

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.
Psalm 25:14

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Defying Earth and Heaven

During His earthly ministry, Jesus had rebuked Israel and especially their rulers and priests. Matthew chapter twenty-three records some of the most stinging remarks. The Saviour accused the scribes and Pharisees of being self-centered, self-seeking, and self-loving. He accused these, evangelists of their day, of actually shutting up the kingdom of God and prohibiting people from entering in! Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees “hypocrites,” “fools,” “blind guides,” “serpents,” and a “generation of vipers” (snakes and sons of poisonous snakes)! Surely this was enough. But the hardest blow was yet to come.

As Jesus was preparing to depart out of the temple for the final time, just prior to the crucifixion, he stated what were the most cutting words of all. “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matthew 23:38) Just a few short days before this, He had quoted Isaiah 56:7 acknowledging the temple as His Father’s “house.” (Matthew 21:13) At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus had called the temple, “my Father’s house.” (John 2:16) Now, speaking to the scribes and Pharisees, He called the temple, “your house.” These words had struck terror to their hearts. The indictment was becoming clear to the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus was saying, “Your ship is not going through!”

What would have been your reaction? Would you have said, “Jesus has spoken the truth.” Would you have followed the truth? The history of the matter, as revealed here, and as replayed all down through the centuries, shows that the decision to follow the truth is not as easy as we might be inclined to think. National, spiritual pride, prevented many of the Jews from accepting Jesus.

When Jesus left the temple that fateful day, the religious leaders did what all religious leaders had done before them and have done to this day. Instead of accepting truth that would require a total dismantling of their system, the Jews declared Jesus to be an imposter! They even quoted Scripture to prove it! They deceived themselves by misinterpreting the words God had given through the prophet Jeremiah.

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

The Jews understood these words to be a promise of God’s unconditional eternal favor.

Prayer Request

As I write today, the world’s attention is focused on the war in Iraq. There is a great deal of debate over the validity of this encounter. One thing is certain, we as Christians must not fail to lift up in prayer all the people involved in the ongoing conflict. Not only should the physical safety of the people be our concern, but especially the spiritual concerns.

Also please, keep the labors of Brothers Lynnford Beachy and Howard Williams in your prayers. As this issue is going out, they are holding gospel meetings in India. The early reports are very encouraging, and we have included, on page nine of this issue, a composite of a few e-mail messages received to date.

Editor

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“These words the Jews applied to themselves. And because God had shown them so great favor and mercy, they flattered themselves that, notwithstanding their sins and iniquities, he

condition. Please carefully note the following statement for it was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

“The Jewish people cherished the

ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” (John 8:39-44)

The seventy weeks was fast drawing to a close. Soon the veil of the temple would be rent in two. Soon Stephen would be stoned, sealing the fate of a nation that once stood not only as the most powerful and prosperous nation on earth, but also as a light and an influence to the surrounding nations. That light and influence for the truth became extinguished.

After the rejection of the Israelites as a people, the gospel went to the Gentiles as the Christian Church took up the work rejected by the Jews and became God’s people. Paul boldly stated that all the promises to the seed of Abraham belonged to the children, not of ancestry, but of faith! In Romans 4:13 he stated: “For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.”

In terms hard to be misunderstood, Paul contrasted the relationship of the true Israelite, the true believer saved by grace through faith, with the unbelieving Jew who trusted in this heritage to save him.

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Romans 2:28, 29)

Instead of accepting truth that would require a total dismantling of their system, the Jews declared Jesus to be an imposter!

would still retain them as his favored people, and shower especial blessings upon them. They misapplied the words of Jeremiah, and depended for their salvation upon being called the children of Abraham. If they had indeed been worthy of the name of Abraham’s children, they would have followed the righteous example of their father Abraham, and would have done the works of Abraham.

“This has been the danger of the people of God in all ages; and especially is this the danger of those living near the close of time.” (*Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, pp. 52, 53)

Did you get that? The Jews “depended for their salvation upon being called the children of Abraham.”

They had failed to meet the condition that the prophecy was based upon. The promise was made to a people who had God’s law written “in their hearts.” (See Jeremiah 31:31-34.) Further, the Jews failed to compare Scripture with Scripture. The prophecy of Daniel 9:24 stated, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Here was a clear statement that their favor, as a people, in God’s eyes, would be dependent upon their spiritual condition. Deuteronomy, chapters 28-30 plainly declared the blessings of obedience as well as the consequences of disobedience. The success or failure of the nation of Israel would be conditional; dependant upon their spiritual

idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and *so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights*. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God.” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 294 - emphasis supplied.)

What is the meaning of the expression: “They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and *so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights*.” How did they defy earth and heaven? Obviously, it is not the literal earth and heaven that is being spoken of. Rather it is the powers of earth and heaven that would try to dispossess the Jews from their position that is being spoken of. The earth represents the powers of earth and the heavens represent God Himself. Think of it. The Jews were spiritually shaking their tightly clenched fists at God, defying Him to cast them off as a people!

Yet, in a preview of things to come, John the Baptist had told the unbelieving Jews of his day:

“And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” (Matthew 3:9)

The Jews had claimed Abraham as their father. However, Jesus told them plainly that they did not have the character and faith of Abraham. He said, “If

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” (Romans 9:6-8)

“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached

“... so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights.” ~ Ellen G. White

before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:6-9, 28, 29)

The promise of being God’s children had first been given to Abraham, then to Isaac and Jacob. The descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob became the twelve tribes of Israel. Make no mistake concerning their calling and origin; the Israelites were called and chosen by God. Yet because of unbelief they were cut off as a people. (See Romans 11:20.) What specific unbelief was it that caused their downfall? Jesus had told them, “If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (John 8:42) The failure to accept Jesus as the only begotten Son of the Father, as the Saviour, doomed the children of Israel according to the flesh.

This unbelief resulted in a departure from the Lord, which left a gap filled

by an alliance with the heathen. Ellen White noted:

“It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation.” (*Great Controversy*, p. 382)

Yet, it is not just Rome that receives a like condemnation. The statement continues:

“Babylon is said to be ‘the mother of harlots.’ By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the

approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 382, 383)

Concerning the experiences of Israel, Paul wrote, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1 Corinthians 10:11)

These lessons are important to us because as we noted earlier that the danger the Jews faced, is especially “the danger of those living near the close of time.” Those who claim to be the remnant are in danger of depending for their salvation upon being called, “Adventist,” or “Seventh-day Adventist.” Adventism has rejected the *foundation* of Christianity, the truth that Jesus is the literal begotten Son of God (see Matthew 16:13-19), and in its place they have accepted the sinking sands of the foundation of Babylon. Ironically, they believe that their foundation is so firm and their prosperity so great, that they would defy earth and heaven to dispossess them of their position of being the remnant. They have sacrificed the truth and the approval of God, in order to gain the

favor of nominal Christianity and form “an unlawful alliance with the world.”

Some Seventh-day Adventists believe that no matter how bad the church becomes, no matter how much apostasy reigns, God will not cast them off. However, God declares concerning Himself, “For I am the LORD, I change not.” (Malachi 3:6) God will not, and can not, give a “blank check” to Adventism today anymore than He could to Israel.

Ellen White noted: “In the balances of the sanctuary *the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed*. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: ‘Found wanting.’ *By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged.*” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 247 - emphasis supplied.)

The fact is, rather than a blank check being given to the church, the greatest accountability is required by God of those who have had the greatest light ever to shine upon mortals.

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world.” (*Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 19) Concerning the importance of sacred trusts we have the following serious counsel:

“The history of Judas presents the sad ending of a life that might have been honored of God. Had Judas died before his last journey to Jerusalem he would have been regarded as a man worthy of a place among the twelve, and one who would be greatly missed. The abhorrence which has followed him through the centuries would not have existed but for the attributes revealed at the close of his history. But it was for a purpose that his character was laid open to the world. *It was to be a warning to all who, like him, should*

betray sacred trusts.” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 716 – emphasis supplied.)

Within Adventism there has been an outcry for the last forty-five years since the publication of the book, *Questions on Doctrine*, against the diluted teachings being presented on the sanctuary doctrine and the doctrine of the incarnation. These outcries have valid reasons for existence. However, the compromises that led to these changes could never have happened if the church had not first accepted the doctrine of the trinity. The acceptance of the trinity paved the way for the church to first enter into dialog with, and then fellowship with Babylon.

Because all the early Adventists believed that Jesus was the literal, begotten Son of God and rejected the doctrine of the trinity, some have come to the conclusion that the Advent movement was founded on error and had to be corrected. Most target this correction to have begun around the turn of the twentieth century. It is propagated that Ellen White believed the doctrine of the trinity, but instead of

his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie.” (*Testimony for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 595)

God lives! And just as certainly, He gave the Advent people the truth, and the “hellish power” of Satan “cannot change the truth of God into a lie.”

Unbelief, departure from the Lord, alliances with the heathen, these have brought corruption. Remember, the daughters of Babylon “cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.” (*Great Controversy*, pp. 382, 383)

There is no doctrine with more roots in Babylon than the trinity doctrine. In fact, it is the foundation of Babylon:

“The mystery of the Trinity is the central doctrine of Catholic faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church.” (*Handbook for Today's Catholic*, p. 11)

The church of tradition openly acknowledges that the trinity comes by tradition not Scripture.

Catholic Church’s New Dogma: The Assumption Of Mary,” by Graham Green—*Life Magazine*, October 30, 1950)

When I first became a Bible-believing Christian, there was something I learned about the Roman Catholic faith that I was taught to abhor: Salvation was found by membership in the Catholic Church. To leave “the church” was to lose salvation.

This teaching, in theory, Adventists have rightfully scoffed and ridiculed. But in reality, there are many Adventists who are more guilty of this sin than are honest, but ignorant, Catholics. The testimony of experience has found that Adventists, in actuality, are not against the *principle* of this Catholic teaching. They are against its application when used of the Catholic Church because they do not believe the Catholic Church to be God’s end-time church. But if it is God’s true, end-time, remnant church we are talking about, then that is a different matter. Many Adventists today are more fearful of disfellowshipment than Roman Catholics. Why? Because they have been led to believe that salvation is equated with church membership. Like the Jews of Christ’s day, Seventh-day Adventists feel that they have promises that give them unconditional eternal favor.

If I had a dollar for every time I have heard it said, “So-and-so left the church,” I might be able to support a few missions. Sadly, I must confess that I have been equally guilty of this in the past. I well remember the indignation that I once felt against a humble brother who, when discussing the so-called apostasy of a member, said, “Why do we speak of people leaving the church and never say anything about their leaving Jesus?” I thought to myself, “Does he not realize that if we are ‘in Christ,’ we would surely be in His church.” Yet the spirit of God began at that point to convict me of my spiritual pride and I had to honestly consider the question this humble

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openly rebuking the brethren on their non-trinitarian position, she quietly just wrote out the truth in the book *Desire of Ages*.

This seems quite strange when we remember how she was gifted in rebuking men such as Ballenger, Kellogg, the leaders of the “holy flesh” movement in Indiana, and others. Yet, strangely, she was silent to her husband and closest working companions concerning the most important doctrine in Christianity!

Even more strange is a testimony written in 1881, fifty years before the trinity doctrine first appeared in an S.D.A. statement of beliefs. In that statement she boldly proclaimed:

“It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all

“Q. Do you observe other necessary truths as taught by the Church, not clearly laid down in Scripture?

“A. The doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine the knowledge of which is certainly necessary to salvation, is not explicitly and evidently laid down in Scripture, in the Protestant sense of private interpretation.” (*Doctrinal Catechism*, as quoted in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 22, 1854)

“Our opponents [Protestants] sometimes claim that no belief should be held dogmatically which is not explicitly stated in Scripture. ... But the Protestant Churches have themselves accepted such dogmas as the Trinity for which there is no such precise authority in the Gospels.” (“The

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The LORD Our Righteousness

by E. J. Waggoner

(The following study is from chapter nine of the book, Christ and His Righteousness. It should help clarify some serious misunderstandings that have recently been advocated through predominant sources. Abbreviations have been replaced in this study. Editor)

The question, then, is, How may the righteousness that is necessary in order that one may enter that [heavenly] city, be obtained? To answer this question is the great work of the Gospel. Let us first have an object lesson on justification, or the imparting of righteousness. The fact may help us to a better understanding of the theory. The example is given in Luke 18:9-14 in these words:

“And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

This was given to show how we may not, and how we may, attain to righteousness. The Pharisees are not extinct; there are many in these days who expect to gain righteousness by their own good deeds. They trust in themselves that they are righteous. They do not always so openly boast of their goodness, but they show in other ways that they are trusting to their own righteousness. Perhaps the spirit of the Pharisee—the spirit which would

recount to God one's own good deeds as a reason for favor—is found as frequently as anywhere else among those professed Christians who feel the most bowed down on account of their sins. They know that they have sinned, and they feel condemned. They mourn over their sinful state and deplore their weakness. Their testimonies never rise above this level. Often they refrain for very shame from speaking in the social meeting, and often they do not dare approach God in prayer. After having sinned to a greater degree than usual, they refrain from prayer for some time, until the vivid sense of their failure has passed away or until they imagine that they have made up for it by special good behavior. Of what is this a manifestation? Of that Pharisaic spirit that would flaunt its own righteousness in the face of God; that will not come before Him unless it can lean on the false prop of its

Pharisees are not extinct; there are many in these days who expect to gain righteousness by their own good deeds.

own fancied goodness. They want to be able to say to the Lord, “See how good I have been for the past few days; you surely will accept me now.”

But what is the result? The man who trusted in his own righteousness had none, while the man who prayed, in heart-felt contrition, “God be merciful to me, a sinner,” went down to his house a righteous man. Christ says that he went justified; that is, made righteous.

Notice that the publican did something more than bewail his sinfulness; he asked for mercy. What is mercy? It is unmerited favor. It is the disposition to treat a man better than he deserves. Now the Word of Inspiration says of God: “as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.” Psalm 103:11. That is, the measure by which God

treats us better than we deserve when we humbly come to Him, is the distance between earth and the highest heaven. And in what respect does He treat us better than we deserve?—In taking our sins away from us; for the next verse says: “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” With this agree the words of the beloved disciple: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9.

For a further statement of the mercy of God, and of how it is manifested, read Micah 7:18,19: “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He

will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast their sins into the depths of the sea.” Let us now read the direct Scripture statement of how righteousness is bestowed.

The apostle Paul, having proved that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in His sight, proceeds to say that we are “justified [made righteous] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that He might be just, and the justifier of Him that believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:24-26.

“Being made righteous freely.” How else could it be? Since the best efforts of a sinful man have not the least effect toward producing righteousness, it is evident that the only way it can come to him is as a gift. That righteousness is a gift is plainly stated by Paul in Romans 5:17: “For if by one man’s offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.” It is because righteousness is a gift that eternal life, which is the reward of righteousness, is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ has been set forth by God as the One through whom forgiveness of sins is to be obtained; and this forgiveness consists simply in the declaration of His righteousness (which is the righteousness of God) for their remission. God, “who is rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2:4) and who delights in it, puts His own righteousness on the sinner who believes in Jesus, as a substitute for his sins. Surely, this is a profitable exchange for the sinner, and it is no loss to God, for He is infinite in holiness, and the supply can never be diminished.

The forgiveness of sins is a reality; it is something tangible, something that vitally affects the individual.

The scripture that we have just been considering (Romans 3:24- 26) is but another statement of verses 21, 22, following the declaration that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be made righteous. The apostle adds, “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” God puts His righteousness upon the believer. He covers him with it, so that his sin no more appears. Then the forgiven one can exclaim with the prophet:

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for

He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Isaiah 61:10.

But what about “the righteousness of God without the law”? How does that accord with the statement that the law is the righteousness of God, and that outside of its requirements there is no righteousness? There is no contradiction here. The law is not ignored by this process. Note carefully: Who gave the law? Christ. How did He speak it? “As one having authority,” even as God. The law sprang from Him the same as from Father, and is simply a declaration of the righteousness of His character. Therefore the righteousness which comes by the faith of Jesus Christ is the same righteousness that is epitomized in the law, and this is further proved by the fact that it is “witnessed by the law.”

Let the reader try to picture the scene. Here stands the law as the swift witness against the sinner. It cannot change, and it will not call a sinner a righteous man. The convicted sinner tries again and again to obtain righteousness from the law, but it resists all

his advances. It cannot be bribed by any amount of penance or professedly good deeds. But here stands Christ, “full of grace” as well as of truth, calling the sinner to Him. At last the sinner, weary of the vain struggle to get righteousness from the law, listens to the voice of Christ, and flees to His outstretched arms. Hiding in Christ, he is covered with His righteousness; and now behold! he has obtained, through faith in Christ, that for which he has been vainly striving. He has the righteousness which the law requires, and it is the genuine article, because he obtained it from the Source of Righteousness, from the very place whence the law came. And the law witnesses to

the genuineness of this righteousness. It says that so long as the man retains that, it will go into court and defend him against all accusers. It will witness to the fact that he is a righteous man. With the righteousness which is “through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Philippians 3:9), Paul was sure that he would stand secure in the day of Christ.

There is in the transaction no ground for finding fault. God is just, and at the same time the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. In Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead; He is equal with the Father in every attribute. Consequently the redemption that is in Him—the ability to buy back lost man—is infinite. Man’s rebellion is against the Son as much as against the Father, since both are one. Therefore, when Christ “gave Himself for our sins,” it was the King suffering for the rebellious subjects—the One injured passing by, overlooking, the offense of the offender. No skeptic will deny that any man has the right and privilege of pardoning any offense committed against himself; then why cavil when God exercises the same right? Surely if He wishes to pardon the injury done Himself, He has the right, and more because He vindicates the integrity of His law, by submitting in His own Person to the penalty which was due the sinner. “But the innocent suffered for the guilty.” True; but the innocent Sufferer “gave Himself” voluntarily, in order that He might in justice to His government do what His love prompted, namely, pass by the injury done to Himself as the Ruler of the universe.

Now read God’s own statement of His own Name—a statement given in the face of one of the worst cases of contempt ever shown Him:

“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

The new heart is a heart that loves righteousness and hates sin. It is a heart of willingness to be led into the paths of righteousness.

keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” Exodus 34:5-7.

This is God’s Name; it is the character in which He reveals Himself to man; the light in which He wishes men to regard Him. But what of the declaration that He “will by no means clear the guilty”? That is perfectly in keeping with His longsuffering, abundant goodness, and His passing by the transgression of His people. It is true that God will by no means clear the guilty; He could not do that and still be a just God. But He does something which is far better. He removes the guilt, so that the one formerly guilty does not need to be cleared—he is justified, and counted as though he never had sinned.

Let no one cavil over the expression, “putting on righteousness,” as though such a thing were hypocrisy. Some, with a singular lack of appreciation of the value of the gift of righteousness, have said that they did not want righteousness that was “put on,” but that they wanted only that righteousness which comes from the life, thus depreciating the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe. We agree with their idea insofar as it is a protest against hypocrisy, a form of godliness without the power; but we would have the reader bear this thought in mind: It makes a vast deal of difference who puts the righteousness on. If we attempt to put it on ourselves, then we really get on nothing but a filthy garment, no matter how beautiful it may look to us, but when Christ clothes us with it, it is not to be despised nor rejected. Mark the expression in Isaiah: “He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” The righteousness with which Christ covers us is righteousness that meets the approval of God; and if God is satisfied with it,

surely men ought not to try to find anything better.

But we will carry the figure a step further, and that will relieve the matter of all difficulty. Zechariah 3:1-5 furnishes the solution. It reads thus:

“And he 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. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the Angel of the Lord stood by.”

Notice in the above account that the taking away of the filthy garments is the same as causing the iniquity to pass from the person. And so we find that when Christ covers us with the robe of His own righteousness, He does not furnish a cloak for sin but takes the sin away. And this shows that the forgiveness of sins is something more than a mere form, something more than a mere entry in the books of record in heaven, to the effect that the sin has been canceled. The forgiveness of sins is a reality; it is something tangible, something that vitally affects the individual. It actually clears him from guilt, and if he is cleared from guilt; is justified, made righteous, he has certainly undergone a radical change. He is, indeed, another person, for he obtained this righteousness for the remission of sins, in Christ. It was obtained only by putting on Christ. But “if any man be in

Christ, he is a new creature.” 2 Corinthians 5:17. And so the full and free forgiveness of sins carries with it that wonderful and miraculous change known as the new birth, for a man cannot become a new creature except by a new birth. This is the same as having a new, or a clean, heart.

The new heart is a heart that loves righteousness and hates sin. It is a heart of willingness to be led into the paths of righteousness. It is such a heart as the Lord wished Israel to have when he said, “O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!” Deuteronomy 5:29. In short, it is a heart free from the love of sin as well as from the guilt of sin. But what makes a man sincerely desire the forgiveness of his sins? It is simply his hatred of them and his desire for righteousness, which hatred and desire have been enkindled by the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit strives with all men. It comes as a reproof; when its voice of reproof is regarded, then it at once assumes the office of comforter. The same submissive, yielding disposition that leads the person to accept the reproof of the Spirit, will also lead him to follow the teachings of the Spirit, and Paul says that “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14.

Again, what brings justification, or the forgiveness of sins? It is faith, for Paul says, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. The righteousness of God is given unto and put upon everyone that believeth. Romans 3:22. But this same exercise of faith makes the person a child of God; for, says the apostle Paul again, “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26.

The fact that everyone whose sins are forgiven is at once a child of God, is shown in Paul’s letter to Titus. He first brings to view the wicked condition in

which we once were and then says (Titus 3:4-7):

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Note that it is by being justified by His grace that we are made heirs. We have already learned from Romans 3:24, 25 that this justification by His grace is through our faith in Christ, but Galatians 3:26 tells us that faith in Christ Jesus makes us children of God; therefore, we know that whoever has been justified by God’s grace,—has been forgiven,—is a child and an heir of God.

This shows that there is no ground for the idea that a person must go

through a sort of probation, and attain to a certain degree of holiness, before God will accept him as His child. He receives us just as we are. It is not for our goodness that He loves us but because of our need. He receives us, not for the sake of anything that He sees in us, but for His own sake, and for what He knows that His Divine power can make of us. It is only when we realize the wonderful exaltation and holiness of God, and the fact that He comes to us, in our sinful and degraded condition, to adopt us into His family, that we can appreciate the force of the apostle’s exclamation, “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” 1 John 3:1. Everyone upon whom this honor has been bestowed, will purify himself, even as He is pure.

God does not adopt us as His children because we are good, but in order that He may make us good. Says Paul: “God, who is rich in mercy, for His

great love wherewith He loves us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:4-7. And then he adds: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Verses 8-10. This passage shows that God loved us while we were yet dead in sins; He gives us His Spirit to make us alive in Christ, and the same Spirit marks our adoption into the Divine family, and He thus adopts us that, as new creatures in Christ, we may do the good works which God has ordained. ✍

“Defying ... continued from page 4

brother asked. That question has not left me the last twenty years! Over and over I have seen the same spiritual pride that the Jews had, the spiritual pride that I had, exhibited in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We breed and teach it in our churches.

Recently a brother from Romania, who belongs to the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement, wrote to me. He had read what he felt was an excellent book on principles of music. This book had been written by a “Seventh-day Adventist minister and his wife. The Romanian brother asked if I could contact the couple to request permission to translate and reprint the book. After doing some checking around, I was able to contact this minister and made the request. The first thing that I was asked by the minister was if the brother requesting permission was a “Seventh-day Adventist.” After stating that the brother belonged

to the reform movement, I was curtly told, “he’s not an Adventist.” I was then asked if I was a Seventh-day Adventist. I replied that I was not a member of the corporate church. I was then informed that I was not an “Adventist” either. This minister told me that he and his wife would prefer to have an “Adventist” publish the book. I assured him that was fine with me. I then asked if someone was currently working on the translation and publication of a Romanian edition for the people of Romania. He said, “No.” I asked if there were plans to try to get somebody to publish the book in Romanian and I was told that there were not any plans at that time. Then he said that his wife had written most of the book and he should talk to her. I was asked to call back in about an hour. At the appointed time, I called back to be told that the wife also wanted it published by an “Adventist.”

Knowing that this minister was supposed to be against the “new

theology,” I counseled him to be careful regarding making such judgments about people before caring to inquire as to the circumstances of their situation. I then informed him that the non-“Adventist” he was talking to was a former “Seventh-day Adventist” minister who was fired and disfellowed for speaking out against the “new theology.” He then admitted that one might be an “Adventist in heart,” but if they were not members of the corporate church, they were still not a “Seventh-day Adventist.”

My mind went back to Mark 9:38-39: “And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.”

My mind also thought of the statement from the *Testimonies* which says:

Continued on page 12

Report from India

by Lynnford Beachy

On March the 18th, Brothers Lynnford Beachy and Howard Williams left to visit southeastern India for three weeks, to share the gospel message of the Father and Son. The following report is an edited composite of three recent e-mails sent from India by Lynnford.

First e-mail:

Howard and I arrived safely in India with no trouble. Everything went very well. We had no trouble coming through customs. They did not open our bags or ask us any questions. Howard said it was the easiest customs he has been through.

We have found Indian people to be very friendly, and the environment nice. It seems poorer here than it was in Africa, if you can believe that. However, we are staying in a nice place, and being treated very well. It is hot here. It was 80 degrees when we arrived at midnight.

There are a lot of people here, all over the roads. Many are walking. Others are riding bicycles and motorcycles. Some are in cars, and buses. We also saw lots of cows beside the road and sometimes in the road. David, our host for the trip, said if you hit one of the cows, the people will come for a fight because they believe all of their gods live in one cow. We also saw some little monkeys by the road.

We had a long ride today in the car, and it was slow going. The people drive crazy, passing when there is no room to pass. The people just slow down and get out of the way. There are horns constantly blowing, not in anger but to let people know someone is coming.

Howard had the first meeting tonight, and it went very well. It was just an introduction. There were about thirty people in attendance. The meetings are being held in the basement of a shopping area in town. The room is

very nice and equipped with loud speakers and chairs for one hundred people.

With the windows and doors open, the meetings are projected over the loud speakers, right into the town to the many people outside. We had no trouble from anyone. There is no trouble having Christian meetings here.

We are expecting more people to show up tomorrow. The food has been simple, but very nice. We stayed with David's sister-in-law last night in Chennai. They are Catholic, and they were very friendly and kind to us. We felt very comfortable. However, they do not have running water, so we didn't get washed up until this evening at David's house, and we were definitely ready for it after our long trip. Tonight, we will stay in Dindigul at David's house. It has running water and a regular shower with only cold water. However, it is hot outside, so a cold shower feels nice.

We will be here for four more days, then we will travel to the next town. Please keep us in prayer. The language is hard here, and going through a translator is difficult, because the translator has trouble understanding some of our words. Everyone gives their greetings.

Second e-mail:

I pray that you are doing well. We had our third meeting now, and it went very well. The people seem to be very interested. We just finished eating our first lunch in India. We went to a hotel restaurant, and it was very interesting. They give you a big banana leaf and lay it on the table, then they put rice on it, along with a few piles of different concoctions. You are supposed to use your fingers and mix it all together, and then eat with your fingers. That is what everyone did except for Howard and me. We used a plate and spoon. The food was very interesting and good. At the end, they gave us a leaf wrapped up



Meetings are being held in Dindigul, Tirupattur, Guntur, and Rajahmundry. Lynnford and Howard's flight in and out of India is through Chennai, formerly known as Madras.

with cinnamon and some other seasonings inside. They said it helped digestion, and they also gave us a handful of fennel seeds. It was a real interesting experience.

Well, I better get going, the next meeting starts in a few minutes. Please keep us in prayer.

Third e-mail

The Lord is really blessing here, with almost everyone coming to a good understanding of the Father, His Son, and the Holy Spirit. Everyone says that the messages have been very clear. We are now answering some questions. It is going a little slow, going through a translator, but the Lord is blessing.

We went to the mountain yesterday. It was very interesting. I ate jack fruit for the first time.

We have one day left after today, then we travel to Tirupatur, about six hours north of here. Please pray for us and these meetings.

We just finished eating lunch on banana leaves, using our fingers to scoop up the rice and vegetables into our mouths. It was very nice.

Well, I better sign off for now. Keep up the good work. May the Lord bless you all.

Sincerely, Your brothers in Christ,

Lynnford and Howard

2003 West Virginia Camp Meeting Notice

Smyrna Gospel Ministries would like to invite all who are interested in preparing for the return of the Lord to attend camp meeting this June 17-21, at the Smyrna Sabbath Chapel in West Virginia. We believe this is going to be one of the best camp meetings the movement has ever had, so plan now to bring your Bibles and a cheerful heart.

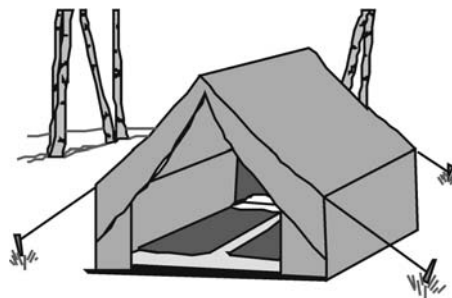
We will be feasting upon God's Word, special music, testimonies, and great fellowship. Brother Howard Williams of Restoration Ministries, Jamaica, will be our featured evening speaker. Some of the other speakers include, David Sims, Dennis Robertson, David Clayton, and Lynnford Beachy.

The theme of this camp meeting will be "Fellowship." The Apostle John writes: "... truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. ... But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:3, 7) As we walk in the light, and fellowship with the Father and the Son, we have fellowship with each other.

While we acknowledge that meetings are the main focus of camp meeting, we realize that it is at times difficult to find the time for personal time with God, and time with one another, when a camp meeting schedule is very full. To help provide time for personal time with the Father and the Son, as well as time for fellowship with each other, we have scheduled meetings in the following manner:

The first meeting will be Tuesday evening, June 17. Each day will begin with an early morning, before breakfast, devotional. After breakfast there will be a morning service with a health presentation and message from God's Word, and a midmorning service with a

message from God's Word. Except for Sabbath, only youth meetings (ages 4-young adult) will be scheduled in the afternoon. Each day will end with an evening service, which will consist of a health presentation and a message from God's Word. We hope to have special music for all services. If you wish to contribute, please contact the camp meeting's music coordinator, Malcolm McCrillis, (423) 772-3161.



This is a *camp* meeting. You need to bring a tent or make other arrangements. We *do not* have cabins or rooms available. Interest is running very high, and while we hope to have enough space for all, we will be much more tightly packed than last year. Smyrna will have a few tents and camping supplies for those who do not have, and cannot afford to purchase them. The supply is limited, so if you need to use a tent, camp stove, etc., please request early. We hope to have four showers with hot and cold water available. Don't forget items such as tents, bedding, flashlights, food, toiletries, insect repellent, and modest casual and Sabbath clothes.

This last spring our road was heavily damaged by flood waters. At the present time, passage for anything beyond a passenger vehicle is difficult. The state highway department is currently working on our road and we hope it will be in the best condition ever by

camp time. However, if you plan on bringing an RV, please contact us to see if the road has been repaired. We will post an update each month till camp meeting. While there is room for RV's, we do not have hook-ups. RV's will need to be self-contained. For those who wish, there are motels in the area. The nearest motels are; The Pocahontas Motel (304) 436-2250; Woody's Motel, (304) 732-6540; The Cow Shed, (304) 732-7000; Twin Falls State Park Resort, (304) 294-4000.

All campers will need to be responsible for their own food. Meals will not be served. For those who use ice chests, ice is available one mile away. We are planning on having a *vegan* haystack Sabbath afternoon fellowship meal for those interested.

Parents will need to be responsible for their children, including "youth," at *all* times.


For further information contact us by using the contact information on page twelve of this newsletter.

Editor

Scheduled Meetings

We will be holding meetings all day Sabbath in the Newark, Ohio area April 12. Specifically, I will be at the Eden Township Hall, 10298 Purity Rd. N.E., St. Louisville, OH 43071. The meetings will start at 10:00 a.m. and continue through the afternoon. There will be a midday fellowship meal.

I do hope that you can come to visit and fellowship with us. For further information you may call Steve Sutton at: 740-763-0155.

We will also be at Wilhoit, Azronia on Sabbath, May 3, for meetings throughout the day. For information please call Arlene Bailey at: 928-442-3275. 

Youth's Corner - The Fruit of True Faith

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Do you believe that Jesus will do exactly as he has promised? If you come to him, casting from your soul every idol, surrendering yourself fully to him, purposing no longer to carry your load of guilt, but rolling the load upon the Burden-bearer, do you believe he will give you rest? If you do believe, you will not gather up all your burdens again, and make it manifest that you drew nigh with your lips, but your heart was far from him.

How many, instead of coming to Jesus, doubt, murmur, and manufacture for themselves burdens and yokes that are grievous to be borne! O that all would surrender themselves to him, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is their reasonable service! He desires so much to save those for whom he gave his life. Has he not invited you to come to him? Has he not said he would give you rest? Has he not said, in sorrowful words, to those who will not comply with his invitations, “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life”?

If we would come to him, let us fix our eyes upon him; for he is full of grace and truth, and he will let all his goodness pass before us while he hides us in the cleft of the Rock. Then we shall endure as seeing him who is invisible, and by beholding him, we shall be changed into his image. The reason that we carelessly indulge in sin is that we do not see Jesus. We would not lightly regard sin, did we appreciate the fact that sin wounds our Lord. Did we know Jesus by an experimental knowledge, we would not esteem duty as of small importance; but would manifest faithful integrity in the performance of

every service. A right estimate of the character of God would enable us rightly to represent him to the world.

Harshness, roughness in words or manner, evil-speaking, passionate words, cannot exist in the soul that is looking unto Jesus.

He who abides in Christ is in an atmosphere that forbids evil, and gives not the slightest excuse for any-

thing of this kind. Spiritual life is not nourished from within, but draws its nutrition from Christ, as the branch does from the vine. We are dependent upon Christ every moment; he is our source of supply. All our outside forms, prayers, fastings, and alms-giving cannot take the place of the inward work of the Spirit of God on the human heart.

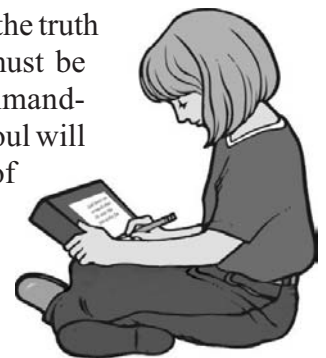
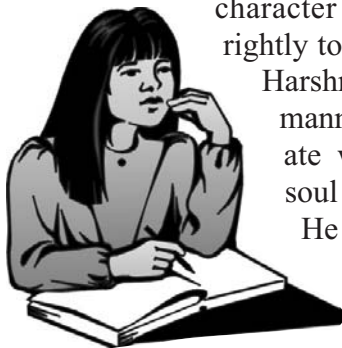
We abide in Christ by faith, by simple childlike trust in his pledged word. Perfect faith, and the surrender of self to God are subjects that should be made very plain to those who are slow to comprehend spiritual things.

Faith is not feeling. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The religion that takes the position of secluded enjoyment, that is satisfied to contemplate the religion of Jesus Christ, and that keeps its possessor from an experimental knowledge of its saving power, is a deception.

Those who possess the religion of Christ are constrained to follow in his footsteps, and they see earnest work to be done for the Master. Christ says he was anointed to “preach the gospel to the poor,” and the religion of Christ takes his followers to the poor, also to the rich in Caesar’s household. The Christian gathers sheaves from every place, among high and low, rich and poor.

“Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Holiness does not consist in profession, but in doing the will of our Father which is in heaven. The crying of “Lord! Lord!” will not secure for us an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Let no man cheat his soul with the delusion that he is saved simply because he can talk of faith and repentance. There are those who exclaim, “I am saved! I am saved!” who yet walk contrary to the doctrine of Christ. The word of God declares, “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” Obedience must be rendered to all God’s commandments in this world before a soul will be chosen as a safe member of the kingdom of heaven, one of the royal children of God.

(Mrs. E. G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, February 10, 1898)



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“The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, pp. 199, 200) Laodicea proudly proclaims, “I am ‘rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.’” (Revelation 3:17) She does not realize that she is “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” (*Ibid.*) God has promised that He “will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.” (Isaiah 13:11) God is still able to raise up children of Abraham from stones.

What really separated the Christian Church from Judaism? It was not the Sabbath, the ten commandments, or the doctrine of the state of the dead. The real difference was the foundation. The Christians accepted Jesus as the Son of God, sent to truly die for their sins. Judaism rejected both the sonship and atoning death of Christ. As a result of this difference, Judaism began to persecute the early Christians.

“That which until that time had been the true church, called and preserved by the Lord, then and there ceased to be the true church at all; and that which this church despised, and forbade, and persecuted, and cast out, became itself the true church.

“And so it is forever, John 9:34-38.” (A. T. Jones — *Individually in Religion*, chapter 4, paragraphs 40, 41)

Beloved, it is time that we examined the foundation that we are building on. It is time that we take a self-examination to see if we are of the faith once delivered to the saints. Please do not let spiritual pride prevent you from standing for the truth. Jesus said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

Friends, God is calling His people out of Babylon. That is much more than just changing our place of worship and the day of the week worship. We are called to leave the false teachings of Babylon with its worship of Baal behind and worship the true God of heaven instead. ✍

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