

# 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

## Perfection of Character

By Allen Stump

*(The following message is an edited version of the opening message presented at the 2006 West Virginia Camp Meeting. . . . . Editor)*

There has been only one movement that God has raised up which teaches He is able to fully perfect a pure and holy people, that He can make a man and a woman more precious than the fine golden wedge of Ophir (Isaiah 13:12). As God looked over the sea of Christianity in the late 1820's and through the 1830's, He searched for such a people, but, friends, He could not find a people anywhere to entrust with the beautiful message of character perfection. He had to raise up a new people, the Advent people, to give the message that God is able to perfect, in each of His children, a character of pure gold and to give the message that there will be a group of people at the end of time who will have developed this fine golden character and who will stand faultless before the throne of God. They will have a pure faith and will teach all the truth as it is found in Jesus. The perfection of our character is one of the greatest and most noble undertakings that God wants to accomplish in each of us. "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69)."

God longs for His character to be *perfectly* reproduced in us, but do we value perfection?

**Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 331).**

Michelangelo was a famous artist and sculptor who lived during the 13th and 14th centuries. A friend, visiting his studio, glanced at a beautiful statue that was almost finished and said, "You have done no work on it since I was here last, have you?" "On the contrary," answered Michelangelo, "I have done a great deal. I have entirely changed the expression of the mouth. I have softened a feature here and there and have strengthened a muscle. I have retouched this part and polished that." "Oh yes, very likely," said his friend, "but those are trifles." "Trifles they may be," answered the great sculptor, "but trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle." Do you see the significance

## Prayer Requests

Camp meeting has come and gone and we especially thank those who were able to come, and we are grateful for all of the prayers offered for a spiritual blessing. Now we humbly request your prayers for Pastor Stump, who will be traveling to Germany, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Austria during the first three weeks of August. He will be preaching at camp meetings and meeting with our brothers and sisters there.

*Onycha Holt*

*(We recently received the following from Brother Richard Stratton.)*

I would like to briefly share with you "The Jonathan Project." Jonathan was born with cerebral palsy, which greatly curtails his physical movements including his ability to feed, dress, and take care of his personal needs. Jonathan is limited to

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of this? “Trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle,” and the perfection of our character is no trifle either. It is a concerted effort of body, soul, and spirit, and if we wish perfection of the whole, then we must be concerned about the trifles—the little things.

There are few who realize *the influence of the little things of life upon the development of character. Nothing with which we have to do is really small. The varied circumstances that we meet day by day are designed to test our faithfulness and to qualify us for greater trusts. By adherence to principle in the transactions of ordinary life, the mind becomes accustomed to hold the claims of duty above those of pleasure and inclination. Minds thus disciplined are not wavering between right and wrong, like the reed trembling in the wind; they are loyal to duty because they have trained themselves to habits of fidelity and truth. By faithfulness in that which is least they acquire strength to be faithful in greater matters.*

An upright character is of greater worth than the gold of Ophir. Without it none can rise to an honorable eminence. *But character is not inherited. It cannot be bought. Moral excellence and fine mental qualities are not the result of accident. The most precious gifts are of no value unless they are improved. The formation of a noble character is the work of a lifetime and must be the result of diligent and persevering effort. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them (Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 222, 223).*

The axiom that the sum is equal to the total of the parts is illustrated in the nation of China. No other nation can logically expect to occupy a country like China, which has a population of a billion people, because one of the great strengths of such a country, a nation, or a people is seen in the sum of the smaller individual components, components of which may seem like trifles but combined together enable the entire body to be strong.

We are living in the antitypical Day of Atonement, and, beloved, if there was ever a time when everything, all the little components, should be important to us, it is now. If there was ever a time that we needed perfection of character, it is today. The Lord makes us ready for adversity and sometimes our characters have to be trained and perfected through perseverance and diligence.

Perfection is seen in the least, no less than in the greatest, of the works of God. The hand that hung the worlds in space is the hand that wrought with delicate skill the lilies of the field. And as God is perfect in His sphere, so we are to be perfect in ours. The symmetrical structure of a strong, beautiful character is built up by individual acts of duty. And faithfulness should characterize our life in the least as well as in the greatest of its details (Ellen White, *Bible Echo*, June 18, 1894).

When we consider the orderly way God has made the stars to follow their perfect pathways, the flowers to yield their sweet fragrances, the eagles to effortlessly soar in the sky due to the extremely complex design with which they have been engineered, and as we look upon every individual living cell and the precise details which are necessary to ensure their continued existence, we see God’s order and perfection and we realize that God is a God of perfection. Instruments like the Hubble telescope have enabled us to see with greater detail and depth into the precision with which the estimated two hundred billion billion stars operate in God’s universe, and the more closely we examine the floral bouquets that God appointed upon the tableland of the earth, the more clearly we see the delicacy and the intricacy with which they were made. As one studies the design of the bones and the aerodynamic structure of the wings of the eagle and the necessity for each feather to be exactly like it is, we see a God of detail and order. He is concerned about trifles and little things, and just as God is perfect in His sphere, we can be perfect in our sphere as well.

## Definition of Perfection

Perfection has been defined as being complete or being mature. “The development of Christian character, tending toward this state of perfection, is a growth toward beauty (*My Life Today*, p. 154).” Friends, perfection of character is something beautiful! There is nothing more beautiful than to see holiness depicted in a godly man or a godly woman. The *Bible Cyclopedic Index* defines perfection as “the extreme degree of excellence.” Now, we may not think that *extreme* is the best word to use because it can have a connotation of being too far out, but perfection is designed to take us as far as we can go. It is excellence!

## Perfection of Character Commanded

**Jesus Commanded It:** Does God really expect this kind of excellence from His people? Yes, He does. Let us look at several Bible verses concerning this. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).” How perfect is our heavenly Father? Is He complete? Is He mature? Is He excellent in all that He is and does? Yes, He is! Even though I am not in heaven and I am not God, He has promised, by His servant, that within my own sphere, I can reach a maturity, a perfection, and a completeness that is just as perfect as God in heaven is perfect.

Once, when Jesus was teaching, some seemingly-pious and righteously-appearing men brought a woman to Jesus who was caught in the very act of adultery, and then said to Jesus, “Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou (John 8:5)?” We realize that it is wrong to commit adultery, but Jesus, whose Spirit was always One to love and to lift up, stooped down and wrote in the dirt. Ellen White tells us Jesus was writing the accusers’ sins, exposing to others their iniquities.

But Jesus well knew for what purpose this case had been brought to him; he read the secrets of their hearts, and knew the character and life-history of every man in his presence. He seemed indifferent to the question of the Pharisees, and while they were talking and pressing about him, he stooped and wrote carelessly with his finger in the sand. Although doing this without apparent design, Jesus was tracing on the ground, in legible characters, the particular sins of which the woman's accusers were guilty, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 349, 350).

As He wrote, one-by-one, they turned and left. Jesus then spoke kindly to this poor, down-trodden woman, whom everyone else was ready to condemn and stone. In fact, they brought her to Jesus so that He might condemn her also and give His approval to her death. After her accusers had left, Jesus asked her, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord (vs. 10, 11)." Please note the accusation was not founded upon a false rumor. Sometimes people say many things that are not very kind and are untrue. Sometimes things are said that are not kind but they are true. The Bible says this woman was caught in the very act of adultery, so there was no question that she was guilty and that the charges brought against her were valid, but notice what Jesus said unto her: "Neither do I condemn thee (v. 11)." Did Jesus next say, "Go and taper off on this sin?" No. Jesus said, "Go, and sin no more (v. 11)."

**Abraham Commanded To Be Perfect:** Notice what God said to Abraham in Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Do you think God really meant what He said to Abraham? God wants us to order our lives so that we can walk before Him perfectly, and He will enable us to do that. Some people say we just cannot live perfectly because every day we are going to sin in some way or another. We have all heard this, but does it have to be? When God tells us to do something, He will enable us to do it. "All His biddings are enablings (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 333)."

**Israel Told To Be Perfect:** Speaking to the children of Israel, God says in Deuteronomy 18:13: "Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God." Does He really mean it? He could have said, "Be as good as you can," for He knows how to speak in human language. God invented language and He does not lack vocabulary. How can I be sure? The Bible says that He created the heaven and the earth. He created all the stars and the Bible says "He calleth them all by their names (Psalm 147:4)." We estimate, to the best of our ability, that there are approximately one hundred to two hundred billion galaxies in the known universe! In each one of the galaxies there are at least one hundred billion stars. So, God doesn't have a problem with vocabulary, friends. When God says in the Bible that He wants us to be perfect, He means it, and we

have no right to diminish His Word and say it means something else.

**Is It A Relationship?:** Christian perfection has been defined in different ways. I remember listening to a very prominent minister in Adventism speak about last day events and perfection. He talked about having a relationship with God and said that, "Perfection is having a perfect relationship with God." A perfect relationship with God, goes hand in hand with perfect submission, a perfect conforming to the will of God.

Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God's word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. Constantly he is to pray to the Saviour to heal the disorders of his sin-sick soul. He has not the wisdom or the strength to overcome; these belong to the Lord, and He bestows them on those who in humiliation and contrition seek Him for help (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532).

Having a relationship with God is very important and this relationship will be part of the pathway that leads us to perfection, but there is more involved in character perfection than this. The minister was saying that one's relationship with God is of primary importance and how one lives his Christian life is secondary to that relationship; therefore, it is okay if one does not live in accordance with God's commandments as long as the relationship with God is maintained. Beloved, this will not bring perfection of character, according to God's Word. I can have a relationship with a harlot, but such a relationship would not facilitate the perfection of my character an iota. It is very important to be connected to the Lord, but this, in itself, is not enough. Notice what Jesus says in John 15:1-5:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If we have a genuine love relationship with Christ, we will bear fruit and we will keep His commandments. "If ye love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15)." We do have to

abide in Christ and be connected to Him, for if we try to live on our own apart from Jesus, the true Vine, we will wither and be powerless.

## Fruit of Character Perfection

**Love:** I want to discuss nine spiritual qualities that no character is perfect without. Colossians 3:14 contains the first one. Speaking of Christian virtues, Paul says: “And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” Charity, in the King James version of the Bible, is translated from the Greek word *agape* and this word is understood to mean love. It is a high and noble love and Paul says that this love is the bond that binds the brethren together in perfection. The greatest aspect of perfection, friends, is love, loving like God loves and understanding His love.

We noticed earlier, in Matthew 5:48, that Jesus instructs us to be as perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, but we need to read the preceding seven or eight verses to understand the context for this verse.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so (vs. 40-47)?

Jesus is talking about loving our enemies. It is not difficult to love people who are lovely and who love us. The challenge as Christians, and the thing that will really reveal our perfection of character, is our ability, by God’s grace alone, to love our enemies as God and Christ love them. When we can truly love people who are mean to us, who abuse us, who tell lies about us, who snub and shun us, and who harm those whom we love, then we are seen in God’s eyes as perfect, even as He is perfect.

**Temperance:** 1 Thessalonians 4:13 says, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.” God is more interested in our character perfection, our sanctification, than even we are. Therefore, to help us along the Christian pathway, He has provided us with something very wonderful: temperance! Temperance can also be understood to be self-control. Temperance is listed with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:23. Paul notes that, “every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in *all things* (1 Corinthians 9:25).” According to Peter, temperance is to be added to our

faith, virtue, knowledge, love, etc., in our Christian growth, which Peters says, “for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall (2 Peter 1:10).”

True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 562).

Clearly, if we wish our Christian characters to develop in a positive manner we must be temperate. A temperate person will have the ability to think more clearly and reason more thoroughly than a person whose mind has become beclouded due to following poor health principles.

The world is given to self-indulgence. Errors and fables abound. Satan’s snares for destroying souls are multiplied. All who would perfect holiness in the fear of God must learn the lessons of temperance and self-control. The appetites and passions must be held in subjection to the higher powers of the mind. This self-discipline is essential to that mental strength and spiritual insight which will enable us to understand and to practice the sacred truths of God’s word. For this reason temperance finds its place in the work of preparation for Christ’s second coming (*Desire of Ages*, p. 101).

Some may not see the need for temperance, but God has clearly declared the need for all who are striving “for the mastery.” While the prophecies of Daniel foretell the history of the world down to the end of the age, the stories in the book of Daniel are instructive in how we are to live and stand worthy in the last days. Interestingly, the first major story in the book of Daniel involves Daniel’s and his companions’ determination to be strictly temperate. (See Daniel 1.)

In fact, in the writings of Ellen White, God emphasizes to His people the concept of “strict temperance” and having “strictly temperate habits (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 499).” These terms are used scores of times by Ellen White! If we ignore temperance Christ will never be able to perfect our characters, for that process depends on divine co-operation and the proper choice of the mind and free will. We have been told:

Intemperance commences at our tables in the use of unhealthful food. After a time, through continued indulgence, the digestive organs become weakened, and the food taken does not satisfy the appetite. Unhealthy conditions are established, and there is a craving for more stimulating food. Tea, coffee, and flesh meats produce an immediate effect (*Ibid.*, p. 487).

While our eating habits do not constitute the whole range of temperance, unhealthy food is the beginning point of intemperance. If we are using “tea, coffee, and flesh meats” we should, by all means, quit these unhealthful practices.

Those who do not feel the necessity of engaging in the work of overcoming upon the point of appetite will fail to secure precious victories which they might have gained

and will become slaves to appetite and lust, which are filling the cup of iniquity of those who dwell upon the earth (*Ibid.*, p. 490).

But those who are slaves to appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character (*Ibid.*, p. 492).

Perhaps you feel bound by chains of an eating disorder or uncontrolled passions. Christ has promised the victory for you so that you might always be “more than conquerors through him that loved us (Romans 8:37).” Please don’t forget that:

As our first parents lost Eden through the indulgence of appetite, our only hope of regaining Eden is through the firm denial of appetite and passion. Abstemiousness in diet and control of all the passions will preserve the intellect and give mental and moral vigor, enabling men to bring all their propensities under the control of the higher powers and to discern between right and wrong, the sacred and the common (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 491).

**Patience:** James 3:2 says the perfect man will not offend in word. The hardest time to maintain patience is when someone says something to us that goes against our grain and offends us and we want to reply back. We need patience and in James 1:4 we read that patience will “have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).” Patience is part of the perfection of our character.

**Holiness:** 2 Corinthians 7:1 says, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” We are told to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness (Psalm 96:9).” What makes something holy? We say it is holy when it is set apart, but what is holiness?

*Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 51).*

The Catholic Church and apostate protestant churches attempt to make up for the lack of inner holiness by substituting the external beauty of marvelous statues, beautifully stained-glass windows, and magnificent organ music, but, beloved, we can be so aglow with the inner beauty of holiness that no outward adorning other than a meek and quiet spirit is needed. Total holiness is beautiful.

**Faith:** In 1 Thessalonians 3:9, 10 we read about faith: “For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face,

and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?” Paul says, in effect, “We have come and we are working with you and praying for you, so that that which is lacking in your faith can be perfected.” We need a greater faith, a perfect faith, and we can have this faith by “hearing ... the word of God (Romans 10:17).” “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love (Galatians 5:6),” and “the faith that works by love purifies the soul (Ellen White, *Australasian Union Conference Record*, November 1, 1900).”

**Praise:** I am glad for the little children! Jesus said, “Out of the mouth of babes ... thou has perfected praise (Matthew 21:16).” Should not our praise be perfect too? There is no reason why our praise cannot be perfect. We should strive toward perfection in the little things in our lives, including our praise and worship and about the way we pray, even if it is just being able to kneel or show proper reverence during prayer.

Praise involves our worship, our prayers, and our songs, which are to be of an ennobling high nature, not of a low, carnal nature that appeals to our senses.

**Spiritual Union:** Jesus, in His beautiful high-priestly prayer, says: “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me (John 17:23).” He said that the disciples were to be perfect in one. There is an aspect of perfection that is found in our bond with our brethren and when we are out of harmony with our brethren, it prevents perfection. Now, it is true that I might not be able, of myself, to heal every wound or to fix every problem with someone else, but if it is within my power, by God’s grace, to fix a problem, I have a responsibility to do so, and so do you. If I want my character to be perfect in the Biblical sense, part of that perfection involves healing all wounds with my brothers or sisters. They may turn their back on me and walk away from me, but if I have done everything that the Lord wants me to do to help heal the wound, then the Lord can work with me. We can kid ourselves, friends, and play church and play social club, but if there is an issue with our brethren that causes disunity that we are not willing to deal with, then we are not perfect in character and neither are we working toward perfection.

**Strength:** 2 Corinthians 12:8, 9 are well-known verses. Paul was suffering under an abuse of Satan: “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” We find that the Lord’s strength is perfected in our weaknesses when we humbly submit to Him. Most people do not like the idea of being weak or in a situation where they have to depend on someone else for their very basic needs. By nature, we have a desire to be self-sufficient, but we should remember that God’s strength in the world’s weakest person is stronger than the mightiest evil angel. “Ye are of God, little children, and

have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).”

**Good Works:** The Apostle Paul writes in Hebrews 13:20, 21: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *Make you perfect* in every good work to do his will.” Does God want us to have perfection of character even in our good works? Yes. We are to have perfection in *everything*. “We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God (*The Great Controversy*, 1888 edition, p. 460).” I was visiting a friend recently and he told me about *double-digging* in his garden. Double-digging involves first digging deep into the soil to loosen it up and then digging even deeper to loosen the soil further down, so that the plants have the opportunity to form a very good root base. Friends, if we want to have a good Christian character, we will have to dig deeply and we cannot cut corners. We need to understand clearly that we live in an exceedingly wicked and sinful world. We are born with a carnal nature that is at enmity with God. “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Romans 8:6, 7).” The word *enmity* means to be at odds or even at war with something. If given the opportunity, the carnally-minded person, inspired by Satan, would desire to usurp the position of God, just as Satan desired God’s position and the worship due to God alone. It is not our natural desire to obtain Christian perfection or to live the life God wants us to live, but this God commands. We have to do things the right way and if we will do this, the Lord will show us His appreciation and give us His commendation.

## God’s Work not Our Own

My father always believed in doing every job properly, down to each detail. He was a perfectionist in his work and everything had to be just right. He once told my mother that he always expected my brother and me “to do a good job.” Sometimes I wish he could have shown more praise than he did for our hard work. As human beings, we like to know our work is appreciated, but my dad expected the right thing from us at all times and God expects us to do the right thing at all times, and, beloved, do not ever think otherwise. Let us do the right thing and leave the consequences with God.

**Perfection of Character Not Naturally Ours:** We need to realize that our natures are corrupt and perfection is not naturally ours. The Bible says that we are “carnal, sold under sin (Romans 7:14).” “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil (Jeremiah 13:23).” Just as the Ethiopian cannot change his skin or the leopard his spots, so we who are accustomed to doing evil cannot do good. We have all been born with a sinful nature that we inherited from Adam. Ellen White tells us that in man, “There is in his

nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist (*Education*, p. 29).” The good news is that God proclaimed in the Garden of Eden that He would put enmity between us and the serpent. “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (Genesis 3:15).” God put within the heart of man a seed to want to do something better. God made provision through Christ that our thinking, our outlook, our perspectives, and our desires can change. Please understand, however, that we are not good people in bad shells, waiting for the dross to be removed. Do not think that if you can just get rid of all the bad things in your life, you will then be a good person. Sometimes we think that if we can just change certain aspects of our lifestyles, if we can stop wearing flashy, revealing clothing and start wearing modest apparel, or if we can just strip off the ornaments we might be adorned with, then we will become good people because the bad has been taken away, but this is not so. The Bible says we *must* be born again. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3).” The Bible says we must have a new heart, a clean heart. “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel (Ezekiel 18:31)?” “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh (Jeremiah 36:26).” This is what the Lord wants to do, He wants to change us. He and only He can do this for us as we surrender totally to Him.

**Only God Can Change Us:** Peter says that God has grace sufficient for every need that we will ever have. “But the God of *all grace*, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, *make you perfect*, stablish, strengthen, settle you (1 Peter 5:10).” God is able to do this. He is able to make us perfect. “For by one offering *He has perfected* forever those who are being sanctified (Hebrews 10:14, NKJV).” He has made it available to each one of us.

There is power in God’s Word to perfect our character. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 tell us: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the *man of God may be perfect*, throughly furnished unto all good works.” God has given us the Bible so that we may be perfect. There is power within the Word of God to accomplish the very thing it proclaims, but we must choose to allow it to work in our lives. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).”

The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of

man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. They do not choose to serve Him.

God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ.

Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in the life. By yielding up the will to Christ, we ally ourselves with divine power. We receive strength from above to hold us steadfast. A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 176).

The will must be placed on the side of God's will. You are not able, of yourself, to bring your purposes and desires and inclinations into submission to the will of God; but if you are "willing to be made willing," God will accomplish the work for you, even "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5. Then you will "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:12, 13 (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 142).

Jesus said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17)." Our sanctification comes from knowing and submitting to truth, and "pure, unadulterated truth" is the righteousness of Christ (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 65).

You might say, "Well, I have a hard time understanding the Bible," and sometimes we do, but we have to invest time and study in God's Word and not just in a fleeting moment or with a passing thought. If we want the perfection of character that comes through God's Word, it will involve spending serious time with God in His Word.

In addition to our personal study, the Lord sends us preachers to help us understand. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher (Romans 10:14)?" "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; *For the perfecting of*

*the saints*, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man (Ephesians 4:11-13)." We have probably heard these verses before, but sometimes we need to be reminded of them.

The Christian life does not always involve things that are fun and games. What is it, then, that makes us to want to be Christians? Harry and Nora Anderson were missionaries to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and their Christian life involved a lot of hardship, self-denial, and struggles, which even included sleeping under an ox cart for six months (see Youth's Corner story on p. 21), but by God's grace they were able to carry on and we can too. It does not require any effort or self-denial on our part to live the way we naturally want to live, but in order to deny self and to take up our cross, there has to be something else that motivates us. The motivation for this is found in God's love.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested [or made known] the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:8-19).

Jesus said God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16), and this motivates us to seek and serve Him. Friends, God could not send a Son and He could not give a Son if He did not already have a Son to give! God declares in His Word that we may know His love and His magnanimous gift of His Son for our sins. Those who deny Jesus is the Son of God deny the love of God.

## We Are to Grow in Perfection

**Paul's Experience:** You might say, "Well, Allen, are you perfect today? Are there not some flaws in your character?" No, I am not perfect in the sense of being fully mature or complete today, but I do believe, friends, that God is working in my life and I believe He wants to work in each of our lives. He was working in the Apostle Paul's life. Philippians 3:12, 14 say: "*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus ... I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" Paul said he was pressing toward that mark. He had the mark in mind but he was not yet perfect. Interestingly, in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 we read: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." One thing that is significant about these few verses from Philippians and Timothy is that these books were written only one to two years apart. Philippians was written first, wherein Paul said he had "not yet fully

attained,” and a couple of years later he wrote his final letter to Timothy, wherein he said that he was ready to die, that God had brought him to the place that He wanted him to be. As F. A. Allum said, “man is immortal till his work is done (“Experiences of the Gospel’s Power in China,” *General Conference Bulletin*, May 22, 1913), and friends we are immortal until our work for God is done, provided we are willing and submissive to Him. Even greater is the concept that we are immortal until His work in us is done.

**We Must Advance in Perfection:** Every day we can be a step closer to the Lord. Our character is built one step at a time and it is usually built upon little things. The big things reveal our character, but it is developed through the little trials and the little things.

Perfection of character is a lifelong work, unattainable by those who are not willing to strive for it in God’s appointed way, by slow and toilsome steps. We cannot afford to make any mistake in this matter, but we want day by day to be growing up into Christ, our living Head (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 500).

Every day we may advance in perfection of Christian character (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 503).

Someone once said that an acorn does not become an oak tree in a day. The fine good trees, the oaks and hickories for example, are the slowest-growing trees. They take time to develop, yet a small oak tree can be perfect in its stages of development even though it isn’t fully grown, and we too can be perfect, even though not fully grown.

**No Room for Boasting:** In the Christian life there is no room for boasting. Job 9:20 reads: “If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul.” You see, the closer we come to Jesus, the more Christ-like we are in our lives, and as we compare ourselves to the perfect standard of Jesus, the more we are going to see the imperfections of our own character. The opposite is also true: The further we are from God, the more perfect we will see ourselves and the better we will think we are in our own eyes. This is because we are getting away from that standard of what real righteousness is and it is hard to perceive our own problems. The Bible says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8).”

None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. So will it be with all who behold Christ. *The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin,*

*and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 561).*

John did not teach that salvation was to be earned by obedience; but that obedience was the fruit of faith and love. “Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins,” he said, “and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” 1 John 3:5, 6. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God’s law (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 563).

**Perfect Heart:** We may strive for outward conformity and have a real desire to do right things, but our heart must also be right. We should remember what the Bible says concerning Amaziah: “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart (2 Chronicles 25:2).” We can be like the Pharisees of old. We can have, for example, what would appear to be the most wonderful demonstration of Sabbath-keeping you have ever seen, with everything right to the letter of the law. “And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. (Luke 11:39).” It is true that God wants us to do the right thing in the right way, but He also wants us to have a perfect heart. This is an experience that He can give us. He says, “A new heart will I give you.” It is not something we can attain of ourselves.

Christian perfection of character involves all aspects of living. Paul writes, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).” “Whatsoever you do,” includes, for example, our dress and how we conduct ourselves in business and with our neighbors, so that we are proper representatives of our Lord and bring glory to Him. We need to be honest and fair with our taxes and in obeying Caesar where it is not contradictory with God’s law. We want total perfection of character. There is no such thing as partial perfection. When we shop at the mall, for example, we will dress and act with dignity, doing everything for the glory of God. We are to live and act in this way because God, very interestingly, is on trial and He is looking for people like us to vindicate His character. It takes everything to make perfection, and it only takes one thing to fail at it. The Bible says in Revelation 14:7 that “the hour of His judgment is come,” and it is perfection in the little things that will allow us to totally vindicate His character by proving that His way is best in every aspect, and *He will perfect* a group of people totally submissive to Him.

Aside from General Eisenhower, you might be surprised to know that in the last one hundred years, President James Carter served in the military longer than any other president. He served on submarines in both the Atlantic and Pacific




fleets and he was later selected by Admiral Hyman Rickover for the United States Navy's nuclear submarine program, where he became a qualified nuclear engineer. Rickover was a demanding officer, and Carter was greatly influenced by him. Carter later said that, next to his parents, Admiral Rickover had had the greatest influence on him. There was a story he often told of being interviewed by the Admiral. The Admiral asked him about his rank in his class at the Naval Academy. Carter said, "Sir, I graduated 59th out of a class of 820." Rickover only asked, "Did you always do your best?" Carter was forced to admit he had not, and the Admiral asked, "Why?" Carter later used this as the theme of his presidential campaign, and as the title of his first book, "Why Not The Best?" So, I ask you today, friends, "Why not the best?" Why can't we be the best generation that this earth has ever seen? Why not perfection? Perfection in our relationship with God, yes; perfection in love, yes; perfection in our patience; perfection in all holiness, praise, and faith; and yes, friends, even perfection in our obedience to all of God's commandments and His requirements, especially the little ones.

We began with the story of Michelangelo. He was the master over the marble. The marble had no choice about what it would become. It was entirely up to Michelangelo. As great a sculptor as Michelangelo was, he was only human, but friends, we can yield ourselves to one who is a perfect Master Workman, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He never makes a single mistake!

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:16-18)." Friends, we will finally yield ourselves either totally to Christ or totally to Satan. We are doing this daily. Every act is revealing to whom we have surrendered. There is not going to be a middle man. There is not going to be a third person. We are eventually going to yield ourselves completely and totally to Christ or to Satan. If we yield ourselves to Jesus Christ, who is the Master Workman, then whatever He chooses to bring about in our lives, in whatever way, is going to be perfect. It is going to be complete and it will result in everything He wants us to be, as long as we submit ourselves to Him. He has done enough for us that we should be willing to do that. He has loved us with an everlasting love. He has made every provision for our happiness and that happiness comes by yielding. I am sure that Harry and Nora were happy sleeping under the ox-cart because they knew they were doing God's will. They knew that God had providentially opened up that twelve thousand acre tract of land in Rhodesia and that He had a plan for it and His plan wasn't going to fail. Harry and Nora counted it a privilege to be part of that plan and to cooperate with God. Whether we are running a printing press, operating a

bulldozer, teaching a class of students, or whatever we are doing, we are to do all to the glory of God. God will then bless our efforts and He will bring something good and great out of our lives, and we will be a happy people for Him doing it. We don't have to be a sad people living in drudgery. "The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 471)," but it is also true that one of Satan's greatest witnesses is a professed Christian who is a sad, defeated, and unhappy person. Friends, even though we are living in the antitypical Day of Atonement, a day of affliction of soul, this does not mean we cannot be joyful. There is joy in the Lord and there is happiness in doing His will. The closer we come to Him, the more happiness we are going to find, and He wants us to come as close to Him as possible.

Why not be the best? Why not be the people God wants us to be? We acknowledge we can't be anything of ourselves. Jesus said that without Him we can do nothing, and Paul says that through Christ we can do everything (John 15:5, Philippians 4:13). So, we need to submit and surrender our lives to Him, friends, and whatever we are struggling to overcome, whatever we are dealing with in our lives, we will find that there is power in the blood of the Lamb. The Lord will come into our lives. He will live and dwell within us and accomplish that same perfection for us that He perfected in sinful, human flesh two thousand years ago. He longs to do that same miracle for us today! Will we let Him? 



*"Prayer Requests" continued from page 1*

his electrical power chair for his means of locomotion. Jonathan is maturing physically and is becoming too heavy for his mother, Dianne, to lift out of bed or help with other common tasks of life. An electrical lift system that operates on a ceiling mounted track to convey him from his bedroom or to the bath tub, etc. would be of great value.

Another immediate need is a conversion van equipped to help lift Jonathan and his power-chair in and out of the van. This would help provide for easy and safe transportation to his physical therapy appointments two or three times a week, to his frequent doctor's appointments, or even to visit his older sister, aunts, and uncles. Jonathan's family is unable to provide these needs, and we at Philadelphia Press Ministries are asking you to especially pray concerning this matter and if the Lord lays upon you the burden to help it would be greatly appreciated. Any cards of encouragement or financial help for Jonathan or his family may be sent to:

Philadelphia Press Ministries  
P.O. Box 218  
Florence, Colorado 81226

*Richard Stratton*

# Setting the Record Straight (Part 1)

By Allen Stump

*(All of our readers may not be familiar with the current topics raised in recent issues of the Adult SS Bible Study Guide and Endtime Issues Newsletters, so it may seem to some that our articles on these publications are unduly critical; nevertheless, we feel that a critique of these articles and an exposure of the proper facts are necessary for the sake of those readers who are exposed to the many falsehoods presented in these publications. We do not wish our articles to be considered as personal attacks upon any of the parties involved. . . . . Editor)*

With the 147th edition of his newsletter, *Endtime Issues Newsletter* (hereafter known as *EIN*), Samuel Bacchiocchi began a series of articles on the doctrine of the Trinity. Bacchiocchi discussed some of the basic issues of the Trinity in the 147th *EIN* and then the 148th edition highlighted a study by Woodrow Whidden on the Holy Spirit. These articles were discussed in the July 2006 issue of *Old Paths*. In this current issue of *Old Paths*, we will review issues 149 and 150.

The 149th issue of *EIN* has an “Editorial Introduction to ‘The Adventist Trinity Debate’ ” written by Bacchiocchi. This editorial is followed by an article written by Jerry Moon entitled, “The Adventist Trinity Debate.” In this article, Moon attempts to cover a brief overview of the debate concerning the Trinity within Adventism and then the development of the doctrine of the Godhead in the Seventh-day Adventist Church during six historical periods which we will examine next month.

The 150th edition of *EIN* contains an article from Moon entitled, “Ellen White and the Trinity.” In this article, Moon presents what he calls: “a fourfold hypothesis” dealing, in part, with Ellen White and her “developing understanding” of God and her influence upon the rest of the Advent movement.

These two articles by Moon represent, in part, his material that was published in the book he co-authored with Woodrow Whidden and John Reeve, *The Trinity*. Part 1 of our study in *Old Paths* will examine the main points that Bacchiocchi stresses and provide commentary and factual adjustments. Part 2, to be published next month, will discuss the section written by Moon.

Before Moon’s historical material, Bacchiocchi writes an editorial in which he first belittles the Adventist Pioneers for not being Trinitarian and then he proposes his own theory on the Godhead.

Bacchiocchi acknowledges that “there is a raging controversy in our Adventist church [sic] over the question of the Trinity (*EIN*, # 149).” Bacchiocchi then states that “our early pioneers, mostly of whom were anti-Trinitarian . . . espoused

the Arian heresy that Christ was created by God and consequently not co-eternal with the Father (*Ibid.*.)” But what are the facts of the matter? Bacchiocchi attempts to indict the whole, or at least the majority, of the “early pioneers” as “Arian,” believing that Jesus was “created.” However, Dr. Bacchiocchi offers no evidence for this indictment. Dr. Bacchiocchi received five years of training at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome; however, the history of Adventist Christology was not his area of study, and to make such a charge without giving the necessary evidence for substantiation and without being an acknowledged authority on the subject should not suffice the serious student who must know solid facts. Let us then look at the facts of the matter.

Dr. Bacchiocchi states that *most* of the early pioneers were anti-Trinitarian; however, the evidence of what the early pioneers believed led Russell Holt to write that:

A survey of other Adventist writers [along with James White] during these years reveals that, *to a man*, they rejected the trinity, yet, with equal unanimity they upheld the divinity of Christ (Russell Holt, “The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination: Its Rejection and Acceptance,” a term paper dated June 2, 1969 — Emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

Bacchiocchi says that “our early pioneers, mostly . . . were anti-Trinitarian”, but Holt says that “*to a man*, they rejected the trinity.” It is true that a few of the Pioneers believed Jesus to have been the first of the creation of God, but it was a very small minority. J. M. Stephenson made a statement promoting the idea that Christ was a created being.

“The first born of every creature.” Creature signifies creation; hence to be the first born of every creature, (creation) he must be a created being; and as such, his life and immortality must depend upon the Father’s will, just as much as angels, or redeemed men: and as the Father has given his Son to have life in himself, so his Son will give this life to all his children (J. M. Stephenson, *The Review & Herald*, November 14, 1854).

It should be noted that Stephenson left the movement the very next year.

Uriah Smith was another pioneer who, at first, believed Jesus was created. In his first printing of the book, *Thoughts Critical and Practical on the book of Revelation*, in his comments on Revelation 3:14-22, he wrote:

Moreover he is “the beginning of the creation of God.” Not the beginner, but the beginning, of the creation, the first created being, dating his existence far back before any other created being or thing, next to the self-existent and eternal God. On this expression Barnes makes the fol-

lowing significant admission: “if it were demonstrated from other sources that Christ was, in fact, a created being, and the first that God had made, it cannot be denied that this language would appropriately express that fact.” (Uriah Smith, *Thoughts Critical and Practical on the book of Revelation*, p. 59)

Uriah Smith “soon revised his understanding, and in later printings of *Daniel and Revelation* he deleted all such statements and added strong statements against this idea, bringing him in harmony with the rest of the brethren (Lynnford Beachy, *What did the Pioneers Believe?*, Table of Contents page).”

J. N. Loughborough published the following statement in 1855:

“These things, saith the Amen. ‘The faithful and true Witness,’ the beginning of the Creation of God.” Rev. iii, 14. But had he been immortal when created, how could he have died (*Man’s Present Condition and his Future Reward or Punishment*, pp. 14, 15)?

An article, without author credits, was published in *The Review & Herald* under the editorship of James White in 1859, entitled, “Christ Our Passover” which carried the following statement:

This view, and this only, is consistent with the scripture which represents Christ as a created being, [“the beginning of the creation of God,” Rev.iii,14], and that large class of texts which speak of Christ as distinct from the Father, in as plain terms as language can employ, and declare him to be subordinate to him, sent forth by him, dying to reconcile the world to him, &c., declarations utterly at variance with the popular idea of a triune God (*Review & Herald*, October 13, 1859).

In the spirit of objectivity, we have listed all the original clear statements in print (four) that we are aware of in which the pioneers penned statements declaring that Jesus was a created being. This hardly constitutes the large majority and surely does not mean the entire body. There are, however, scores of recorded statements in which the pioneers declared Jesus to be the “only begotten Son of God.” It should be noted that the pioneers understood that there was a clear distinction between Christ being a creature through creation and Christ being the Son of God by birth. In the former, Christ would have to have been brought into existence from nothing by the creative power of the Father. In the latter, He was begotten of the Father’s very person through a process that the Bible does not describe but clearly states happened.

Sadly, many professed students of the Bible fail to make this distinction and assume that if one believes that Christ was begotten, one believes that Jesus was created, which is not true! I once had an experience that riveted into my mind the manner in which prejudice can prevent us from understanding the truth. I once loaned a video tape on this truth about God to a minister. After a reasonable period of time, I

visited and asked if he had watched any of the tape. He responded, “Yes, I watched until the speaker [Bill Stringfellow] stated that Christ was a created being, then I knew he was wrong and turned it off.” I had studied Elder Stringfellow’s presentation very carefully and I knew that no such statement was on the tape and informed the pastor so. I asked where on the tape such a statement was made. He responded, “He said that Jesus was begotten, that is the same thing.” With this logic, the minister would have to discard John 3:16 from the Bible.

The Adventist pioneers, however, were too wise to do such a foolish thing. They knew Jesus was the “only begotten Son of God.” Notice some of the following statements:

The Scriptures declare that Christ is “the only begotten son of God.” He is begotten, not created (E. J. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 21).

He was born of the Holy Ghost. In other words, Jesus Christ was born again. He came from heaven, God’s first-born, to the earth, and was born again. But all in Christ’s work goes by opposites for us: He, the sinless one, was made to be sin in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He, the living One, the Prince and Author of life, died that we might live. He whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity, the first-born of God, was born again in order that we might be born again (A. T. Jones, *Christian Perfection*, paragraph 53). (This is also found in *Lessons on Faith*, p. 154.)

He who was born in the form of God took the form of man (A. T. Jones, *The General Conference Bulletin*, 1895, p. 449).

Christ is the only literal Son of God. “The only begotten of the Father.” John 1:14. He is God because he is the Son of God; not by virtue of His resurrection. If Christ is the only begotten of the Father, then we cannot be begotten of the Father in a literal sense. It can only be in a secondary sense of the word (John Matteson, *The Review & Herald*, October 12, 1869).

The Scriptures nowhere speak of Christ as a created being, but on the contrary plainly state that he was begotten of the Father. (Uriah Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, p. 430)

God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, - a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, - appeared the Word. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1. This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. His beginning was not like that of any other being in the universe. It is set forth in the mysterious expressions, “his [God’s] only begotten Son” (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9), “the only begotten of the Father”

(John 1:14), and, “I proceeded forth and came from God.” John 8:42 (Uriah Smith, *Looking Unto Jesus*, p. 10).

The rainbow in the clouds is but a symbol of the rainbow which has encircled the throne from eternity. Back in the ages, which finite mind cannot fathom, the Father and Son were alone in the universe. Christ was the first begotten of the Father, and to Him Jehovah made known the divine plan of Creation (Stephen Haskell, *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, pp. 93, 94).

Christ was the firstborn in heaven; He was likewise the firstborn of God upon earth, and heir to the Father’s throne. Christ, the firstborn, though the Son of God, was clothed in humanity, and was made perfect through suffering (*Ibid.*, p. 98).

The S. D. Adventists hold the divinity of Christ so nearly with the Trinitarians that we apprehend no trial here (James White, *The Review & Herald*, October 12, 1876).

Notice it is not the concept of the Trinity that Elder White saw agreement upon, but rather that Jesus was divine.

But if I am asked what I think of Jesus Christ, my reply is, I believe all that the Scriptures say of him. If the testimony represents him as being in glory with the Father before the world was, I believe it. If it is said that he was in the beginning with God, that he was God, that all things were made by him and for him, and that without him was not anything made that was made, I believe it. If the Scriptures say he is the Son of God, I believe it. If it is declared that the Father sent his Son into the world, I believe he had a Son to send. . . . Children *inherit* the name of their father. The Son of God “hath by *inheritance* obtained a more excellent name than” the angels (R. F. Cottrell, *The Review & Herald*, June 1 1869, emphasis in the original).

So we see from these sample statements that there is ample evidence to support the concept that the pioneers believed Jesus to be the only begotten Son of God. Bacchiocchi is correct that the early pioneers did not believe that Christ was co-eternal (in the absolute sense) with the Father. They understood by the very nature of the terms *Father* and *Son* that the Father would of necessity be before the Son. They did believe, however, that Christ was begotten so far in eternity past, that the time was to our minds infinite.

As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it in these words, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2, margin. There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is

practically without beginning (E. J. Waggoner—*Christ and His Righteousness*, pp. 21, 22).

In arguing the perfect equality of the Father and the Son, and the fact that Christ is in very nature God, we do not design to be understood as teaching that the Father was not before the Son. It should not be necessary to guard this point, lest some should think that the Son existed as soon as the Father; yet some go to that extreme, which adds nothing to the dignity of Christ, but rather detracts from the honor due him, since many throw the whole thing away rather than accept a theory so obviously out of harmony with the language of Scripture, that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. He was begotten, not created. He is of the substance of the Father, so that in his very nature he is God; and since this is so “it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” Col. 1:19 . . . While both are of the same nature, the Father is first in point of time. He is also greater in that he had no beginning, while Christ’s personality had a beginning (E. J. Waggoner, *The Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1889).

The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first. The Son was equal with the Father in that he had received all things from the Father (James White, *The Review & Herald*, January 4, 1881).

And as to the Son of God, he would be excluded also, for he had God for his Father, and did, some point at the eternity of the past, have beginning of days. So that if we use Paul’s language in an absolute sense, it would be impossible to find but one being in the universe, and that is God the Father, who is without father, or mother, or descent, or beginning of days, or end of life (J. N. Andrews, *The Review & Herald*, September 7, 1869).

The angels, therefore, are created beings, necessarily of a lower order than their Creator. Christ is the only being begotten of the Father (James Edson White [Son of Ellen White], *Past Present and Future*, p. 52).

As we noted in last month’s issue of *Old Paths*, while we do not agree with Bacchiocchi’s concept of God, he is also out of sync with most professed Trinitarians. Instead of the “orthodox” concept of three persons in one being, Bacchiocchi advocates “three Beings with the same mind set (EIN, #149).” Bacchiocchi says:

In my Bible classes I proposed the definition of *Three Beings sharing the same center of consciousness*. The problem with such a definition is that there are no human analogies to help us understand it. Let us accept the fact that we worship a triune God who is so great that escapes our comprehension (*Ibid.*).

The official position of the Seventh-day Adventist is to be found in the *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, also known as volume twelve of *The Seventh-day Adventist*

Bible Commentary series. Notice the following references in the *Handbook* concerning the nature of God:

... one divine reality and not to a *plurality of divine beings* (p. 121).

... divine *Being singular, with a plurality of persons* (p. 122).

The danger of Tritheism [three beings ... becomes real when the oneness of God is reduced to a mere unity conceived in analogy to a human society or a fellowship of action. Beyond such a unity of action, however, it is necessary to envision God as the one single reality which, in the very acts by which He reveals Himself directly in history, transcends the limits of our human reason (p. 150).

How is it that Bacchiocchi is allowed to hold to such unorthodox Trinitarian teachings in such a professed Trinitarian church? Is Bacchiocchi considered too superior a personality to question? Does his time at the Jesuit Gregorian make him unquestionable? Is it simply enough to acknowledge a *belief* in a triune God as a *fact* even though we cannot understand it? No! No, beloved! God wants our faith to be an intelligent faith based on clear facts from the word of God. Ellen White noted the need we have to remember that God is guiding His people on the pathway to heaven.

In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. *We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history* (*Life Sketches*, p. 196).

*Life Sketches* was published in 1915, but Ellen White first made this statement in *The General Conference Bulletin* on January 29, 1893. She then stated it again in her article in *The Review & Herald* on October 12, 1905, thus showing the consistency of her belief that God had led and taught the Advent people over the years.

Those who forget the lessons of the past are doomed to repeat them in the future. A correct understanding of our history as a people is very important. By the end of the first half of the 20th century the majority of the church had accepted the Trinitarian doctrine. Because our former position was swept under the historical rug after the passing of half a century, the knowledge that the church had once been non-Trinitarian was almost forgotten. When LeRoy Froom published *Movement of Destiny*, in 1971, he could treat the early position of the church “like an encapsulated cancer, gross but confined (Biblical Research Institute, *The Sanctuary and the Atonement*, p. 530)” due to the fact that our history was mostly unknown to the new converts. However, as the truth has been revealed in the last thirty-plus years, the Adventist Church has had to come face-to-face with the facts of its early non-Trinitarian position. Now, instead of denying

the non-Trinitarian position she once held, she explains this change as a growing process, especially accelerated by the ministry of Ellen G. White, whom the church also acknowledges as having had a growing experience.

But we have a paradox, an enigma, that is not easily solved if we hold to the Trinitarian teaching. Sister White stated that God had raised up the Adventist movement and gave it truth to declare to the world. In 1904 Ellen White wrote:

Let none seek to tear away the foundations of our faith—the foundations that were laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the word and by revelation. *Upon these foundations we have been building for the last fifty years.* Men may suppose that they have found a new way and that they can lay a stronger foundation than that which has been laid. But this is a great deception. Other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 297).

She says that for the fifty years prior to 1904 (going back to at least 1854), the church had been building upon a solid foundation. She warns against men thinking that they have a better way. In that same year, 1904, she wrote of an omega of heresies that would come into the church. Notice what she said concerning it:

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. *The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error.* A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure (*Special Testimonies, Series B, no. 2, p. 54*).

If the Trinitarian teaching were true, then we must admit that the movement, in the most fundamental teaching, was raised up in error and was actually doing the work of Satan. Ellen White, however, states that for fifty years the movement was built upon a solid foundation. Some would cite the fact that the development, during the first nineteen years of the Advent movement, of our understanding of what time of

day the Sabbath should began and end and the progression in our understanding of *how to apply* health reform principles are evidences that the Advent movement was growing, not only in its insight in these areas, but also in the fundamental knowledge of who God is. It is true there was a progression of understanding on *when to keep* the Sabbath and in *how to apply* health reform fairly early in the movement, but this actually provides strong evidence against the acceptance of the Trinity doctrine because the doctrine of God is the most fundamental doctrine upon which all others are based and a wise God would see that the most major part of the platform of truth is laid down first!

Additionally, our understanding of the Biblical doctrine of the Sabbath was formed in the earliest days of this movement, but it should be not confused with which hours one should observe the Sabbath. The details, though important, are not the doctrine itself. In fact, our knowledge of *how to observe* the Sabbath is continually growing. The same is true with health reform. Temperance is a Biblical doctrine, but our knowledge of *how to be* temperate and how to live healthfully is continually growing. Let us not confuse the doctrine with the details of how to observe it. The truth is, all the foundational doctrines of Adventism were established in the early days of the movement.

If the Advent people needed correction in their understanding on the nature of God and Christ, then God would have done it when the foundation was being set! Ellen White wrote that if the omega succeeded, that “The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error (*Ibid.*).” Today the non-Trinitarian position of our early pioneers is accounted as error. Every detail of the prophecy that Ellen White gave has been fulfilled except the last part which states, “Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure (*Ibid.*).” If this has not occurred, then it surely can be expected to be fulfilled in the near future. God is not to be trifled with. Those who betray sacred trusts will have to answer for their evil deeds. God gave to the Adventist people sacred trusts and we are to be faithful to them!

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. *To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.*

The most solemn truths ever *entrusted* to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned,

*and God’s people are to be true to the trust committed to them (Testimonies for the Church, 1909, vol. 9, p. 19).*

It is a great wickedness to betray these sacred trusts and the consequences are terrible!

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. 76).*

On June 2, 1947, A. W. Spalding wrote a two-page letter to H. Camden Lacey. The letter began:

Will you extend your helping hand to me once more? I am in Washington making the last revision of my manuscript for the first volume of An Episodic History of Seventh-day Adventists. Two or three large questions confront me.

One of these is the history of the trinitarian and antitrinitarian doctrines among us. I understand that some of our leading men in the beginning were opposed to the doctrine of the trinity, at least as expressed by certain trinitarians.

After making certain observations in relation to the subject, Spalding wrote:

Now I should be grateful for any light you have to throw upon the subject.

There is to me a twilight zone in this history which I wish to have lighted. ... Did all the fathers sin? And if so, did they repent? How prove the unity of the faith in our succession if our pioneers were Arians and we are Athanasians?


Lacey replied in a three-page letter dated June 5, 1947. The reply read in part:

I will attempt now to answer some of the queries you propound in your recent letter of the 2nd.

Most assuredly our people were anti-trinitarians, when we (the Lacey family) accepted the ‘Truth’ in 1888. At least, that is how it appeared to us at that time.

“How prove the unity of the faith in our succession if our pioneers were Arians and we are Athanasians?” Well now, the answer is obvious- to you, as well as to the rest of us; so: let us leave it there!

Lacey’s statement deserves careful thought. The basis for succession of the faith is unity in the truth. Few on either side of the issue (trinitarian or non-trinitarian) question the importance of a proper understanding of the doctrine of God.

Lacey is writing as a Trinitarian in 1947 and he is saying very plainly that he cannot claim unity of the faith with the pioneers; yet, truth is the basis for succession of the faith. The implications should be as clear to us as they were clear to Lacey. If there is not succession of the faith between the pioneers of the movement and today, then we must admit that either we, or the pioneers, were in error. If they were in error on this vital subject, then how can we claim that God raised up this movement? No wonder Lacey said, "... let us leave it there!" However, this need not be. We do not have to repudiate the teachings that were established in truth. Getting the record set straight by having a correct understanding of our history helps us to properly comprehend our place and work in the world at this time. 



## Letters:

I would like to complement your choice of topics for *Old Paths*. Each one is outstanding. My compliments also for the proof-reading and editing, for which I am sure Sister Holt has a hand. Her articles are inspiring, too ... I truly enjoy your travels ... "Bits and Pieces" is a wonderful addition.—**Montana**

Thank you very much for sending me *Old Paths* every month. Every issue is quite enlightening and filled with truth. You did a good job commenting on and analyzing the unbiblical and Babylonian errors that were present in the previous Sabbath School Quarterly with lessons for the months of April, May, and June 2006 ... Both my wife ... and I wish you the Lord's richest blessings in your wonderful work. Keep looking up, for the Lord is in charge, and the present truth must be preached in the whole world.—**Tennessee**

Wow! Glory indeed to God the Father & to His Son, Our Lord & Saviour! I visited the OP website yesterday. I downloaded the May 2005 OP on The Ten Commandments & the U.S. Supreme Court. Thank you very much. May God richly bless you. Please pray for the work in my area, it seems as if a wild fire is threatening to ignite!—**Internet**

I could use some copies of *Old Paths* to hand out in church...I told them, it was a Catholic doctrine, in Sabbath School. The teacher said, "Just because Catholics believe it doesn't make it wrong. They have other doctrine that's right too." I don't know what they are ... Thanks for helping to open my eyes, through the Holy Spirit. Thank God, for the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. It's so hard for people to see the truth. I know now, why Jesus wept. I weep sometimes myself. Time is short, we got to get it right and get it done.—**Pennsylvania**


I have just read your April 2006 *Old Paths* and was truly blessed. You have truly done a good job on those compilation as regards those statement from the writings of Ellen White such as three living persons of the heavenly trio; three great powers; the eternal heavenly dignitaries, etc.— A Pastor in **Nigeria**

I lead in operating an independent ministry in the western part of Nigeria ... We are just humble instruments in the Lord's Hand to lead precious and thirsty souls to Jesus Christ ... I have followed the blueprint of the NT in establishing a home church ... Since I started the work here, I have been in constant conflict with the corrupt conference SDA organization for waking our people up and for teaching them proper observance of the Sabbath plus kneeling down in both public and private worship. This later teaching and practice have caused me to be threatened with court case by ... leaders in the SDA organization ... Oh, honestly, words cannot describe how joyful I am to have accepted the Truth (John 14:6) of the correct understanding of the Godhead ... At first I was a bit skeptical because of my former understanding derived from a book ... however, after rereading that book ... I now see clearly that the writers ... proved their doctrines from the Bible, pioneers of the SDA and Spirit of Prophecy writings. It's apparent that I've been deceived ... I now see from the weight of evidence in the Bible, SOP writings and our Pioneers that I was indeed wrong ... Our search for the truth about God requires that we set aside all our preconceived ideas. One needs an open, searching mind, willing to accept light found in God's Word as He gently leads us to His truth...Once we have the correct knowledge of God, all doctrinal truths in Scripture fall into place for they all center on the revelation of God through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ ... I have endeavored to share this wonderful truth ... with my former friends and brethren that believers in tritheism ... send more materials ... for both in-reach and outreach.—The Same Pastor in **Nigeria**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to my ministry which is dedicated to assisting those in the healthful lifestyle work. I am currently assisting a number of centers to secure health-care products for their ministries and health guests, such as organic herbs, organic extracts and essential oils, juicers, blenders, foot spas, etc.

Our goal in this ministry is to support the right arm of the gospel, for we need to work together to finish God's work on this earth. If you would like more information about this ministry, you may contact me at [vpeandassoc@yahoo.com](mailto:vpeandassoc@yahoo.com). We do not accept any offerings for this ministry.

Vic Parrott  
28002 N. Jackson Road  
Chattaroy, WA 99003  
509-844-3039 

# Continued Review of the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, “The Gospel, 1844, and the Judgment”

By Allen Stump

(Please see introductory remarks at the beginning of the article “Setting the Record Straight,” on page 10 . . . Editor)

Last month we published an article entitled, “How Simple is Simple?” which gave comments on the first eight lessons of the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide. This current article is designed to offer a few brief comments on lessons 9 through 11 and to look at issues of prophetic interpretation that are connected to events portrayed in Daniel and also Revelation.

## Lesson 9: Day-Year Principle

Lesson 9 covers the principle that a prophetic day in apocalyptic prophecy is equal to a year in literal time. The basis of the author’s (Clifford Goldstein) argument is threefold. Goldstein argues that the only way to make meaningful sense out of the seventy-week prophecy is to understand that each day represents a year. Goldstein also discusses Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 and provides certain parallels within Hebrew poetry that connect the concept of *days* and *years*. While we agree with these principles, however, we believe more evidence should have been given if the author is devoting a week of study in the quarterly to this one point.

The importance of the year-day principle should never be overlooked. It helps to provide God’s people with a prophetic guide to read their *chart and compass*. The year-day principle validates the Adventist understanding of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 in declaring the time of Christ’s coming and for His declaration, “The time is fulfilled (Mark 1:15).” Without the year-day principle, we cannot establish A.D. 1844 as a valid time for the movement of Jesus Christ into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary to begin His work of final atonement.

For those who would like detailed evidence of the validity of the year-day principle, we recommend Volume 1 of the Daniel & Revelation Committee Series, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, by William Shea. Shea devotes over forty pages of research to prove beyond reasonable doubt the legitimacy of the year-day principle.

## Lesson 10: Rome and Antiochus

Lesson 10 discusses the place of Rome in the prophecy of Daniel and discounts the common prevailing view among evangelicals that the fulfillment of the “little horn” of Daniel 8 is found in the Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes. Goldstein does a reasonable, but basic, defense against the position of Antiochus being the “little horn” of Daniel chapter 8. Of the four successive kingdoms mentioned in Daniel, Rome is the only one not mentioned by name. This has led some to believe that even though Rome is clearly the

kingdom that follows Greece in chapters 2 and 7, it is not the nation portrayed in chapter 8. Removing Rome from this picture helps to take the heat off of the papacy for it is this power that is said to “prosper and practice,” “destroy,” and even “stand up against the Prince of princes (Daniel 8:25).”

The lesson for Tuesday, August 29, finishes with an indictment that Christ is deceptive. The statement in question says,

**Jews who lived during the time of the Roman Empire would often interpret these same prophecies like this: Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Edom. Why Edom? Because, afraid of the Romans, the Jews hid the interpretation, something that the Lord in His divine providence and foresight did hundreds of years earlier in Daniel itself.**

It is one thing to speak in symbols, even if their interpretation is not apparent on the surface, and quite another matter to hide something. The work of Christ is one of openness.

**And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not (Mark 14:48, 49).**

Jesus choose not to reveal the meaning of the details of the prophecies of Daniel early, and they were sealed unto “the time of the end (Daniel 12:4).” The prophecies were, however, not hidden of themselves, some of them were relevant to a much later time and even to the last days. Those could not be clearly understood until the time came that they were applicable to. At that time, the symbols became clear and the message understandable.

Also, unlike the Jews, Christ never worked out of fear. Boldly, Jesus always told the straight truth, even calling Herod a “fox (Luke 13:32)” and declaring the scribes and Pharisees to be “hypocrites (Matthew 23:13).”

## Lesson 11: The Sanctuary and the Little Horn

Lesson 11 deals with the trampling down of the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary and has some reasonably illustrative points concerning the attempts of the Papacy to take Christ’s high priestly ministry away from the people and substitute it with a human priesthood.

Some of the points of truth that are mentioned in the teacher’s edition of the lesson as being cast to the ground are, “Sunday Sabbath, immortality of the soul, Mariolatry, human intercession, purgatory, equal or superior status of tradition with reference to Scripture (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, Third Quarter 2006, p. 130).” Of notable omission from John Fowler’s (the author of the



lesson commentary) list was the doctrine of the Trinity, which is the very foundation of the antichrist.

Paul boldly declared that “there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).” This plain and essential teaching of the Bible was rejected by the Papacy. While the Papacy claims to believe in one God, its *one God* is a *godhead* of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal persons. 1 Timothy 2:5 also clearly says that Jesus is not that one God, but the Mediator between that one God and men.

The place of Christ in the plan of salvation is consistently presented in the Scriptures as that of Mediator between God and men. “The mystic ladder of his [Jacob’s] dream represented Jesus, the only medium of communication between God and man (*Steps to Christ*, p. 20).”

It is through Christ, by the ministration of His heavenly messengers, that every blessing comes from God to us. . . . And thus Christ is the medium of communication of man with God, and of God with men (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 143).

Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, set up from everlasting to be our substitute and surety (*Signs of the Times*, April 26, 1899).

From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant, the one in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 247).

The truth that Jesus is the only mediator has been denied by the Papacy because it conflicts with the basic premise of the Trinity doctrine. For Jesus to be our mediator, he must be able to fully reach both parties (God and man) that He must reconcile. If Jesus is really co-equal with the Father in all respects, as the Trinity doctrine teaches, then we must have a mediator between us and Jesus. This is recognized by the Papacy and the result is Mariology, as well as the intercession of dead *saints*. with Mary being worshiped as a mediatrix. When, in our teachings, Jesus is taken out of His high and rightful place as the Son of God, He becomes disqualified to be our high priest! The fact that Jesus is the Son of God, however, is the foundation of our faith.

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. . . . The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer’s faith (*Desire of Ages*, p. 412).”

The fifth chapter of Hebrews emphasizes the connection between Christ’s mediatorial role and His Sonship.

And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee . . . saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec . . . Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 5:4-10).

Jesus is our priest because God, in His plan, designated Him as such. Observe that the exact authority which affirms Christ’s Sonship to the Father also designates His mediatorial role: “He that said . . . Thou art my Son . . . saith also . . . Thou art a priest for ever (Ibid.).” Thus Christ’s mediation is irremovably tied to His Sonship. To truly accept His mediation requires an acceptance that He is the Son of God.

### **Saved By and Through the Church?**

Page 131 of the Teachers Edition of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* states:

Instead of the [Catholic] church being the proclaimer of salvation by grace through Christ alone, it became the reservoir of salvation so that one cannot be saved without being a member of it. Such is the work of the little horn.

Those who are familiar with Seventh-day Adventism know that while no such official teaching is publicly endorsed, the principle is universally understood by many of its members. When someone allows Satan to overcome them and they lose their spiritual experience, how often is heard a phrase such as, “He has left the church,” or “She has left the church.” Seldom do we hear about someone leaving Jesus!

God certainly did call His church out and set a people apart to be a vehicle for the sharing of His truth. Instead of the church being a means for the proclamation of the truth, however, like Catholicism, Adventism has allowed the concept of *the church* to be the grand goal of truth rather than a means of spreading the truth.

### **The Understanding of the Papacy as the “little horn” and the Antichrist of Prophecy**

Integral to the understanding the role of the church, especially that of the remnant, is having an understanding of the identity of the “little horn” power. Adventism was a movement born out of prophecy and very early in her experience she identified the Papacy as the “man of sin.”

William Miller identified the Papacy as “the man of sin,” the “little horn” power in his lectures. (See *A Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology*, pp. 48, 49.)

In 1850, J. B. Cook, writing in the second issue of the *Advent Review*, noted:

From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries we trace the efforts of the **Man of Sin**, to set aside “the Lord’s Day,” and introduce the first day — the day on which the European nations had been accustomed to idolize the Sun.

They are so far “drunk with the wine” of Papal Rome. My feelings were inexpressible, when I saw this. The truth I must confess.

This is the true testimony. Thus easily is ALL the wind taken from the sails of those who sail, perhaps unwittingly, under the Pope’s sabbatic flag (*Advent Review*, Vol. 1, number 2, August 1850).

In 1846, Ellen White was given a vision where she was shown the importance of the Sabbath. She wrote:

The fourth commandment has been trampled upon, therefore we are called upon to repair the breach in the law and plead for the desecrated Sabbath. The man of sin, who exalted himself above God, and thought to change times and laws, brought about the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. In doing this he made a breach in the law of God (*Life Sketches*, p. 96).

This is a clear reference to the Papacy. Ellen White, along with the Adventist Pioneers clearly believed the “little horn” power to be Rome with the emphasis on it being the Papal phase of Rome.

### **“Our religion would be changed”**

During the crisis over the pantheist teachings of Dr. Kellogg during the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Ellen White was given insight concerning a special effort of Satan to undermine the faith of God’s people. She wrote:

The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. ***Our religion would be changed.*** The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure (*Special Testimonies*, series B, no. 2, pp. 54, 55).

Through Ellen White, God in His great mercy sent His people a warning that Satan had plans to disrupt the work of God and would attempt to change our faith. If this false revival was allowed to succeed, it would change our religious faith! This change would not be an open attempt to rebel against God, but would be done under the guise of “virtue” being “better than vice” and would appear to do a “wonderful work.” God, however, would not be in this work and it would be finally swept away.

We have seen that a knowledge of the place of the Papacy in Bible prophecy was well-established in the Advent

Movement. In fact, when the first fundamental statements of belief was published in 1872, statement #13 declared:

That as the man of sin, the papacy, has thought to change times and laws (the laws of God), Dan. 7:25, and has misled almost all Christendom in regard to the fourth commandment, we find a prophecy of a reform in this respect to be wrought among believers just before the coming of Christ. Isa. 56:1, 2, 1 Pet. 1:5, Rev. 14:12, &c. (1872 tract, *A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by The Seventh-day Adventists*).

This statement was also published in the first edition of the *Signs of the Times* (1874; James White, Editor) and in the 1889, 1905, and 1907-1914 *Yearbooks*.

When the 1931 statement was published in the *Yearbook*, *no* statement on the Papacy was found. The General Conference in session at Dallas, Texas in 1980 voted the present statement which contains *no* mention of the Papacy. It is doubtful that many of the delegates at that session even knew that sixty-six years earlier the church’s beliefs had a statement on the Papacy! Our religion has been changed!

The possibility for the deletion in the statements of belief on the man of sin was enhanced when the General Conference Executive Committee voted to approve a document in 1926 entitled, “Relationship to Other Societies.” The first point of this document stated:

We recognize every agency that lifts up Christ before men as a part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world, and we hold in high esteem the Christian men and women in other communions who are engaged in winning souls to Christ (*So Much in Common, -Documents of interest in the conversations between the World Council of Churches and the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, p. 73).

From 1926 onward, it would not be fashionable to speak against those from Babylon who think they are working for the up-building of the body of Christ but who in reality are under the control of Satan working for the destruction of souls.

### **The Doctrine of God**

The change of position on the doctrine of God came into the church at about the time we were changing the position of our relationship to Babylon. Contrary to what others would declare, up to the time of Ellen White’s death and shortly thereafter, the teaching of Adventism did not include the doctrine of the Trinity. The statements of belief on God in the 1872 tract was “distinctly non-Trinitarian (*Issues*, p. 39).” But in the 1931 statements, and then later in the 1980 statements, the concept of the Trinity is taught. As major as the issue of the “man of sin” is, no doctrine is more fundamental than one’s view of God. Our religion was changed and we must not forget that the real issue with Dr. Kellogg was over the nature and personality of God.

Ellen White warned that this new theology's "foundation would be built on the sand." The Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is the solid foundation of the believer's faith. Writing to the church at Ephesus, Paul stated:

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:19, 20).

The believer today, as well as the apostles and prophets, all have the same foundation for their faith, Jesus Christ—the chief corner stone. In Ephesians, Paul applies the prophecy of Isaiah 28:16 to Jesus, as does Peter in 1 Peter 2:6.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, even the Lord, Behold, I lay for the foundation of Sion a costly stone, a choice, a corner-stone, a precious stone, for its foundations; and he that believes on him shall by no means be ashamed. (Isaiah 28:16, English translation of the Septuagint)

Ellen White strongly agreed with these statements of Scripture. Concerning Peter's confession that Jesus is the Son of God, as recorded in Matthew 16:16, we read: "Peter had expressed the truth which is the foundation of the church's faith (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 413)." We also noted earlier the statement on page 412: "The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer's faith."

No wonder that Ellen White declared that this new teaching "would be built on the sand." She also told us its end result: "storm and tempest would sweep away the structure (*Special Testimonies*, series B, no. 2, p. 55).

## The Sanctuary Doctrine

Further changes in our religion can be seen in the comparison of our former beliefs on the topic of the sanctuary with our current teaching on this subject. Please carefully compare the following statements concerning the sanctuary doctrine:

### 1872 Tract

That the sanctuary of the new covenant is the tabernacle of God in Heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8, and onward, of which **our Lord, as great High Priest**, is minister; that this sanctuary is the antitype of the Mosaic tabernacle, and that the priestly work of our Lord, connected therewith, is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation. Heb. 8:1-5, &c.; that this is the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, what is termed its cleansing being in this case, as in the type, simply **the entrance of the high priest into the most holy place, to finish the round of service connected therewith, by blotting out and removing from the sanctuary the sins which had been transferred to it by means of the ministration in the first apartment, Heb. 9:22, 23; and that this work, in the antitype, commencing in 1844,**

occupies a brief but indefinite space, at the conclusion of which the work of mercy for the world is finished

That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, **the Son of the Eternal Father**, the one by whom God created all things, and by whom they do consist; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, **ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in Heaven, where, with his own blood he makes atonement for our sins; which atonement so far from being made on the cross, which was but the offering of the sacrifice, is the very last portion of his work as priest according to the example of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in Heaven.** See Lev. 16; Heb. 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7; &c. (1872 tract, *A Declaration of the Fundamental Principles Taught and Practiced by The Seventh-day Adventists*; emphasis supplied).

### 1980 Statement

24. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary: There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, **making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross.** He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Heb. 8:1-5; 4:14-16; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; 1:3; 2:16, 17; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Lev. 16; Rev. 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:12.) (<http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/fundamental/index.html>)

The 1872 statement clearly teaches that Jesus' work in the Most Holy Place is necessary to make final atonement for sin

and that the atonement spoken of is not just the sacrifice on the cross. The new statement says nothing about the Most Holy Place nor Christ making atonement after 1844. In fact, this statement uses language from the book, *Questions on Doctrine*. *Questions on Doctrine* was a book published as a clarification of Adventist belief after some of the leading ministers within the Seventh-day Adventist Church held conferences with some leading evangelicals in 1955 and 1956. During these conferences, compromises were made in some of our teachings in an effort to please the evangelicals and to help remove the status of cult from Adventism.

*Questions on Doctrine* taught that the atonement for sin was completed on the cross and that the work of Jesus in heaven does not involve any work necessary for our salvation. Notice the following blasphemous statements:

When, therefore, one hears an Adventist say, or reads in Adventist literature – even in the writings of Ellen G. White – that Christ is making atonement now, it should be understood that we mean simply that Christ is now *making application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement He made on the cross*; that He is making it efficacious for us individually, according to our needs and requests (*Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 354, 355 - emphasis in the original)."

How glorious is the thought that the King, who occupies the throne, is also our representative at the court of heaven! This becomes all the more meaningful when we realize that Jesus our surety entered the "holy places," and appeared in the presence of God for us. But it was not with the hope of obtaining something for us at that time, or at some future time. No! *He had already obtained it for us on the cross* (*Ibid.*, p. 381; emphasis in the original).

While some consider the 1980 statements of belief a courageous step forward; the truth is, these statements of belief brings Adventism much closer to Rome than many realize. Remember:

It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy (*Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894).

God, through Ellen White, sent a most serious and solemn message to the church shortly before her ministry was to end. The people needed to understand that they were simply not one church among many in Christianity, but rather were to be a lighthouse to the world and all that Babylon encompassed. God wanted His people to warn the world and all those in it against the beast and the mark of the beast. In 1909 she wrote:

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been *entrusted* the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn im-

port—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.


The most solemn truths ever *entrusted* to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19).

In the two above paragraphs the word, "*entrusted*" stands out. God entrusted the message of the sanctuary atonement, the call out of Babylon, and the mark of the beast to Adventism. She also noted what would be the result if we failed to fulfill this trust.

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 (*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 247).

## Implications

Ellen White sent a message to the General Conference Session in 1899 which stated, "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history (*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, February 20, 1899)." This is also published in *Life Sketches*, p. 196. Sadly, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has forgotten not only the way the Lord has led her, but especially her most basic fundamental beliefs concerning Christ, the Papacy as the man of sin, and Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary. It is a sad commentary to realize that one can be a member in good and regular standing within the mainline church today without believing the solid foundation that Jesus is the literal Son of God. It is also unconscionable that one can be a member in good and regular standing in the church that was raised up to deal the Papacy its death blow and not believe the Papacy to be the man of sin. It is equally unconscionable that one can even be a minister or General Conference president without believing there is a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven, where, since 1844, Jesus has been making the final atonement for sin!

As we noted earlier, Adventism is a movement of prophecy. Yet, when the most basic foundation of Adventism is removed, along with her pillars, the Lord must proclaim the verdict that is pronounced upon Laodicea, "I will spew thee out (Revelation 3:16)." May God give us His Spirit to be able to discern the times in which we live and to be like the children of Issachar who, during the time of David, "were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do (1 Chronicles 12:32)." 

# Camp Meeting Report

Our theme for the West Virginia camp meeting, held June 20 through June 24, was "Revival and Reformation" and presentations by the various speakers reflected this message. Visitors came from many parts of the United States, as well as from a few places overseas. Brother Lynnford Beachy's translator for his recent Brazilian series of meetings, Jairo Carvalho, attended camp meeting, along with his wife Paula, and we were very blessed to meet them both. Brother Carvalho gave two presentations during camp meeting. Also, Brother Elvis Alberto, who is leading out in the work in Curacaõ in the Netherlands Antilles, attended camp meeting and spoke to us twice about his faith-building experiences in Curacaõ, which, along with presentations by other speakers, were both uplifting and encouraging. Even though the schedule was quite full, we were able to leave free time between most meetings to allow campers opportunity to reflect on the messages presented and for fellowship with one another.



**Young Sisters' Choir**

During this camp meeting, ground was broken by broadcasting the audio portion of several of our meetings over the Internet, and in the next few months, as the presentations can be processed, we plan to have the video format of the meetings on the Internet, playable through Windows Media player. If you missed the camp meeting, we encourage you to check the web site for updates ([www.smyrna.org](http://www.smyrna.org)).

Communion service was held during camp meeting, which was a spiritual highlight and helped to draw us closer together as



**More Special Music**

brothers and sisters, as well as closer to our Lord and Savior. Another highlight was the baptism of three precious people during camp meeting, and we pray that their walk with the Lord will continue to be full

and satisfying. Also, Brother Alberto was ordained as an elder during camp meeting, so that he can officiate in a fuller capacity with the body of believers in Curacaõ.

Video tapes and DVD copies of the camp meeting presentations will soon be available for those without Internet access and for those wishing high quality copies for themselves and for sharing. We hope and pray that Jesus will come before camp meeting next year, but if not, we hope that you will plan now to attend, to not only receive a spiritual blessing but also to be a spiritual blessing to the rest of us who do attend. If you wish to place an order for the camp meeting messages currently ready on video and DVD, please call us for further information, and we plan to publish a complete list of the camp meeting sermons next month.

*Ornycha Holt*



**Happy!**



**Main Congregation**

## *Ministers and Gospel Workers' Meeting*

Some of the ministers and elders at camp meeting were able to have an additional meeting on the Sunday after camp meeting to discuss the subject of righteousness by faith and how to work toward a better presentation of the most precious message the Lord sent us in 1888. As an outgrowth of this meeting, a follow-up meeting with these brethren is scheduled for September, 2006, to continue the study of these topics.

In an effort to help create an environment for open dialogue, the brethren agreed to exchange draft articles from *God's Word/God's Way*, *Old Paths*, *Open Face*, and *Present Truth* newsletters for comments and suggestions prior to publication. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety (Proverbs 11:14)." We hope this step will promote better understanding and harmony among us, as well as help us to avoid expressions that might be misunderstood and lead people astray. We feel it is important to try to present a united front.

*Allen Stump*

# Youth's Corner - Harry and Nora

(This mission story was presented to the children on a recent Sabbath morning at the Smyrna Chapel, and we think it will be inspiring to our readers, both young and old alike. . . . . Editor)

This is a very special story that happened a long time ago. Harry and Nora were leaving New York City and it was 1895. Now, that is before your Mommy and Daddy were born. That is before your Grandmas and Grandpas were born and maybe even before their parents were born. Harry and Nora were leaving New York City because they were going across the ocean in a steam ship on a very long trip. They had packed up all of the belongings they would need because a long way across one ocean and then across another ocean, in the continent of Africa, were twelve thousand acres that had been donated to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Harry and Nora were going to that land to do something special for God. Before they went, they knew they would have to build their own home, plant their own gardens, dig their own wells, and do many other things like that, so Harry packed the axes and hoes and other tools he would need, and Nora packed twelve thousand pounds of flour and boxes and boxes of canned goods! Where they were going there were no stores and there might not be other food to eat until their gardens started to grow.

And so, they boarded the ship in New York and for eight days they sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to England. Harry said the last three days on the ship were very noisy because the ship was having a very rough time in the ocean, going high up one wave and then falling down into the trough of the next wave. As it did so, the trunk of clothes they had in their room went sliding back and forth across the floor, hitting the walls all day and all night long. It kept them awake all the time. They stayed in their beds much of the time, for if they were on the floor they also were tossed back and forth. After waiting a few days in England, they boarded another boat which took them on another long journey all the way to Africa. Once in Africa, they rode a train for as far as they could go and then the train rails ended! Next, they moved all of their belongings onto carts pulled by oxen. So all of Harry's tools and all of Nora's food were loaded onto carts, and for six weeks and six

hundred miles they continued their journey to the interior of Africa.

Now, Harry had never driven an ox cart before, but he was sure he was up to the task. He adjusted his hat to just the right angle on his head, then he picked up his whip and cracked it over the heads of the oxen, and do you know what happened next? Those oxen charged! Off and running they went, and Nora, along with another missionary lady, were on top of the ox cart. Nora was frightened and called, "Harry, help me!" What could Harry do? He was on the ground. All he did was crack the whip and off the cart went! "Harry, help me," Nora continued. So what would a good husband do? Off and running went Harry after the cart, whip in hand, but he ended up in a special tree called the *Wait-A-Bit* tree. The *Wait-A-Bit* tree is a thorn tree and the thorns are like fish hooks with barbs on the end of them, and Harry ran right into this tree. The oxen missed the tree, the cart missed it, but not Harry. He was stuck in the *Wait-A-Bit* tree and wait he did. The only way he was able to get out of the tree was to pull hard on his clothes and leave part off his clothes behind, but that was okay because Nora was still calling, "Help me, Harry!" So off he went again, and finally the oxen turned around, hit another cart and stopped. That was their first day of a forty-two day journey by ox cart.

They had other problems along the way, but the reason I am telling you this story is because of a big word called *perseverance*. Perseverance means you stick to something you know you need to do even though you are having trouble doing it, and Harry and Nora had trouble at the start of their journey with a rough ocean journey and now they were having trouble with ox carts and more trouble was yet to come.

Finding water on their six-week journey was difficult, for not only did the oxen need water, but Harry and Nora also needed water to drink, as well as water to cook and clean with. Sometimes they would pass through villages and ask about water, and one time the chief of the village told them he had a well. So, Harry and Nora went looking for the well but what they found was just a little depression in the ground with water slowly seeping up a little bit at a

time, and when they first got there they were surprised to find someone washing his feet in the well they were supposed to drink from! They politely asked if that person would be willing to wash his feet later, and Harry and Nora then had to wait for the dirt to settle out of the water. Two hours later, by slowly cupping out the water, they obtained one bucket of water and that was all they could take time for. Even though they had trouble finding water, they persevered! They were going to Africa to build a mission and it didn't matter if they were on an ox cart for six weeks or if they had trouble finding water, they would work for God!

Harry and Nora had many problems, but they persevered and did not give up. Finally, after six weeks, they arrived at the huge tract of land that was to be their new home. On it were only two huts—one for Harry and Nora and one for the other missionary couple that accompanied them. The huts were thatched, which meant the roofs were made of grass. One of the first things Harry knew he had to do was to build a better house for them that would keep them dry, for the rainy season was coming, but Harry couldn't find good wood to build their house with. The trees that were grew on the land were knarled and crooked. Harry kept looking and finally found some trees that were straight, but his African helper said, "No, no, not good wood. Good for one month, good for two months, bad in three months." Harry thought that couldn't be, so he cut down the wood and used it for his roof, and it was good for one month and good for two months, but on the third month the roof came crashing down because little bugs lived inside those trees and ate out the inside of the trees. Now Harry had another problem, but he persevered and this time listened to the Africans and used the knarled and crooked wood for his house. Between the crooked pieces of wood, Harry put a lot of mud to form walls and to make a roof, and finally Harry was finished.

Next, Harry and some of his friends moved the cook stove that Nora had brought all the way from America on two steam ships and on the train and lastly on the ox-cart into her dirt-floor kitchen. She polished up the stove and said, "In the

morning I am going to make a good breakfast for you, Harry, because you have worked so hard on this house,” and then they went to bed. Do you know what happened during the night? It started to rain, and it rained and rained very hard. In fact, through the roof it started to really leak on Harry and Nora, who were sleeping in their beds. There was only one thing they could do. Do you know what it was? They opened their umbrellas and propped them over their heads to stay dry. Somehow they slept through the night. The rainy season had started.

In the morning, Harry put his feet over the edge of the bed and onto the floor, and it felt squishy under his feet. The mud oozed up between his toes, and then, as he stood up, he felt coolness up to his ankles. He walked out to the kitchen. Do you know what he found? Because there was not enough time for the mud in the walls and roof to dry, the mud became really wet and collapsed. There were eight inches of mud on their stove, but they persevered! They were not going to get discouraged because Harry and Nora really wanted to be in Africa. So, they just cleaned up the mud and stayed in Africa in spite of their problems.

This was not the end of their problems, however. On another time, after they had finally planted their garden, when it was daytime and the sun was out it suddenly became cloudy. It was like there was a big cloud outside, and when they looked up, they saw a big swarm of locust heading straight for their garden. The locusts settled down on Harry and Nora's garden and munched on all the green, juicy plants and then left! But Harry and Nora didn't think about going back home to America where everything was nice. They said, “We will stay,” and they did stay and they somehow were able to figure out where to obtain food until a new garden could be planted and grown.

Then another problem happened. A civil war broke out where Harry and Nora lived, and some of the African people did not like the white people who had come to live in their country. Harry was in town one day when someone came running and said, “The natives are coming and they are coming to kill all the white people!” So, Harry rushed home and he got Nora and the other families (by then there was a third family living with them) together and they packed up everything they could fit in their

ox cart. This time they did not have oxen to pull the cart because there had been disease in the cattle and their oxen had died (that had been another problem for Harry), so they had to pull the cart themselves to a safe town, but they had no place to live. So this is what Harry and Nora, the other family that had a little boy named George, and the third family who had three little children of their own, decided to do. They were going to have to live in their ox cart. Harry and Nora slept underneath it and the other two families divided up the ox cart, with one family living on one side, and the other family living on the other side—one half of the cart for one family and one half for the other family. They lived like that for six months until the civil war was over, but Harry and Nora did not think, “Oh, it is time for us to go back to America.” They persevered and stayed in Africa. They said, “We will work for God and build something special for God on this twelve thousand-acre piece of land that God has given us.”

While they were living under their ox cart, Harry would often leave to obtain food for them, but it was dangerous to leave. One time Harry went back to where he used to live and acquired some food, but then he heard a voice say, “You need to leave right away. It is dangerous here!” Harry looked around and there was no one that could have spoken to him, but he knew he heard a voice, so he obeyed and did just as the voice said. He packed up the food he had gotten and he took his blanket and ran out into the bush and slept there all night. The next morning he met some friends and the friends asked him, “Did you know the rebels were coming by and they were looking for you?” God had helped Harry and because he had obeyed, God was able to save his life.

Another time Harry thought, “I need a donkey because then I won't have to walk so far to get food.” Soon after, when he was trying to quietly go by the rebel camp while on his donkey, the donkey brayed loudly. Harry was afraid that the rebels would hear them, so he said, “Quiet, quiet, donkey. It is okay, donkey,” and he kept going slowly on. But soon there was another loud bray and this time Harry thought, “I can't stay on this donkey,” so he told the little African boy that was with him, “You take the donkey home,” and Harry got off the donkey and ran through the bush to get home. A

donkey was not a good idea when the rebels were around. Harry and Nora were patient and persevered and were finally able to move back home. When they reached their little house with the crooked sticks, they dug up the kitchen stove which had buried to keep it from being stolen, and happily moved back into their small African house with the dirt floor.

Little white ants were also a problem for Harry and Nora. These ants ate everything, it seemed, even mosquito netting. One time Harry was traveling to some of the remote villages to visit with the people. In between villages, when it was time to sleep, he would take his pants off and put them over a bush and then lay down on the ground to sleep. One night the wind blew his pants off the bush and onto the ground. Harry didn't know this, but when he woke up the next morning he found that white ants had eaten half a leg of his pants. Those were the only pants he had taken with him on his journey, so he had to put them back on, with one long leg and one short leg, and finish his trip to the villages, but Harry persevered because he wanted to work for God. It didn't matter if there were white ants or if there were rebels around, he knew God would take care of him, and God did take care of him and helped him and Nora to establish the Solusi Mission in Zimbabwe, then known as the country of Rhodesia.

After Harry and Nora returned from living under their ox cart, children came to them who were very hungry, and Harry and Nora started taking care of these hungry, starving children. They were able to help the children because Harry and Nora had persevered—they continued to do what God wanted them to do even though there were difficulties and troubles along the way.

You might have a hard time doing what you know is right, for Satan will try to get you to change your mind, but God will help you just as He helped Harry and Nora. He will help you to be just like Jesus in your home. When you obey your Mommy and Daddy, when you help them in big and little ways, you are being just like Jesus and it pleases Him very much, and Jesus will bless and help you, just as He blessed and helped Harry and Nora. ✍

*Onycha Holt*

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## Sweet Spirit of Content

*When storm clouds come a bluebird  
Does not cease her sweet refrain;  
Her song is lovely in the sunshine  
But just as beautiful in rain.*

*A honeybee's not fretful  
Of what flowers she will find~  
If she must choose she does not sigh  
Because she can't make up her mind.*

*A single daisy is so precious  
Yet so lowly in the grass  
If she is crushed she keeps her smile  
Till her humble life is past.*

*All of nature is rejoicing  
Over all things God has sent  
I hope I have that very same  
Sweet spirit of content.*

~~Tara May~~



## Live Sabbath Worship Service Now Available on Internet

We are pleased to announce that our Sabbath worship service at the Smyrna Chapel is being broadcast live as a Skypecast, every Sabbath morning at approximately 11 a.m. EST. We earnestly invite you to be part of our church family and join us each Sabbath morning, for we believe you will be blessed. To do so, visit our website ([www.smyrna.org](http://www.smyrna.org)) and click on the appropriate link for the live church service. You will need to download the free Skype software, if you have not already done so.

*Onycha Holt*

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Editor . . . . . Allen Stump—[editor@smyrna.org](mailto:editor@smyrna.org)  
Assistant to the Editor . . . . . Onycha Holt—[onycha@smyrna.org](mailto:onycha@smyrna.org)

If you have tried to send Lynnford Beachy an email using [berean@smyrna.org](mailto:berean@smyrna.org) between March 12 and July 19, he did not receive it. Please send it again using his primary address, [berean@presenttruth.info](mailto:berean@presenttruth.info). We apologize for any inconvenience this has caused you.