the contents of this issue of *The Reformation Herald*; you might appreciate seeing about the new developments in the world's arena and what Bible prophecy has to say about everything that really matters.

Life on Earth has an end. We spend health to get the money, then we spend money to get back the health. We miss the present, being obsessed with the future. In reality we live neither in the present nor the future. We live as if we would never die and when we die, we die as if we never lived. *R*





# THE NEWS ABOUT THE NEWS

## HOOKED

That's the relationship we hold with many of the tangible and abstract things that exist in the world all around us. Consciously (or more than often unconsciously) we tighten our grasp on the things we think we are controlling in the world—all the while unaware that in our subconscious, the very things we try to control end up controlling us. The news is a perfect example.

Our minds are constantly bombarded with negativity mixed with occasional glimpses of positivity. The impact on our brains, which are so malleable, is very real. Inside our brain, when we watch something negative, a boost of cortisol is released in our body. Then when the occasional positive story emerges, a little rush of dopamine is released. Then the negativity returns and the cycle goes on.

Eventually we get trapped in a cycle that becomes our home. It's all

we know so we keep going back to it. Just like the Israelites, when times get rough, we run back to the very place that violated and mistreated us. The latest "news" becomes our Egypt.

## IT'S ADDICTIVE

Almost everyone has no idea what's going on.

This is precisely why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34 NIV).

As our minds are flooded with news and images of violence, we become more prone to different forms of aggression that are the start of a pathway that could lead us to re-enact the very scenes that we have allowed to be portrayed before our eyes. The early forms of aggression may be simply insulting other people verbally or even spreading rumors about other people.<sup>1</sup>

By beholding we certainly become changed.

Each day the news is filled with stories of violence, warfare and terrible acts of destruction. The more and more these scenes become familiar to our minds, the more our minds decrease in their ability to empathize with people.<sup>2</sup>

So what does it mean to "empathize"? One dictionary defines empathy as "emotional or mental understanding of the feelings or spirit of someone."<sup>3</sup>

This sense of empathy is lost as we are constantly bombarded with news that is filled with violence and terror. Jesus Himself prophesied of this effect on the human heart. He foresaw that, "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matthew 24:12).

Instead of our first response being to help those in need, we tend to first look out for ourselves. We live in a cycle of fear, worrying about threats to our own selves instead of having hearts open to loving people in the way Jesus has loved us. This



cycle of fear is constantly multiplied each day we watch the news. This cycle of fear can lead people to be more hesitant when helping others and less able to fully express love and empathy to people who are in need.<sup>4</sup>

Again, this is why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34, NIV).

This fear cycle is not sustainable to live in. Our hearts will slowly close inward and lose their ability to truly empathize with the suffering world around us.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18).

The big question is: Why do we keep going back to these cycles of bondage?

Why do we continually feed off of fear and allow that to stimulate all our actions?

The disciple John delicately arrives at the big problem.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15–17).

We end up in slavery because the "love of the Father" is not in us. Eventually, every individual who is in this cycle "passeth away" and those who "doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

**So, what is God's will for you and me?** Let these verses express it:

**"For I know what I have planned for you," says the Lord. 'I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11, NET2).**

"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NLT).

"For everything made evident is light, and for this reason it says: 'Awake, O sleeper! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!' Therefore consider carefully how you live—not as unwise but as wise, taking advantage of every opportunity, because the days are evil. For this reason do not be foolish, but be wise by understanding what the Lord's will is. And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for each other in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:14–21, NET2).

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:3, 4).

**"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"** (2 Peter 3:9).

**This sounds like good news**

**to me!** These verses are only just a taste of the will of God that is found in the Word of God.

Now where does the pathway to healing begin?

Jesus revealed His master plan on how He was going to break the power the devil uses—the cycle of fear and bondage—in one distinct battle cry: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:31, 32).

Ironically, the pathway to healing begins by beholding more violence. Except this time it's a different kind of suffering on display. Amidst all the cycles of bondage, fear, violence and suffering, just over 1,989 years ago, we were introduced to the cross.

Hanging on the cross, displayed for all to see, is the Good News.

It's the eternal Son of God, separated from His Father for the first time in all eternity.

He cries out in desperation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

Why is He separated?

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4, 5).





"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The violence ends by Someone receiving violence, not giving it.

The separation caused by sin ends by Jesus willingly allowing our sins to become His.

The cycle of bondage ends in Jesus!

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:1-3).

"For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder" (Psalm 107:16).

"He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Psalm 107:20).

Jesus, the Word made flesh, is the end of our bondage!

**Jesus is the change we've all been thirsting after.** Change occurs simply by beholding with the eye of faith, the character of the One Who

is the Desire and Craving of our hearts.

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18, NKJV).

And as we behold the Holy Spirit, just like with a mirror, it reveals to us the sins that Jesus has died for. Each day as we look deeper into the glory—the character—of God, change occurs.

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5).

As the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, we start displaying an earnest empathy for those that are in pain and struggling in the cycles of bondage around us. This is precisely the condition in which the Holy Spirit seals us.

"And the Lord said unto [the man clothed in white linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side], Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (Ezekiel 9:4).

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Malachi 3:16, 17).

Now what does it mean to fear the Lord? It's simple. It's to hate the things God hates and love the things God loves.

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate" (Proverbs 8:13).

Our beautiful Creator has given us the seventh day of each week to be reminded of this most precious redemption!

"Recall that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there by strength and power. That is why the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15, NET2).

When we are resting in His love, the Spirit is able to write the rest of the law on the tables of our hearts!

"He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law."<sup>5</sup>

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:16, 17).

May God open our eyes, that we may see more clearly, love more deeply, and listen more intently to that loving voice that belongs to the beautiful face of the One Whom we will see one day soon.

"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15).

**"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things"** (Philippians 4:8). *R*

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- <sup>5</sup> *Counsels for the Church*, p. 263.



# THE WORLD'S MORAL COMPASS

| Part 1 of 2

## INTRODUCTION

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3). This profound and perplexing question David asked of God, of himself, and of all thoughtful men and women who would ever read his Psalms. Having observed the dramatic collapse of the very foundations of the moral and social order in the nation of Israel, David was in great distress and with grave concerns.

When an earthquake, landslide or an explosion unsettles the foundations of buildings, the entire structures erected on those foundations are in danger of crumbling and collapsing. With great apprehension we are witnessing in our time how the tectonic forces of dark origin unsettle the foundations of the moral order upon which was built and on which for millennia have stood the entire structure of Christian society and of Western civilization.

In this article we wish to briefly explore the origins of the contemporary worldview that has swept over the Western world in the last few decades, causing a major crack in its foundation. We also wish to discover the impact of this worldview on human society and compare that impact with the standards for human conduct established by our Creator. As we will quickly point out, the most destructive manifestations of this unsettling philosophy have boldly emerged in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The visible expressions of that unbiblical worldview are to be found in the modern concept of marriage and family life and in the ways the men and women of our age view their gender and sexuality. The challenges facing contemporary Christians, especially the younger generation, are unprecedented. These challenges require careful investigation in the light of divine revelation but also the willingness on the part of the observer to submit to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SEXUAL IDENTITY, MARRIAGE, AND FAMILY

We will not be able to understand the magnitude of the changes that have taken place in the last few decades unless we first understand the original blueprint which man's Creator laid for the human family. In the first chapter of the book of Genesis we read verses 26 to 28:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and

over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

The account of creation in chapter 2 of Genesis provides some additional information about God’s original plan for man and woman:

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. and Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:21–24).

Any unbiased and fair-minded reader of the creation account in Genesis can clearly discern the following foundational principles for human sexual identity, marriage, and family life:

1. God created human race as male and female, two distinct sexes of the same species (“*adam*” or mankind). Both were created in God’s image and both were endowed with beauty and dignity. The misconception of an original androgynous (bisexual) man in Genesis 1:27 is completely unfounded. “God created man [mankind] in His own image, in the image of God created He him [singular]; male and female He created them [plural].” “Them” clearly refers to two distinct sexual persons—masculine and feminine.
2. God ordained that both sexes, male and female, be fertile and capable of fulfilling distinctive reproductive functions. It has been God’s design that man and woman reproduce (multiply) and fill the earth with godly offspring. There is no place in God’s order of creation for unisexuality, bisexuality, or for any diminishing of sexual identity. It is heterosexuality, male and female, that God designed for the human race. Only through such a union can God’s image in the human race be preserved.
3. The conjugal relationship and reproductive function of man

and woman are properly realized only through a permanent bonding of a man and woman in a sacred union we call marriage—“they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

4. As originally designed and intended, marriage is blessed by God only if it is a:
  - a) Lifelong union (which death alone can dissolve)
  - b) Monogamous union of only two human beings
  - c) Heterosexual union of a man and woman
  - d) Christ-centered union in which both man and woman recognize God as their Creator and Sustainer (after the fall, as their Redeemer)
5. The contemporary sharp distinction between sex as biologically given and gender as a socially and culturally constructed identity (masculine or feminine, no gender, or something in between) whereby a human being is at liberty to view his or her gender identity as different from the biological sex assigned at birth, is foreign to biblical thought.

As we will soon realize, all these foundational principles defining the identity and the function of human beings are presently either completely ignored or misconstrued and radically redefined.

## THE ROOTS OF THE HUMANIST WORLDVIEW IN ANCIENT HISTORY

We might be surprised to find that the modern Western worldview on human sexual identity, gender roles, marriage and family life is fundamentally rooted in ancient Greek philosophy. This is not to say that the ancient Greeks and other pagans, by whom the Greeks were influenced, held the exact same views as our modern society does. We only wish to say that the roots of the modern worldview are firmly planted in the pagan philosophical view of man and of the world in which man lives. Today we call this worldview “humanism” or a “humanist philosophy.”

One of the prominent advocates of relativism (holding that there are no absolute truths) and agnosticism (asserting that we cannot know anything about the existence of God or gods and of an absolute truth) was a Greek philosopher from the fifth century B.C., Protagoras of Abdera (Older Sophist). The sophists came before Socrates, Plato and Aristotle and spread skepticism and humanism.

Protagoras is well known for one dictum that aptly expresses the fundamental outlook of the Greek philosophy and of the modern humanists: “Of all things the measure is man, of the things that are, that [or ‘how’] they are, and of things that are not, that [or ‘how’] they are not.”<sup>1</sup> That famous expression was later known by its Latin form as *homo mensura omnium rerum*—“man is the measure of all things.” The Protagoras sentence could be interpreted philosophically in different ways, but one way is certainly inescapable: Man, and not God, supposedly defines the truth of all things, including the truth about man himself and about his moral conduct.

Protagoras also asserted that different individuals view matters differently: “Each thing appears to me, so it is for me, and as it appears to you, so it is for you—you and I each being a man.”<sup>2</sup> This view laid the foundation for the philosophy of relativism.

But we should not think for a moment that Protagoras was the true father of humanism and relativism. The father of humanism predated Protagoras when he approached a young woman in a beautiful garden and said to her: “You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5). So, the true birthplace of humanism and associated secularism and materialism that we will mention later, is found in Genesis 3.

## HUMANIST WORLDVIEW IN THE AGE OF REASON

But in the terms of the more recent past, we need to consider another major watershed in the history of theoretical thought that caused a decisive break with the traditional Christian worldview. That event took place in the year 1781 when



a fairly obscure German philosopher by the name Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) published a book under the title, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Let us see, in the simplest way, how that book impacted the world.

Kant had lived in what is often referred to as the age of Enlightenment and rationalism when European thinkers turned to human reason as the “chief source and test of knowledge.”<sup>3</sup> In his dialogue with rationalists and empiricists, Kant made one of the most important distinctions in the history of theoretical thought. He divided reality into two spheres: There is an ultimate, metaphysical sphere, which he called the noumenal realm, which he distinguished from the lesser realm that he named the phenomenal realm.

The phenomenal realm is basically the world of phenomena that we can observe by our senses and measure, analyze, systematize, predict, manipulate through scientific inquiry and practice. So, humans with their mind and sense can come to a fairly meaningful understanding of the reality of this phenomenal world.

But, he claimed, that other world, the transcendental (noumenal) world that goes above and beyond physics—the realm of metaphysics, which we would call the realm of the supernatural—is beyond our ability to penetrate. Kant said that there are three things located in the noumenal world: God, the self, and the “thing-in-itself.” Of course, we cannot enter here into an analysis of some of the philosophical concepts employed by Kant and we do not need do so.

Suffice it to say that a serious problem arose in the Christian intellectual circles with Kant’s assertion that God is beyond human ability to know anything about: He insisted that we simply cannot at all talk about God’s existence or His attributes. In other words, according to Kant, there is no way to get from the phenomenal realm to the noumenal realm. There is an unbridgeable chasm between these two worlds (“Lessing’s ditch”).

Kant further engaged in a thoroughgoing criticism of the classical arguments (proofs) for the existence of God. These arguments were glue in the medieval university, ensuring

that theology preserved its status of a queen among all sciences and that philosophy served as her handmaiden. But in Kant’s *Critique*, the queen was not only dethroned but basically sent off into exile. Human reason, and not divine revelation, is the final court of appeal in all questions about the nature of reality and the only true moral compass for ethical conduct. Kant has thus become the chief proponent of human moral autonomy.

Let us make crystal clear at this juncture that Kant’s philosophical criticism has not shaken one bit the spiritual foundations of the true Bible-believing Christians. Kant’s criticism has affected primarily those Christians in intellectual circles who have relied on human reason for their religious beliefs assuming that natural reason can infer certain truths about the true God without the aid of faith and without spiritual regeneration.

#### AFTER KANT—RELATIVISM AND PLURALISM

Yet, the influence of Kant in the history of philosophy and in the history of human thought and Western civilization in general, cannot be overstated. After Kant, the whole host of philosophies was spawned—including dialectical materialism (Marxism), humanism, logical positivism, existentialism, relativism, pluralism, secularism, and postmodernism. . . . All these “ism-s” have their distinctive features, but all of them have one thing in common: Skepticism with respect to the supernatural and particularly to God. All of them share the common premise of phenomenology that was manifested ultimately in metaphysical naturalism, the philosophical worldview that supremely rules in the contemporary scientific community (scientific naturalism).

If we take God out of the equation, there is no way that humans can come to ultimate reality. You must be satisfied with “here” and “now.” Consequently, we can speak of “truths” but not of “truth,” “purposes” but no “purpose,” “existences” but no “essence,” “humans” but no “humanity.” Therefore, what emerged after Kant was a form of relativism. In the history of Western

theoretical thought every period of skepticism was followed by some form of relativism and its twin sister—pluralism. If there is no absolute truth, if all truth is relative, then all truths are equally valid or invalid. Pluralism is that philosophy that says there is no absolute truth but only plural truths. Therefore, no one has the right to claim an exclusive truth.

To claim an exclusive, absolute truth in the modern age means to be guilty of the most “politically” incorrect sin, the sin of “narrow-mindedness.” The supreme virtue of relativism and pluralism is rather “broad-mindedness.” It is truly tragic that this concept has crept in even among some Christian communities. We hear about evangelical Christians who identify themselves as “broadly evangelical.” Such a qualification of a Christian is an oxymoron, since such a Christian is a “pretend-Christian.” If you are a Christian and think like a Christian, and believe as a Christian, then the false supposition is that you are by definition a narrow-thinking person, which by today’s cultural standards is a vice. But by the measurement of the incarnation of Truth and the perfect Son of God, it is a virtue.

#### A CASE IN POINT

To illustrate the consequences of different worldviews for everyday life, let us fast-forward to our contemporary society and view one of the morally and socially divisive issues through the lenses of two opposing philosophies—the humanistic and the biblical worldviews.

For several years, the city of San Francisco, California, allowed unrestricted public nudity. Somehow, due to the proliferation of public nudity and boldness of some of its advocates, in November of 2012 the Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance banning public nudity in San Francisco without a permit. The ordinance was passed by a very narrow majority of 6-5 vote.

It is quite interesting to observe that in the debate over this controversial issue, one of the arguments against public nudity was that nudity is improper in public places due to sanitary reasons! Sitting nude on public benches or chairs in parks





***It is noteworthy that the first thing the fallen pair then did was to sew themselves aprons of fig leaves. That skimpy clothing was still insufficient to take away their fear and shame in God's holy presence. (Genesis 3:7, 10, 11.)***

and restaurants is not hygienic. It is truly puzzling that even those who opposed public nudity did not find any better argument in support of their position. This incident only shows the pervasiveness of the humanist worldview in our modern culture: The opponents of public nudity either do not believe in or do not have moral courage to uphold the biblical principles on human nakedness.

Those who advocate public nudity argue that the push for body acceptance and body freedom is in no way sexual or prurient. "Nudists believe that shame, fear, and the view that the human body is always sexual or obscene are ideas which are socially constructed and learned, just like any other prejudice or bigotry."<sup>4</sup>

The biblical worldview which is built into the foundations of Judeo-Christian system of values strongly affirms separation between the holy and profane as well as separation between humans and animals. The reasons to oppose public nudity derive from the biblical separation of life and death, nature and God, good and evil, man and woman, the holy and the profane.

If human beings walk around with their private parts uncovered, they are behaving in a manner indistinguishable from that of animals. One of the major differences between humans and animals is clothing. Clothing separates us from—and in the biblical view, elevates us above—the animal kingdom.

But how can humanists, who have invariably adopted scientific naturalism and evolutionary biology as their foundational view on human origin and nature, separate humans from animals? The humanist mind

finds this animal-human distinction unnecessary. Article after article in major liberal newspapers and magazines fascinate their readers with the new discoveries showing how much more alike humans and animals are than we ever thought.

A further reason to oppose public nudity on biblical grounds comes from another separation that God established in the beginning—between profane and sacred. The first thing Adam and Eve discovered after eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was that they were naked. And the first emotion they ever experienced after the fall in sin was shame over their nudity.

It is noteworthy that the first thing the fallen pair then did was to sew themselves aprons of fig leaves. That skimpy clothing was still insufficient to take away their fear and shame in God's holy presence. (Genesis 3:7, 10, 11.) But God graciously stepped in to take care of His wayward children. He made for Adam and Eve more suitable clothing: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). And if we move on through the biblical record we will find consistent teaching regarding human nakedness—God views it as improper. Whether this be the case of the nakedness of Noah (Genesis 9:20–24), or of the priestly garments (Exodus 28:42; 20:26) or the apparel of Christian women (1 Timothy 2:9)—the principle remains the same: public nakedness is wrong.

For a humanist, "sacred" in a proper sense of the word, does not exist. Sacred exists only if humans acknowledge the existence of a Supreme and holy Being we call God

and the infinite distance that exists between that Being and humans. Humanism denies the existence of such a Supreme Being. Humanism is therefore left only with the human mind and human reasoning capacity to determine what is right and wrong, good and evil.

And that is exactly the place at which the archdeceiver wanted the human race to be. Eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, take the place of God, assume God's prerogative to define the ultimate reality, and presumably you will become like God: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). As we know all too well, man and woman have not become divine, but they have become naked, crushed by the sense of shame and fear. It is truly a perplexing thought that the natural vestiges of shame due to public nakedness seem to have almost completely disappeared with many humans living in this generation. This tells us that the world as we have known it approaches its end. *R*

[In Part 2 of this article we wish to explore the consequences of the sexual revolution, including rampant divorce and the destruction of families, gender confusion, and acceptance of homosexuality. We will look into various sinful practices in the light of God's Word. In addition, we will call upon Christians to stand for moral absolutes in the face of widespread opposition.]

## References:

<sup>1</sup> DK80b1; also Plato's *Theaetetus* 152a 2–4.

<sup>2</sup> *Theaetetus* 152a 6–8.

<sup>3</sup> [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com), article on "Rationalism."

<sup>4</sup> Barcan, Ruth. *Nudity: A Cultural Anatomy*. Oxford, London: Berg, 2004, 179.





[Emphasis added throughout.]

# THE DOMINO EFFECT

**T**he Dark Ages, the scary Inquisition, and the torture chambers are long forgotten. Is it possible that the Papacy (which is, was, and will be for a while, the most powerful institution on Earth) will ever change the very essence of its intentions? H. E. Manning, in the book, *The Present Crisis of the Holy See*, says: "The Rome of the Middle Ages claimed universal monarchy. The Modern Church of Rome has abandoned nothing, retracted nothing."<sup>1</sup>

So, if Rome does not change, then who changes? Protestant America, correct? "Only editors imbued with the principles of the Reformation will insist that the happiness of mankind depends on the triumph of the Republican form of Government."<sup>2</sup>

Protestant Republicanism was defined by a society without kings and a religion without popes, but the conviction of Rome is: "Well

informed Catholics will bear in mind that the Pope is not only their spiritual father in Christ, *but also a crowned Head, a King with Temporal Possessions.*"<sup>3</sup>

So, it is impossible to blend these two very opposite views: Biblical Protestantism vs. the never-changing Roman hierarchy. In reality, one of the two has to resign its privileges, rights, and power in order to harmonize. Unfortunately, Protestantism is the one actor that takes a few steps back, accepting the loss, forsaking its Biblical foundation. Obviously by doing this, it yokes itself under the submission of slavery to Rome.

The immediate reality is pretty shocking because it impacts our present generation. This is not history anymore—it's the fulfilment of history in the present time. It is not the prophecy anymore, but the fulfilment of the prophecy in our times.

## ALTAR BOYS OF PROMINENCE?

Father D. S. Phelan, on June 27, 1912, produced a mega statement in *The Western Watchman*:

"Tell us we are Catholics first and Americans or Englishmen afterwards; of course we are. Tell us, in the conflict between the church and the civil government we take the side of the church; of course we do. Why, if the Government of the United States were at war with the church, we would say tomorrow, *To hell with the Government of the United States*; and if the church and all the governments of the world were at war, we would say: *To hell with all the governments of the world.*

"Why is it, that in this country, where we have only seven per cent of the population, the Catholic Church is so much feared? She is loved by all her children and feared by everybody. Why is it the Pope has such tremendous power? Why, the Pope is the ruler of the World.





All the emperors, all the kings, all the princes, **all the presidents of the world are as these altar boys of mine: THE POPE IS THE RULER OF THE WORLD.**"<sup>4</sup>

So, it happens that today, our world leaders are bowing down to the Pope, acting as altar boys, irrespective of his or her political or religious tie. A few examples of various individuals will be sufficient to reveal the facts:

Mrs. Hillary Clinton declared that: "You certainly don't need to be Catholic to be inspired by the humility and heart of the 'Holy Father,' Pope Francis. . .,"<sup>5</sup> while her countercandidate Donald Trump echoed similar language: "My administration will stand side by side with the American Catholics to promote the values we all share as Christians and Americans."

So, regardless of the political affiliations, both Democrats and Republicans have the same attitude and perspective when it comes to the Pope, and now more recently especially among younger Republicans, climate change—and ultimately this will culminate in the legalization of Sunday-keeping.

When we deal with two authorities, Caesar and Jesus, we cannot be neutral; we choose one or the other. It's like when you deal with LOVE, you give everything or nothing. So it is with submission to the highest authority in the universe. We cannot have Jesus, the King of the Universe and at the same time be bowing to the Pope, claiming to be the vicar of Christ, demanding the

same authority as the Creator of the universe. It's one or the other.

### WHAT'S THE HIDDEN AGENDA BEHIND THE CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE?

"We were created for work, but we were also made to rest. It's interesting that even secular studies have embraced the idea that we need to take a break and *relax* regularly (see these pieces in the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, and *Scientific American*). Rest is a creational principle—it is embedded in the molecules of our DNA."<sup>6</sup>

"According to a recent report published by The World Health Organization and The Climate and Clean Air Coalition, a voluntary partnership of governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses, scientific institutions and civil society organizations committed to protecting the climate and improving air quality through reducing short-lived climate pollutants, air pollution is responsible for an estimated seven million deaths annually, or one in eight premature deaths every year. . . .

"This suggests that the time may be right for [author, economist, and religious scholar Dr. David Smadja's] proposal. 'This frantic race to go faster and faster makes us forget essential things, such as loving ourselves, others and also our earth,' says Smadja, 'the result is a global disaster, whose ecological impact is more and more obvious. **A Sabbath for ourselves, our industry and our**

**environment is a corrective to these failures.** It is a transcendence of spiritual over material will lead to a better sharing of wealth and a measurable improvement to the climate crisis that can bring together populists, progressives and conservatives toward a common cause.' "<sup>7</sup>

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### THE WEAPON OF CHOICE: DOGMA SWITCHED TO SCIENCE

After being threatened to recant his theory that the earth orbits the sun, the Italian astronomer, Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) was said to have mumbled, "E pur si muove." "Albeit It does move." As a scientist, Galileo had been severely persecuted for challenging the Vatican's view that the sun revolved around the earth. Galileo's scientific findings to the contrary were not only taboo, in 1616 they caused him to be summoned by the Roman Inquisition on the charge of heresy, a crime typically punished with torture. It is not known whether Galileo really dared to mumble such a statement after his sentence was pronounced, since to express such a view would bring certain death at the hands of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Yet now it looks like Rome has adjusted its methods since then. **Today it is intensely using science to promote its religious agenda.** The Roman Church has launched a campaign to save the planet from global warming, by replacing the medieval dogmas of the Dark Ages with the scientific inquisition of the Informa-

tion Age. Four hundred years ago, they used dogma as a way to persecute science, and now are starting to use science as a way to persecute the Word of God and its followers. Let us consider a few convincing evidences in this sense:

Catholics are still in campaign (April 30, 2018) by Brian Roewe. "The Catholic Climate Covenant officially launched on April 25 the 'Catholics Are Still In' campaign to assemble church institutions behind a united Catholic Climate Declaration advocating for U.S. action. . . .

"Climate change is an urgent moral issue because it compromises the future of our common home, threatens human life and human dignity, and adds to the hardships already experienced by the poorest and most vulnerable people both at home and abroad. We teach that governments exist to protect and promote the common good, and that 'the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all,' referencing a passage from Pope Francis,' 2015 environmental encyclical 'Laudato Si,' on Care for Our Common Home."<sup>8</sup>

## SLIPPING INTO A RELIGIOUS FLAVOR

**"In respecting religious liberty and the common good of all, Christians should seek recognition of SUNDAYS and the Church's holy days as legal holidays."**<sup>9</sup>

"THE PARIS AGREEMENT on climate change is a triumph of diplomacy. At its best, diplomacy enables countries to find the common good, just as politics at its best enables a single society to find the common good. . . . By Jeffrey D. Sachs, December 13, 2015, 12:21 p.m."<sup>10</sup>

"Populist movements across Europe have begun to push back. Earlier this year, Poland restricted almost all Sunday shopping with a law backed by the Catholic Church and the Solidarity trade union. Hungary banned Sunday shopping in 2015 but repealed the measure a year later, while retaining 12 public holidays and the right of workers to take Sundays off."<sup>11</sup>

"Discussions about the Sabbath often center around moralistic laws and arguments over whether a person should be able to play cards or purchase liquor on Sundays. In this volume, popular author Walter Brueggemann writes that the Sabbath is not simply about keeping rules but rather about becoming a whole person and restoring a whole society."<sup>12</sup>

Regardless of whether it is the left or the right media, both branches intensively assist in the fulfillment of implementing the SUN-DAY as the day of rest to save the planet and reverse climate change. The general promotion of SUN-DAY rest is gradually becoming more prevalent and the climate change hysteria fits right in:

"And on the Seventh Day We Rested?"<sup>13</sup>; "Tightrope: Better take a break [keep Sunday], or you'll break down"<sup>14</sup>; "German Court Enforces Day of Rest"<sup>15</sup>; "Slow Sunday: The simple solution to global warming": "Using Sunday as a day of rest and renewal would be good for our personal health as well as the health of the planet"<sup>16</sup>; "Let's Make Sunday a Day of Rest. . ."<sup>17</sup>; "Keeping stores open on Sunday is not beneficial for society"<sup>18</sup>; "Pope: No Work Sundays Not Just for Faithful"<sup>19</sup>; "Arizona State Senator: Make Sunday Church Attendance Mandatory"<sup>20</sup>; "Sunday as a Mark of Christian Unity."<sup>21</sup>

The most prominent emblem of the Roman Church is the mystic SUN-DAY, the ancient pagan "venerable day of the sun" — the mark of sun worship. On the approximate day when the sun resurrects every year, around December 25<sup>th</sup>, is the day that Constantine the Great elevated on March 7, A.D. 321, as a commemoration of the ancient incarnation of the sun god, the Persians' Mithra, the god of the Babylonians and Egyptians regardless of whether it's called Baal, Bel, Murdoch, Marduk, Mitra, Ra, or whatever. SUNDAY is the emblem of the Roman church (Sun-day) of its mark, the symbol of her authority, as they freely claim: "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. . . . And the act is a MARK of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters."<sup>22</sup>

The transparency of the following declaration leaves no space for doubt in the fact that behind the huge emphasis on global warming and climate change is actually the desire of Rome to rule the world.

"Not the Creator of the Universe in Genesis 2:1–3, but the Catholic Church 'can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days.' "<sup>23</sup> "Sunday. . . is purely a creation of the Catholic Church."<sup>23A</sup>

## LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO BLAME

Former Governor of California, Jerry Brown, who is described as an evangelist for climate change, also blamed climate change deniers for the recent deadly fires in that state, **saying that they are responsible for the deaths of California residents.**<sup>24</sup>

So, as we can see, things are heading in such a direction that some are trying to find a scapegoat for the natural disasters of catastrophic proportions. The ice is melting, the world is feared to become a global desert, and at the end, SUN-DAY, Yes SUN-DAY, SUNDAY REVERENCE, **will be introduced to the world as the ultimate solution for saving Earth.**

On Sunday, the Democrats and Republicans can reconcile with each other; on SUNDAY, all religions will have to rest for the "cooling off the planet." On the DAY OF THE SUN, the world will unite to save the planet.

## LET'S REALIZE SOMETHING

There is nothing wrong with the intent to save the planet. This is very noble and moral. However, considering both sides of the coin, we have to address a few clarifying questions: If it does not matter what day of the week we take a break to rest, as long we save the planet, why don't we rest on the biblical seventh day of the week? The effect is the same, correct? If a Sunday law forces people to stop their secular activities only and strictly on Sunday, that by default shows the true nature of such subtlety in hiding the true purpose of its promoters. Pass-



ing a religious law undercover, or embedded in climate change, clearly provides the necessary support in reestablishing the supremacy of the Church of the Dark Ages.

Does the intent of this law consider the details of God's law? What if . . . God in His providence leads things in the opposite direction? Is there any one of these climate-change protagonists to make any remarks in reference to God or the Bible? Do they have any consideration or regard for Bible prophecy? What if there is one greater than the Pope? What if there is a Bible prophecy that speaks about the imminent destruction of our sinful world? What if the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is the very "wall" that opposes the globalists and their perspective of climate change? Does the MEDIA acknowledge that any one of these potential factors has a role to play in the destiny of our planet? Does the left or right wing of the MEDIA have any desire to inform the people about Christ's second coming?

Rome conceals its real intentions very well, but there is One above all that cannot be deceived nor mocked. God in His wisdom has an invisible line that cannot be bypassed. Multitudes may cry "peace and safety," but imminent destruction is gradually stirring up from above. The perfect storm is quiet, intense and devastating in nature and very precise. Maranatha, Behold, the Lord is coming!

## LOOKING INTO BIBLE PROPHECY

In the book of Daniel, chapter 11:44, 45, there is a powerful king controlling the world, being terrified by the news coming from the east and from the north. The Bible reader knows why the most powerful man on earth will be so concerned to destroy all those that are bringing up a different kind of perspective, supposedly for the salvation of our planet.

"But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many" (Daniel 11:44). The good news of the second coming of the Lord terrifies him. To put this in

the right perspective, we can read Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come." So, he (the Antichrist), shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to take away many. That is the agenda of the globalists, to exterminate from the face of the earth those that oppose one-world dictatorship. "Treason against the Roman government was the crime for which Jesus was condemned."<sup>25</sup>

So, history will be repeated with the followers of Jesus. As the Christians in Rome were unjustly accused by Nero for burning Rome—a crime that he himself committed, so will history be repeated with those who do not buy into the "Climate Change SUNDAY Worship."

This is why the people of God will be blamed for the calamities that will affect our land.

The people that will obey the word of God rather than the tradition of men will be perceived in the same way as the apostle Paul upon his arrival in Rome as the object of universal execration. Jesus mentioned about the fact that a persecut-

ing power will always have more of the character of the beast rather than the character of a lamb.

Do not forget the statement above with the words of Jerry Brown that he blamed climate change deniers for the deadly fires in his state.

## WHO DECIDES WHAT IS "GOOD"?

Matthew 19:17, Jesus explains, "there is none good but one, that is, God." And supposedly for that good, the Lord was crucified, since, **as Caiaphas, the head religious leader in his day presumed to his colleagues, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man [Christ] should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not"** (John 11:49, 50).

And today we hear much about "the common good." What is it? What is the magic behind this expression? The quest for the Common Good and Climate Change—Sunday Worship—are very much connected in the international political and religious arena. Let us look at some of the serious facts

**"Treason against the Roman government was the crime for which Jesus was condemned."** As the Christians in Rome were unjustly accused by Nero for burning Rome—a crime that he himself committed, so will history be repeated with those who do not buy into the "Climate Change SUNDAY Worship."



that may lead to the fulfilment of Bible prophecy:

"The Paris agreement on climate change is a triumph of diplomacy. At its best diplomacy enables countries to find the common good, just as the politics at its best enables a single society to find the common good."<sup>26</sup>

"Together, the countries of the world have agreed that, in minimizing risks of climate change, the national interest IS BEST SERVED BY PURSUING THE COMMON GOOD. I believe it is an example we could gainfully follow across the political agenda."<sup>27</sup>

"Only those who recognize that the common good concerns a man's soul can explain why we should legislate rest on Sunday: to honour the God who on that day rose. This is why we call Sunday the Lord's day."<sup>28</sup>

"By defending Sunday, one defends human freedom. . . . Sunday is the day of the Lord and man, a day which everyone must be able to be free—free for the family and free for God."<sup>29</sup>

**"Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is [for 'the common good'], that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:49, 50).**

"The death penalty can sometimes support THE COMMON GOOD. . . . 'Therefore If a man be dangerous and infectious to the community, on account of some sin, it is praiseworthy and advantageous that he be killed in order to safeguard the common good.'"<sup>30</sup>

Jesus clearly foretold: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

Somewhere in 1898, over 130 years ago, A.T. Jones, an American thinker, made a remarkable inquiry into the "Common Good" philosophy. Here is what he had to say about this fancy concept: "*What, on the other hand, is the 'common good'?* It is a very indefinite term. Each person defines it to suit himself. Governments define it to suit themselves. . . .

"*When we speak of natural rights it must be with limitations. Natural rights of the individual in the community are subordinate to the com-*

mon good. Sabbath laws have been proved to be for the common good.

"Natural rights are sought to be curtailed in the interests of Sundays laws." Now we understand what A.T. Jones clarified in regard to the "common good" definition when he said: "Sunday laws are a denial of natural rights, and this is instinctively recognized by the advocates of such laws in the pleas made for their enactment."<sup>31</sup>

So, here we have a clear example of how our fundamental rights to freedom and liberty can easily be infringed upon. When politicians and religious leaders joined the cause of "common good," to set a uniform individual and social behavior, the end of a free society is near. Around the year 1990, author Malachi Martin, after writing the book, *The Keys of This Blood*, was praised by *The Dallas Morning News* as being a prophet, stating that in biblical times they would have called him a prophet. In his book Martin describes very well the Vatican's intention to control the world through the same scenario:

"Willing or not, ready or not, we are all in an all-out, no-holds-barred, three-way global competition. Most of us are not competitors, however. We are the stakes. For the competition is about who will establish the first one-world system of government that has ever existed in the society of nations. It is about who will hold and wield the dual power of authority and control over each of us as individuals and over all of us together as a community. . . . No holds are barred because, once the competition has been decided, the world and all that's in it—our way of life as individuals and as citizens of the nations; our families and our jobs; our trade and commerce and money; our educational systems and our religions and our cultures; even the badges of our natural identity, which most of us have always taken for granted all will have been powerfully and radically altered forever. No one can be exempted from its effects. No sector of our lives will remain untouched."<sup>32</sup>

When we speak of "the common good," in reality, we are talking about

a very communistic view of leveling the conscience of individuals. No freedom of expression, no liberty.

"Populist movements across Europe have begun to push back. Earlier this year, Poland restricted almost all Sunday shopping with a law backed by the Catholic Church and the Solidarity trade union."<sup>33</sup>

"For this reason, THE SABBATH [they are actually referring to Sunday] IS THE HEART OF ALL SOCIAL LEGISLATION." Christian politics begins with the Sabbath. Our task is to secure it in law—not as a privilege for the powerful, but a right enjoyed by all."<sup>33</sup>

## CHURCH AND STATE COMINGLED

The guideline of the international policy of the New World Order was obstructed by the still-surviving mentality of many Christian Bible believers—and as this Protestant mentality is removed from society today, the way to implementing a Global policy is open. In fact, Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State, on page 20 of his book, *World Order*, confirms the natural course of action towards the largest dictatorship ever known to humanity:

"The Protestant reformation destroyed the concept of a world order sustained by the 'two swords' of PAPACY and EMPIRE."<sup>34</sup>

One of the greatest, most translated authors of all times, Ellen G. White—who lived more than half a century before Malachi Martin—wrote:

**"Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are working in disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists."**<sup>35</sup>

It is amazing to see these premonitions fulfilled in our times. Just look at the facts: *The Wall Street Journal*, on August 6, 2015, confirms the fulfillment of these words:

"The Religion of Climate Change: Lending the power of the pulpit to the cause of environmental politics."<sup>36</sup> The author continues opening our eyes with more profoundness in the light of our subject:



"[Papal] doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. . . . In free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance."<sup>37</sup>

With prophetic accuracy, the words of Ellen G. White were fulfilled in the declaration of Pope Francis: "Sundays are a gift from God—don't ruin it."<sup>38</sup>

As H. E. Manning said and we repeat: "The Rome of the Middle Ages claimed universal monarchy. The Modern Church of Rome has abandoned nothing, retracted nothing."<sup>39</sup> That is why the following statement makes perfect sense in the mindset of the Roman tradition: "The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine Mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday."<sup>39</sup> Not the Creator of the universe, in Genesis 2:1–3—but the Catholic Church "can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days."<sup>40</sup>

The result of such an attitude will lead people out from under the shield of God—and the results will be inevitable: "As men depart further and further from God, Satan is permitted to have power over the children of disobedience. He hurls destruction among men. There is calamity by land and sea. Property and life are destroyed by fire and flood. Satan resolves to charge this upon those who refuse to bow to the idol which he has set up. His agents point to Seventh-day Adventists as the cause of the trouble. 'These people stand out in defiance of law,' they say. 'They desecrate Sunday. Were they compelled to obey the law for Sunday observance, there would be a cessation of these terrible judgments.'<sup>41</sup>

"Satan puts his interpretation upon events, and they [leading men] think, as he would have them, that the calamities which fill the land are a result of Sunday-breaking. Thinking to appease the wrath of God, these influential men make laws enforcing Sunday

observance. They think that by exalting this false rest-day higher, and still higher, compelling obedience to the Sunday law, the spurious sabbath, they are doing God service. **Those who honor God by observing the true Sabbath are looked upon as disloyal to God, when it is really those who thus regard them who are themselves disloyal, because they are trampling under foot the Sabbath originated in Eden.**"<sup>42</sup>

## REALITY IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

In reality, the true people of God are elevating His true Sabbath that originated in the garden of Eden as the memorial of creation, the crown of the birth of human family, the symbol of salvation, and the Sabbath on which Jesus rested in His mission on Earth, as well as the day of deliverance on which so many of the miracles of Jesus were performed, with the intent to blend the spiritual healing of the sinner with the day on which his/her deliverance occurred. The Sabbath and Jesus will forever be preserved in the mind of the repentant sinner. Not a few of the theologians of the church hierarchy acknowledge that: "The Adventists are the only body of Christians with the Bible as their teacher, who can find no warrant in its pages for the change of day from the seventh to the first. Hence their appellation, 'Seventh-day Adventists.'<sup>43</sup>

In opposition with the recognition Rome has to the Adventist Biblical consistency in regard to the Sabbath day, Louis-Gaston Ségur, in his *"Plain Talk about the Protestantism of To-Day,"* London, 1874, displays the inconsistent pretention of Protestants in regard to their Bible-faith-based claim: "Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is a homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the (Catholic) Church."<sup>44</sup>

The Roman Church does indeed have a real perception about the fact that most of her beliefs are non-Biblical and very antagonistic in nature. Rome purposefully has chosen to go

against the Scripture and against the God of the Bible in a very conscientious manner. Her moves and actions for the establishment of papal supremacy in the world are neither blind nor accidental, but rather are very keenly and meticulously designed.

## A LESSON FROM THE PROPHET ELIJAH

In his day, Elijah was a solitary man compelled to face an entire nation. The same system of Sunday worship, very similar in practice and nature to the Roman empire religion of today, was dragging the Israelites away from worshipping God on the Sabbath day to worshipping Baal on the day of the sun. This conflict between Baal and the God of Israel, between Sunday worship and Sabbath worship, transpired in a very similar fashion to the climate change cry of today's society. In the time of Elijah, global warming was tearing the country apart. **The common good made** Jezebel to incriminate Elijah the prophet of God. The common good made the nation to persecute the innocent one, Elijah. What a similarity—the same history in futuristic perspective! We, too, are living in the time of the Elijah message (see Malachi 4:5) with the same reasoning and the same attitude towards the people of God—and with the same results. Let us review the Bible verses and put them in today's perspective:

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings 18:17, 18).

Elijah was one man persecuted by the nation. He was blamed for the climate change in his time, he was blamed for the global warming of his time and we as the people of God will be blamed for the climate change and global warming of today. Elijah was doing the "right math"—one man plus God equals a majority, so likewise the people

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of God in modern times will be determined to respect the same reasoning, one man plus God equals a majority.

In the showdown of supremacy of the true Creator of heaven and earth in the days of Elijah, the prophet gave an open challenge: "Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21).

So, it will be today. The same message will be delivered by the people of God in regard to the climate change dilemma: **How long halt you between two opinions? If the Lord Jesus is God, then follow Christ. If the Pope is god, then follow him. If the keeping of SUNDAY will improve the climate, then Rome is right. But if compulsory Sunday legislation will worsen the climate, then the Bible is, as always, true. God will accept the challenge.**

"The Pope is the ruler of this world," they may claim, but the true God of the universe will intervene; Jesus will come and put an end to the world's misery and sin, we the people that wander as pilgrims and strangers will have to pass the test of time. The Scapegoat is on the way; the One that became sin for

humanity is coming to deliver His own. Jesus, yes, Jesus is going to rescue the people of God from the hands of the Antichrist. The equation is simple: Which choice will we make? The Sabbath of the Bible or the DAY OF THE SUN (SUNDAY), the law of God or the tradition of man? The Lord Jesus or the Pope? The next step in the order of events is a repeat of the declaration of Caiaphas, to "consider that it is expedient for us [i.e., for 'the common good'], that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50).

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). *R*

[To be continued.]

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# ARE PLANS FOR “THE COMMON GOOD” ALWAYS GOOD?

## FAITH BEYOND THE CLUTCHES OF THE SOCIALIST AGENDA

It was a different world when I was born in west Romania in the town of Simleu-Silvaniei, today referred to as a small administrative center of three villages. As a young child, I was happy and thankful not to have been born in a foreign country. Being the eldest son, until the age of 9, I really enjoyed working hard in the garden and taking care of the cows, sheep, and horses.

Then things became very difficult when the Communists came and took away most of the animals. They went to everyone's home, forcefully seized their agricultural implements and confiscated their land. People were brainwashed to give their land to them for a very small sum of money for their labor on what had been their own land. (The people received nothing for the land.)

By the time I was 10, all that was left was our garden space of about 2-3 acres. We still had this only because my father did not give the land to the collective; he gave it to another branch of the government

in exchange for a job. Our farm outside of the city had been taken away. They let us keep the one-acre vineyard.

If you did not sign the paper to give up the land, they would torture you to death, literally. It was supposedly everybody's land now, but it actually had been usurped for the collective (an exclusive branch of the Communist government). This might have seemed fine for the collective, but not for the working people.

If you had a farm, you could grow your food, but now since it all belonged to the collective, you would only get a sack of wheat, corn, and potatoes, for example—instead of the whole field that you had once owned and still worked.

### WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Knowing there was always a future to plan for, my parents were told by the teachers that I had the brain of a doctor or an engineer and that they should urge me to pursue one of those two goals. Success

would require faith; my mother was of the Pentecostal religion (but was not one to speak in tongues) and my father was Orthodox.

When I was 10 years old, a neighbor came and told my mother about the Sabbath from the Bible. But she resisted against it.

The idea then came to her to ask her father about all the Bible verses that might say that Sunday was the holy, church day. He was an elder in the Pentecostal church and she hoped that by Monday she would be able to tell the neighbor about any biblical change in God's holy Sabbath.

But my grandfather explained to my mother, "Honey, there's no such verse in the Bible." That was a big blow to my mother's heart. She was shocked and surprised.

"Why, then, do we go to church on Sunday?" she asked.

His answer was, "Because there's no church here that keeps Saturday. If there were, I would go there."

When the neighbor came back, Mom had no proof for Sunday.

Beginning in June, my mother went to no church for about 6

months. She felt upset at the Pentecostals and the Orthodox for not knowing this—and upset at the Adventists for not telling everybody.

Then, on December 24, a voice came to her and said, “You need to go to church now.”

“Who is there?” she asked.

No answer.

A few minutes later the same thing happened again. But she couldn’t see anyone. While she was preparing food for Christmas, the voice came again a third time and said, “You need to go to church. Enough of your stubbornness.” She asked, “Which church?” . . . No answer.

## TIME TO FIND THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

At this time, my mother was already acquainted with Alex Morlocan, a Seventh Day Adventist Reformer. He had not always been a churchgoer. For a while he had been a judge for the court in another city—but as a judge, he had been under a lot of stress and, as a result, had developed a severe stomach ulcer. The pain was so bad, he finally had to retire, so he went back home to our city. When he arrived home, he found that his sister had married someone from the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement. They studied with him and he quickly accepted the message. His mother and sister became Reformers as well.

Knowing Alex Morlocan in the neighborhood, my mother sent me to go to his home to invite him for Christmas carols that night. I ran. When I arrived, the people there were having evening worship. The door was open, so I entered the house. They were all standing, singing.

Mother had taught me how to pray, but I wasn’t invited to do that, so I just gave them the message:

“My mother is inviting you to our home for Christmas carols.”

“Okay, we’ll be there as soon as we can.”

When I arrived back home, my mother told me quickly to switch the wine she had to grape juice, and we all sat around the table and had cakes, cookies, and juice.

“Now tell us why you invited us,” said Alex Morlocan.

“My neighbor came with the Bible and told me about the Sabbath. I want to hear what you have to say.”

So, Mom soon became a Sabbathkeeper who no longer consumed meat nor alcohol, but still cooked for my father whatever he wanted. I became a Sabbathkeeper also.

## A TURNING POINT

One night when I was 17 years old, our family was holding a big Christmas party. I usually helped out with the hospitality at such gatherings and, as expected, there was a lot of wine, flesh food, and laughter in the house.

But something spoke to my heart on this occasion. Quietly slipping away from the crowd, I invited my brother to join me in the barn. There we knelt down before the Lord and together made a pledge not to drink wine or eat meat anymore, and not to go to the movies. (Before the movies, we used to drink rum and liquor and then after the movies would usually have some beer.)

Our vegetarian food was hidden from my father until the age of 20 when I eventually moved out.

During this period, I went to church with my mother. Our Adventist neighbors had relatives in the Reform and they heard that I was going to the Reform church. My wife’s uncle was in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where they invited me to their church to learn how to play musical instruments for free.

But in that church, I noticed they were celebrating holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and the other national holidays which I didn’t like doing. In my inner heart, I was changing. Parties now began to disgust me.

At the age of 20, as it was required by law, I went into the army. At 21, I came home and began working—at least until the Securitate (the secret police agency of the Socialist Republic of Romania) came to visit me to say that if I did not start working on Sabbath, I would be fired from my job.

It was a crisis, so I had to find a new job far away. Yet with God’s help, within a short time I was making more money than the president of the company. But during this period, pressure was also put on me several times to become a member

of the Communist party by attending their meetings—which I had to refuse every time, explaining that those who were Communist party members were frequently late to work in the morning, late from lunch break and returned with alcohol on their breath, and they would leave a mess in the locker room. Therefore, I asked, “Are these the habits you want me to learn at those meetings?” So, they would give me peace again for a while.

Then, at the age of 22, I was baptized—and at 23, I married my wife, Margaret, the daughter of Alex Morlocan, the one who had come to share with me the history of the Sabbath.

My wife and I have had many wonderful experiences together—and some challenging ones. Worshiping with the believers on the Sabbath day and helping to print and deliver the *Sabbath Bible Lessons* to souls who cherished the truth was not easy in Romania in the 1970’s under the oppressive Ceaușescu regime. Besides the confiscation of Bibles and hymn books, and the offerings, it put one’s liberty and even life at risk. On numerous occasions we found ourselves in grave danger because of our faith.

## SEARCH AND SEIZURE

One time we were caught singing songs for Sabbath school in the living room of a fellow believer. This was on the second floor of a 3-story building, and someone had left the main doors of the hallway unlocked and, the secret police with guns in their hands barged into the apartment where we were worshiping and demanded of us, “Hands up! Don’t move!” They then collected the ID’s from everybody, then the Bibles, hymn books, and Sabbath school lessons, and then wrote down our names and took us all to the police station. There they wrote up a report of whom they had found and everything that was there and took each one of us to our homes, one by one, for a search. There they would confiscate all of our religious books at home and fine 1,000 lei (Romanian currency) to every individual.

Meanwhile, on the 3rd floor of that apartment building, there was a couple with two young children





***Despite all these trials, the word of the Lord mightily prevailed in our behalf during those years and I can testify of our God that He indeed sustains and protects His people that trust in Him, whatever the circumstances.***

sick at home, so that family had not come to the meeting. Although they had not been there, the police went to search their apartment anyway. The officers burst into their home and asked why they weren't in the church meeting. The reason had been because their children were sick that day, so they weren't fined. But their religious books were confiscated.

The police then asked this family, "Why aren't you working today?"

"Because we own our own business. We work 6 days and keep the Sabbath day holy."

"What kind of business?"

"We are photographers."

"Do you have a business license?"

"Yes, we do."

"Can I see it?"

"Sure, here it is," handing the license to the officer.

The officer kept it and said, "You'll not see this anymore."

"Why? What have we done wrong? You can't just take our license away!"

The police said nothing; they just walked out and left the family without their business license.

Now, as my wife and I were waiting at the police station to be taken home for our search, the sister who had lost the business license came to the police station with a crying baby in her arms, appealing to the officers:

"Please give us our license back because we have to go to the field tomorrow to deliver the photographs we made last week so that we can have money to feed our children."

While the officers were distracted, I quietly managed to whisper to her, "Helen, come here."

The officer who was busy making other reports didn't hear me, so I was able to quietly give Helen the key to our apartment.

"Get two suitcases from the garage and remove all the religious books from the bookshelves and take them away," I whispered.

So she did. She forgot about her license for now, her income, and her hungry children, taking the key. She hurried off to hide away the books in the suitcases but couldn't carry the suitcases with the baby in her arms.

The landlord saw what was happening. So, our sister asked if she could leave the suitcases somewhere since she couldn't carry them with the baby in her arms.

The landlord cried, "No! I don't know who you are and what you're doing and I don't want to be part of it, so I'm going to call the police on you!"

So, Helen was obliged to carry the suitcases and the baby out to the hills, where she quietly waited, sitting on the suitcases under the shade of a tree.

When we arrived back at our apartment with the secret police, the landlord began to excitedly tell us the story about the suitcases, but I quietly signaled to her to be silent, so she suddenly stopped talking. The secret police did their search and were able to find an old Bible lesson from 1925—so they still fined both me and my wife 1000 lei each.

The police officers had also noticed that the landlord had abruptly stopped telling her story about the suitcases for no apparent reason, so they decided to find out why. The next day, on Sunday morning, as I was able to see out the window

from my workplace, the officers stealthily came on foot to the landlord's house and quietly tapped on her window to have a talk with her. Later, that evening, the landlord came and gave us 2 weeks to move out of our apartment.

So, we moved out, but the church meeting still continued as before on the next Sabbath. Even without Bibles, hymn books, or lesson books, we all worshipped the Lord together from memory. But by God's grace, since my books in the two suitcases had been spared, we were soon able to use those. If we had ever been caught with those beautiful, brand new books, we would have been tortured.

Any such system of controlling people and oppressing their religious faith is definitely not of God. We were visited by secret police officers many times afterwards until, by the Lord's providence, we moved away, eventually emigrating to the United States.

## CONCLUSION

Despite all these trials, the word of the Lord mightily prevailed in our behalf during those years and I can testify of our God that He indeed sustains and protects His people that trust in Him—whatever the circumstances—and I can declare wholeheartedly with the psalmist: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalm 116:7-9). Amen! *R*



# The Real Reason

Compiled from the writings of  
E. G. White

What is the real reason why  
so many natural disasters  
are occurring — both now  
and in the future?

“As I hear of the terrible calamities that from week to week are taking place in the world, I ask myself, What do these things mean? Are they permitted to come to arouse those who are transgressing the law of God? The most awful disasters, by fire and flood, are following one another in quick succession. The judgments of God are in the land. They speak in solemn warning, saying, ‘Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.’ (Matthew 24:44).”<sup>1</sup>

“A spirit of lawlessness pervades every land, and is especially manifest in the great cities of the earth. The sin and crime to be seen in our cities is appalling. God cannot forbear much longer. Already His judgments are beginning to fall on some places, and soon His signal displeasure will be felt in other places.”<sup>2</sup>

“The judgments of God are in the land. Calamities are following one another in quick succession. Shall we allow these things to be, without telling people what they mean, and how to escape the destruction soon to come upon all the world? Shall we







allow men and women to go down into the darkness without having been told how to gain a preparation for the future life?"<sup>3</sup>

"Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. When he was suffered to afflict Job, how quickly flocks and herds, servants, houses, children, were swept away, one trouble succeeding another as in a moment. It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them.

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. **In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and**

**terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous.** Destruction will be upon both man and beast. 'The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant' (Isaiah 24:4, 5).

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity."<sup>4</sup> R

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# MEMORIES ABOUT THE FUTURE: LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

**H**ow can we remember something that hasn't happened yet—that's still in the future? The wise man explains: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

One of those things that's the same in the past as well as the future is the issue of accountability. We like to hold others accountable for their actions, but our human nature prefers to evade it when it comes to ourselves.

Accountability tends to catch us off guard. Typically, we don't expect a day of reckoning to come. Our human nature reasons that surely someone else will be the one to get caught or suffer the consequences of some wrongdoing—never me. I won't be the one, we tend to assume.

But is that what our Creator teaches?

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). That includes every one of us, for "all have sinned,

and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Yes, we all are accountable for our actions, as the Scripture teaches: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Ecclesiastes 11:9). "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). So, yes, our accountability before our Maker is inevitable. Yet what blessed assurance does the next verse in Hebrews provide? "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Verse 28).

Christ was offered to bear our sins—and the wonderful news is that He will come again without sin unto salvation. How likely are we to be ready for His appearing? Will most people greet Him gladly? What do examples from Bible history tell us?

## THE DAYS OF NOAH

Jesus has informed us what the world will be like when He returns: "As the days of Noe [Noah] were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37).

"[Christ] refers to Noah as a literal person who lived; He refers to the Flood as a fact in history; He shows the specification of that generation, as characteristic of this age."<sup>1</sup>

The Lord goes on to explain what life was like before the great Flood, that mammoth catastrophe: "In the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Verses 38, 39).

What were the days of Noah ("Noe") like? We just read that people were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage. What's wrong with that? After all, we do



need to eat and drink in order to live. Nothing wrong with that. But, keep in mind, we should not live in order to eat and drink! Such a twisted priority reveals a lack of understanding of God's great and noble plan not only for our nourishment but even for our very existence.

**In the days of Noah, "the appetite was indulged at the expense of health and reason. This constant indulgence of their sinful desires corrupted them and defiled the earth under them. The same evils intensified exist in our world today.** Men are blind to reason and the result of indulging perverted appetite. The world is the god of ninetenths of professed Christians."<sup>2</sup>

The apostle Paul tearfully refers to those who are actually "the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Philippians 3:18, 19). Does that sound like a common trend today?

And what's wrong with marrying and giving in marriage? Certainly marriage is not a sin. In fact, we are told in Scripture that "marriage is honourable in all" (Hebrews 13:4). Yet we think of the many sad cases where glamorous weddings are performed without any regard whatsoever to the great plan of God for the best, noblest—and above all—eternal interests of those involved.

**"Very plainly Christ saw what the condition of society would be in the future. He saw that self-indulgence would control men and women. What of the marriage relation today? Is it not perverted and defiled, made even as it was in Noah's day? Divorce after divorce is recorded in the daily papers. This is the marriage of which Christ speaks when He says that before the flood they were "marrying and giving in marriage."<sup>3</sup>**

Recent statistics in the United States show that around half of marriages end in divorce—and interestingly enough, that rate is actually going down. Believe it or not, there have been fewer divorces in recent years than before. But why? Sadly, in reality it's likely because fewer people are even bothering to try to make a lifelong commitment of

marriage in their intimate relationships. That's how lax the society has become with regard to this sacred institution established by our loving Creator in the beginning!

## ATTITUDES BEFORE THE FLOOD

We were reminded above about the priorities, passions, and fascinations of people before the earth was destroyed by the great Flood in Noah's time. What else should we recall about that time? "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Does that sound like our day?

"In Noah's day all men were not in the fullest sense heathen idolaters. Many had a knowledge of God and His law, but in their grand works of sculpture, in the works of art, they professed to be honoring God by representing Him in the works of their own hands in the similitudes which they had made of God. These works of art were worshiped as God and the Creator was forgotten. . . .

"Noah to them was regarded as a fanatic, and they did not humble their hearts before God, but continued their disobedience and wickedness the same as if God had not spoken to them through Noah. But **Noah stood like a rock amidst the tempest. He was surrounded with every species of wickedness and moral corruption; yet his faith wavered not.** Undaunted he stood, the faithful messenger of God amid the scoffs and jeers of the world, an unbending witness for God. His meekness and his righteousness was shining brightly in contrast to the revolting crimes, intrigue and violence continually practiced. Connection with God made him strong in the strength of infinite power, while his solemn warning voice for one hundred and twenty years fell upon the ears of the inhabitants of that generation in regard to events, which, as far as human wisdom was concerned, would be impossible to transpire."<sup>4</sup>

Did the people of Noah's day think there was cause for concern as he warned them about the Flood?

What did the scientists say? After all, rain as we have experienced it for thousands of years now, had never yet occurred in their day. Remember, at that time, "the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:5, 6).

"The men of Noah's time, in their philosophy and worldly wisdom, thought God could not destroy the world with a flood, for the waters of the ocean could not be sufficient for this. But God made the philosophy and science of men foolishness when the time had fully come to execute His word. The inspired pen describes the earth as standing out of the water and in the water. God had His weapons concealed in the bowels of the earth to compass her destruction. And when the great men and the wise men had reasoned before the world of the impossibility of its destruction by water, and the fears of the people were quieted, and all regarded Noah's prophecy as the veriest delusion, and looked upon Noah as a crazy fanatic, God's time had come."<sup>5</sup>

**Noah had had a faith that worked. Over the course of 120 years, he had constructed a massive boat on dry land as he pleaded with the people in warning about the imminent Flood.** Every blow of the hammer was a sermon in itself. Every piece of timber on the ark was closely fitted, and every seam covered with pitch to withstand the impending angry waters. All that the faithful patriarch could do was done—but God alone was the only One who would be able to protect through His mighty power that lone vessel upon the heaving billows so soon to roar.

Finally, the Lord "hid Noah and his family in the ark, and the rain began to descend, slowly at first; the jeers and scoffings did not cease for a time, but soon the waters from heaven united with the waters of the great deep; the waters under the earth burst through the earth's surface, and the windows of heaven were opened, and man with all his philosophy and so-called science, finds that he had not been able in his worldly

wisdom to comprehend God. He found too late that his wisdom was foolishness; that the Lawgiver is greater than the laws of nature. The hand of omnipotence is at no loss for ways and means to accomplish His purposes. He could reach into the bowels of the earth and call forth His weapons, waters there concealed, to aid in the destruction of the corrupt inhabitants of the old world. But let us all bear in mind that those who perished in that awful judgment had an offer of escape.”<sup>6</sup>

## WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

How is it with us today? Do people still put the theories and conjectures of science above a plain “Thus Saith the Lord”? Do we underestimate the omnipotence of our Creator and Sustainer? How proud are we of our scientific knowledge? This is not an attempt to downgrade legitimate science pursued in the fear of God, but simply to remind us of our frailty and consider how primitive and faulty our conclusions often prove to be.

Jesus is coming again—and yes, in preparing to meet Him, we are accountable for our words, thoughts, and actions—and for sure, we really need His help as our Advocate.

“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh” (Matthew 24:42–44).

“The . . . reasoning will be heard today from worldly wise-men, from the unfaithful watchmen in the pulpits, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming, all things remain as they were from the beginning. You have no need to be alarmed, there is to be a thousand years of temporal millennium before Christ will come. All the world will be converted. Peace, peace; you should pay no regard to these fanatics, who are only alarmists.’ The world generally will despise prophecy and abuse those who speak to them in words of God, rebuking their sins. . . .

“As the contemporaries of Noah laughed to scorn that which they termed fear and superstition in the preacher of righteousness, so will the solemn messages of warning be ridiculed in our day.”<sup>7</sup>

Likewise, “there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:3–7).

So, when you have to face scoffers today, just keep in mind that their scoffing itself is a fulfillment of this prophecy.

Let us instead have the fear of the Lord as those “when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Peter 3:20–22).

Think of the privilege that was Noah’s! Amid all the turmoil of a horribly wicked generation—a generation so extremely corrupt and debased that the loving Creator was compelled to destroy it, Noah “found grace in the eyes of the Lord,” he “walked with God,” and the Lord established His covenant with Him, and “remembered Noah” (Genesis 6:8, 9, 18; 8:1). As for Noah, “according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Genesis 6:22).

What a beautiful, loving relationship was this! Like Enoch, Noah, “walked with God.” Such a wonderful, awesome experience can be ours

*Jesus is coming again—and yes, in preparing to meet Him, we are accountable for our words, thoughts, and actions—and for sure, we really need His help as our Advocate.*



as well! By cherishing and dwelling on the Word of God, we can hear the voice of our Creator speaking to us and know that He is taking a keen interest in every aspect of our lives—through fire and flood—and helping us in our every need and concern. Yes, as the song says, what a Friend we have in Jesus! . . . What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer, abiding in the Vine, as poignantly illustrated in Scripture.

Such a life indeed brings to our hearts and minds powerful memories about the future—when the faithful few in our generation will have cultivated such a close, loving walk with the Lord and His Word as to reflect the image of Jesus fully and be preserved from great turmoil unto life eternal. May the omnipotent God of Heaven strengthen each one of us to be genuinely, courageously faithful and true to our calling as Noah was to his! *R*

## References:

- <sup>1</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, December 20, 1877.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, January 3, 1878.
- <sup>3</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 56.
- <sup>4</sup> *The Signs of the Times*, December 20, 1877.
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- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*





# CHARACTER TRANSFORMATION: WHEN AND HOW?

*[Emphasis added throughout.]*

**T**he wisest man in the Bible, king Solomon, wrote: “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

The New International Version puts it this way: “[Men] have gone in search of many schemes.”

In the beginning, God created man in a perfect way—physically, mentally, and morally. As a result of sin, human nature became corrupt. God’s image in man was replaced by Satan’s image. The whole nature was affected by sin, and the apostle Paul declares that “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). By transgression of God’s holy law, man, animals, and all of nature were negatively affected for the worse.

When man was brought into existence, he reflected the divine nature and divine character, even though his character wasn’t fully developed. However, when the first couple submitted themselves to the

deception of Satan, their character became corrupted.

“After their sin Adam and Eve were no longer to dwell in Eden. They earnestly entreated that they might remain in the home of their innocence and joy. They confessed that they had forfeited all right to that happy abode, but pledged themselves for the future to yield strict obedience to God. But they were told that **their nature had become depraved by sin**; they had lessened their strength to resist evil and had opened the way for Satan to gain more ready access to them. In their innocence they had yielded to temptation; and now, in a state of conscious guilt, they would have less power to maintain their integrity.”<sup>1</sup>

Sadly, this is the human condition to this day, and in fact, human nature has become increasingly worse over the centuries. This was the reason why God destroyed the world by the Flood, and, for this same reason, He will destroy this world by fire.

When we study human history from the Bible perspective, we see that in regard to his character, man is always the same. Israel is a very appropriate example.

From the time God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, in spite of His working powerful miracles day by day in behalf of His people during 40 years of their journey in the wilderness, they always manifested a spirit of ingratitude, rebellion, and unbelief.

At Mount Sinai, the people declared their good intention to obey all God’s instructions conveyed to them by Moses. However, only a few weeks later, they revealed that despite the best of human intentions, they could not change their character. At the end of their history, Israel as a nation eventually joined forces with the Romans to crucify their Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Today, we see that almost everything is changing. Technology in general is progressing in a marvelous way. We now have much better

forms of communication and better ways of transportation; medical science is progressing enormously, but sadly, man's character is the same.

As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13, the best knowledge without God's love cannot change man's character. On the contrary, the more knowledge we have, without love, the more dangerous we become. Modern war machinery, missiles, and other modern devices are the result of the progressive knowledge used to destroy humanity.

Even in the religious environment, people are trying to improve themselves, but the result is the same: It is impossible to change our character by our own efforts. Throughout religious history, man jumped from paganism to legalism, and from legalism to antinomianism, but with no positive results.

**Improvement is not the solution. We really need character change.**

Ellen White accurately summarized this thought, when she wrote: "The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature."<sup>2</sup>

In His night interview with Nicodemus, Christ said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

## HOW CAN WE BE BORN AGAIN?

We are born again when we believe in Jesus: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12, 13).

When we surrender our life to Jesus, we are justified by faith and are born again.

Justification and forgiveness are the same thing.

In the Lord's prayer we ask: "Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors."

Justification or forgiveness is the beginning of our character transformation.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we

have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; **because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us**" (Romans 5:1-5).

## HOW CAN WE CHANGE OUR WRONG TENDENCIES?

"God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. **It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.** David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me' (Psalm 51:10). And again he says, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us' (Chapter 103:12)."<sup>3</sup>

In order to enter heaven, we need a changed character. However, no human power can work this transformation.

"It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Job 14:4; Romans 8:7). Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness."<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, yes, our character needs to be—and can be—changed. Power is needed: "That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness."<sup>5</sup>

"Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart. But against these principles there is struggling an antagonistic power. The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a







***"God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin, but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart."***

bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ."<sup>6</sup>

When human beings are connected with Christ by faith, two divine agents work for the transformation of character: The Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

"By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. **The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus.** The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live 'by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven."<sup>7</sup>

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Ro-

mans 10:17). **The Scriptures are the great agency in the transformation of character.** Christ prayed, 'Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth' (John 17:17). If studied and obeyed, the word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart works by love to Christ, conforming us in body, soul, and spirit to His own image. Then God can use us to do His will. The power given us works from within outwardly, leading us to communicate to others the truth that has been communicated to us."<sup>8</sup>

"In all who submit to His power **the Spirit of God will consume sin.**"<sup>9</sup>

Our sinful actions are forgiven by God through Christ when we repent and confess them. Our sinful tendencies are put under control and destroyed when we keep our connection with Christ through constant communion with Him.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

"We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity [Ephesians 2:1-6 quoted.] . . .

"As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we cooperate with God in overcoming Satan's temptations. God works, and man works, that man may be one with Christ as Christ is one with God. Then we sit together with Christ in heavenly places. The mind rests with peace and assurance in Jesus.

"In His Word God reveals what He can do for human beings. He molds and fashions after the divine

similitude the characters of those who will wear His yoke. Through His grace they are made partakers of the divine nature, and are thus enabled to overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is God who gives us power to overcome. Those who hear His voice and obey His commandments are enabled to form righteous characters. Those who disregard His expressed commands will form characters like the propensities that they indulge."<sup>10</sup>

## WHEN DOES THIS TRANSFORMATION NEED TO OCCUR?

"Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers that God has given them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter."<sup>11</sup>

"It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment."<sup>12</sup>

"It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake, and make determined effort for symmetry of character. 'Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts' (Hebrews 4:7). We are in a most trying position, waiting, watching for our Lord's appearing. The world is in darkness. 'But ye, brethren,' says Paul, 'are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief' (1 Thessalonians 5:4)."<sup>13</sup>

God will finish the work He has begun.

## A PROPHECY FOR TODAY

Zechariah 3:1-4: "And [the Lord] showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of

the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, **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.**"

"Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement."<sup>14</sup>

**"As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, 'Take away the filthy garments' from them, and the encouraging words are spoken, 'Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. And the remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. 'A fair miter' is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests**



*It is now that we must awake, and make determined effort for symmetry of character....*

unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God' (Revelation 14:4, 5)."<sup>15</sup>

## NOW IS THE TIME

"We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold

today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. **If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time.** When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. **This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.**"<sup>16</sup> R

## References:

- <sup>1</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 61.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.
- <sup>3</sup> *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings*, p. 114.
- <sup>4</sup> *Steps to Christ*, p. 18.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>6</sup> *Education*, p. 29.
- <sup>7</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.
- <sup>8</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 100.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, p. 107.
- <sup>10</sup> *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 943.
- <sup>11</sup> *Child Guidance*, pp. 164, 165.
- <sup>12</sup> *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 342.
- <sup>13</sup> *Christian Experience and Teachings of E. G. White*, pp. 190, 191.
- <sup>14</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 472.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 475, 476.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 355.







## 1) Youth Convention and Sabbath School Seminar in Hungary

October 25–27, 2019.

## 2) Baptism in Sri Lanka

September 29, 2019.



## 3) Missionary Campaign—Guyana

September 21, 2019.

## 4) 4,800 Mindanao Quake Survivors Receive Aid in the Philippines

October 31, 2019.





- 5) **Baptism in Mabinay, Philippines**  
November 2, 2019.

- 6) **XVI Reorganization Session of the Spanish Field**  
December 16, 2019.

- 7) **Annual Visayan Field camp meeting—Philippines**  
October 20–26, 2019.



- 8) **Delegation Session, Southeast United States Field**  
November 3–5, 2019.

- 9) **Youth Sabbath in Munich, Germany**  
November 16, 17, 2019.

- 10) **Brethren Aid Taal Volcano Evacuees—the Philippines**  
January 19, 2020.





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MOVING? Please let us know.



# OBEYING THE RIGHT WAY



**H**ow important it is to do what we are supposed to do! To obey is something that faithful children love to do. It makes us happier and makes life better. That way we stay out of trouble. We know we should obey our parents and others whom they tell us to obey.

But what happens when someone else tells us to do something that is not right? Sometimes friends may try to get us to do something we know is wrong. When this happens, what should we do?

Peter had just done some amazing things in the name of Jesus and by His power. Many people came to him for help and they were healed of their sicknesses. But there was a leader who got very jealous over this and figured out a way to have Peter and the other apostles put in jail for doing those good deeds. But wait a minute—what the apostles had done was good, not bad! So it wasn't fair for them to have to go to jail, was it?

But how long did Peter and the other apostles have to stay in jail? Not very long! An angel from God came and opened the door of the prison and told them to go right back to the people and talk to them again about the good news about Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

The officers of the prison were surprised to see that Peter and the other apostles had been set free by a miracle from God. But they were afraid to try to put them back in the jail again since the people of the city would know that would not be fair to the apostles and they might get angry about it. So instead, the jealous leader tried to scare the apostles by talking to them in a bossy way:

“Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name [of Jesus]?” (Acts 5:28).

The answer of Peter and the other apostles was simple: “We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:29–32).

Yes, God is the real One we need to obey. When we obey what He says, He gives us His Holy Spirit and takes care of us. As we read God's Word and learn about what Jesus says, we will know how He wants us to obey. We will obey God's word through love to Jesus because He loved us first. That's the right way!

—By BHM