

# Old Paths

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

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Psalm 25:14

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*I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. (Isaiah 45:12)*

**Prayer Requests – Update on Visiting the General Conference:** We are currently preparing materials to share at the General Conference Session, June 23–July 3, and we want to give you an update on some challenges we are currently facing. Due to limited human resources here at Smyrna, we do not yet have all the books and tracts prepared that we would like to take with us. We have finished a run of *What Did the Pioneers Believe?* but still have many printed copies of *The Foundation of Our Faith* that need to be assembled. We are praying that the necessary materials can be readied, but we certainly need the Lord's blessing and your prayers.

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# The Seal of God and the Abominations of Ezekiel 8 (Part 5)

“The book of Ezekiel is deeply instructive” (*The Review and Herald*, February 25, 1896).

Adventism was raised up to restore long-buried truths, such as the seventh-day Sabbath, the truth about death and hell, and the identity of God and his Son. Adventism was also raised up, however, to proclaim God’s last-day warning messages to the world. These messages include the everlasting gospel, as taught in the sanctuary service and the proclamation that the seal of God and the mark of the beast occur before the seven last plagues are poured out upon the earth.

The book of Revelation speaks about those who will receive the seal of God and clearly denotes that those who receive the seal of God are set in contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast. When the seal of God is discussed, the book of Revelation is usually the center of the focus; however, as with so much in the Apocalypse, the imagery of the seal of God is borrowed from the Old Testament, specifically from the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ezekiel.

The events of Ezekiel chapter 9 are clearly the result of judgment. There are two classes. One class is left for destruction and the other receives a mark on their foreheads. This mark is given to one group—those who receive the seal of God.

In the book of Ezekiel, God calls the Sabbath a sign between himself and his people (Ezekiel 20:12, 20). Furthermore, we have also been plainly told that “the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 640).

In Ezekiel 8, God revealed to Ezekiel abominations that were occurring in Jerusalem. Chapters 8 and 9 of Ezekiel make up part of an enacted prophecy. God showed Ezekiel literal events occurring at that time in Jerusalem among God’s people which were prophetic of literal events that would happen among God’s people at the end of time. The end-time setting is clear:

Jesus is about to leave the mercy seat of the heavenly. ... The prophet, looking down the ages, had this time presented before his vision. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 207, 208)

Four months ago, we began a study on the four abominations of Ezekiel 8. The first abomination, listed in verses 3 and 5, is what is called “the image of Jealousy.” As we began this study, we saw that this first abomination represented sun pillars (obelisks – steeples). The next abomination Ezekiel is shown (verses 10-12) consists of the idols of Israel: “Creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about” (Ezekiel 8:10). In connection with this, Ezekiel is shown the leaders of Israel with censers and a thick cloud of smoke (v. 11). Three months ago, we saw that this worship of God portrayed upon the walls is the usage of visible representations of God, Christ, angels, and heavenly things, whether they are two or three dimensional images. The third abomination is “women weeping for Tammuz” (Ezekiel 8:14), and we saw two months

ago that Tammuz was a false christ, even the so-called second person of the trinity. The last abomination is twenty-five men with their backs to the temple, facing east towards the sun and worshipping the sun (Ezekiel 8:16)! Last month, we discussed the rejection of the final atonement of perfection/sanctification through the sanctuary message, and this month we will discuss the final aspect of that abomination, men facing east towards the sun and worshipping the sun.

God calls all of these things described in Ezekiel 8 abominations (Hebrew: *tow’eba*), ranking them with homosexuality and other terrible perversions (Leviticus 18:22-26), idolatry (Deuteronomy 7:25), human sacrifice (Deuteronomy 12:31), and occult activities (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

The list of abominations that are given progresses from bad to worse (Ezekiel 8:6, 13, 15), a progression in which one abomination prepares the way for the next.

(For further details concerning the first part of this prophecy and the first four abominations, please see Parts 1-4, available upon request.)

## The Ultimate Apostasy

Now let us begin to study the second part of the last abomination:

Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. (Ezekiel 8:15, 16)

The first abomination involved sun worship (worship of the sun god via sun pillars), and now we see it has helped to prepare the way for the last abomination, the worship of something created rather than worship of the Creator. The second abomination also prepared the people to worship the finite rather than the infinite God.

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The first three abominations are directly opposed to the first and second commandments.

The last abomination is in direct opposition to the fourth commandment. Here we find what is ultimately the worship of Satan on Sunday instead of the worship of the true God on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath was instituted at the beginning of this world.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God *blessed the seventh day*, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. (Genesis 2:1-3)

Notice that the record is that “God blessed *the seventh day*, and sanctified it.” It does not say here that God blessed the Sabbath. While we believe that God did bless the Sabbath and we shall see that the commandment affirms that he did, the emphasis here is the blessing of the seventh-day. If God merely said that he blessed the Sabbath, some might claim that the first day of the week is the Sabbath and, therefore, the recipient of the blessing. But God was too wise to do it that way. No, he blessed the seventh day and because the seventh-day is the Sabbath, it is blessed by virtue of it being the seventh day.

Not only was the Sabbath blessed, but it was sanctified, or set apart, for holy use.

According to the fourth commandment, the seventh-day Sabbath is a memorial to creation.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

The Sabbath was given to all mankind to commemorate the work of creation. The great Jehovah, when he had laid the foundations of the earth, when he had dressed the whole world in its garb of beauty, and created all the wonders of the land and the sea, instituted the Sabbath day and made it holy. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the Sabbath was set apart as God’s memorial. God sanctified and blessed the day in which he had rested from all his wondrous work. And this Sabbath, sanctified of God, was to be kept for a perpetual covenant. It was a memorial that was to stand from age to age, till the close of earth’s history. (*The Review and Herald*, August 30, 1898)

While we understand that the Ten Commandments are a transcript of God’s character, the Sabbath, as well as the fifth commandment, was instituted after creation. They were made for man. Jesus noted concerning the sabbath: “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

As we noted earlier, God blessed and sanctified the Sabbath, and he hallowed the Sabbath (Exodus 20:11). To hallow means

to sanctify or consecrate, to be sacred. It is no wonder that God calls the Sabbath “my holy day” (Isaiah 58:13), a designation that he gives to no other day.

Jesus claimed to be the Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8), and he gave the epic revelation to John upon the Sabbath day, a day Inspiration describes as “the Lord’s day” (Revelation 1:10; *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 581).

The Bible declares that God made all things through his only begotten Son. Hebrews 1:1, 2 states:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.

Thus, Christ is the agent of God in creation. (See also Colossians 1:16.. Thus, as Christ is the Lord of creation, he is also the Lord of the memorial of creation—the Sabbath.

As Adventists, we need not spend a lot of space in this article going through many proof texts to show the validity of the seventh-day Sabbath. The Bible teaches that Jesus kept the Sabbath (Luke 4:16), and the apostles kept the Sabbath (Acts 16:13; 17:2; 18:4, 11). The Bible teaches us that the Sabbath was kept in both the Old and New Testament times. History also teaches us that faithful men and women have since the time of the apostles kept the seventh-day Sabbath, but we are looking at the Sabbath beyond simply being a day of worship that we believe happens to correctly fall upon the seventh day (Saturday).

The Sabbath is *the* memorial of creation. By acknowledging God as Creator, we acknowledge him as the true God. God himself holds out his creatorship as being the distinguishing factor that he is the true God.

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. (Jeremiah 10:10-12)

It is God’s power to create that sets him apart from all others. “Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things” (Jeremiah 14:22). The Sabbath, being a memorial of God’s creation, is, therefore, the sign of God’s authority and of his creative ability.

The issue in Ezekiel 8 is not just the day we worship but the God whom we worship. We saw in the third abomination of Ezekiel 8 that Israel had gone past worshipping the true God with idols of metal, stone, and wood, to the worship of a false god. The worship towards the Sun-day is the worship of another god, not the true God. Interestingly Sunday has been declared by the “man of sin” to be a day dedicated in honor of the trinity!

It (Sunday) is a day dedicated by the apostles to the honor of the Most Holy Trinity, and in memory that Christ our Lord arose from the dead upon Sunday, sent down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday, etc., and therefore is called the Lord's day. It is also called Sunday from the old Roman denomination of *Dies Solis*, the day of the sun, to which it was sacred. (*Douay Catechism*)

Of course, there is no Scripture that tells of any such honor to Sunday or the supposed trinity. The final events of the mark of the beast will not be isolated to the issue of Sunday alone. Along with Sunday, comes the worship of the trinity. It will be said in that time that since all Christians (at least almost all) universally worship the same God (the trinity) they should all worship the trinity on the day dedicated to the trinity (Sunday).

Beloved, this is not simply an issue of worshiping the same god on a different day but rather the worship of a different god! To show how Satan has worked in the past, notice the law of Maryland (October 1723), relative to Sunday. It states:

TO PUNISH BLAMSPHEMERS, SWEARERS, DRUNKARDS, AND SABBATH BREAKERS, AND FOR REPEALING THE LAWS HERETOFORE MADE FOR THE PUNISHING SUCH OFFENDERS.

Be it enacted by the right honorable the lord proprietor, by and with the advice and consent of his lordship's governor, and the upper and lower houses of assembly, and the authority of the same, That if any persons shall hereafter, within this province, wittingly, maliciously, and advisedly, by writing or speaking, blaspheme or curse God, or deny our Saviour Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or the Godhead of any of the three persons, or the unity of the Godhead, or shall utter any profane words concerning the Holy Trinity, or any of the persons thereof, and shall be thereof convict by verdict, or confession, shall, for the **first offence**, be bored through the tongue and fined twenty pounds sterling to the lord proprietor to be applied to the use of the county where the offence shall be committed, to be levied on the offender's body, goods and chattels, lands or tenements, and in case the said fine cannot be levied, the offender to suffer six months' imprisonment without bail or mainprise; and that for the **second offence**, the offender being thereof convict as aforesaid, shall be stigmatized by burning in the forehead with the letter B and fined forty pounds sterling to the lord proprietor, to be applied and levied as aforesaid, and in case the same cannot be levied, the offender shall suffer twelve months' imprisonment without bail or mainprise; and that for the **third offence**, the offender being convict as aforesaid, shall suffer death without the benefit of the clergy. (*The American Sentinel*, February 13, 1890)

This was in keeping with Maryland's Religious *Toleration* Act of April 21, 1649, which said, in part:

. . . whatsoever person shall . . . deny the Holy Trinity, or any of the persons thereof, shall be punished with death.

Hardly a toleration! The worship of the trinity and Sunday sacredness are an intertwined pair that Satan uses to promote the worship of himself, a creature!

This concept Satan uses in contradistinction to the worship of the true God. God wants to save us. Satan wants us to be lost. God wants our love and worship for the blessing it is to us. Satan wants our worship for the sick pleasure he receives from such service.

God is the Creator, and Satan is a creature, one created. The work of God in man's salvation is a creation process. Notice how creation and redemption are linked in the following texts:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have *redemption through his blood*, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For *by him were all things created*, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and *by him all things consist*. (Colossians 1:13-17)

But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. (Isaiah 43:1)

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:23, 24)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The way to have a new creature is to have a new creation. In fact, the Greek root word (*ktisis*), translated "creature" in 2 Corinthians 5:17, is also translated *creation* in six places in the New Testament. (See Romans 8:22; 2 Peter 3:4; etc.)

David expressed the truth of linking creation and redemption in his prayer of repentance, when he said: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). David realized that his old heart was not fixable. It could not be repaired by even God. He needed a new heart, and God gave him his desire.

Now notice Ezekiel 20:12: "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them." The work of creation (the Sabbath is the memorial to this) and the work of recreation (the Sabbath also being the memorial) are one.

When we surrender God's sign of creative power, there is no defense from giving up on his creative power to change us totally and fully. Sunday-keeping and a pseudo justification without any sanctification go hand-in-hand. The belief that we can continually sin and repent until Jesus comes is one of Satan's best tools. Satan is happy for the process to be continued without reformation or change.

## The Three Angels' Messages

The Sabbath commandment is given in the first angel's message. The angel calls upon us to worship the Creator who made the "heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7). This is a quotation from the fourth commandment, as given in the Septuagint. The second angel declares that Babylon has fallen and is set in contrast to the acceptance of the first angel's message (Revelation 14:8). In Revelation 14:9-11, we find the warning concerning the mark of the beast which is given to those who reject the first and second angels' messages. Then the message finishes: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep [present tense, active mode in the Greek] the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). This is given in sharp contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast. We have been told:

The Sabbath will be *the great test of loyalty*, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 605; all emphasis supplied in this article unless otherwise noted)

The Sabbath is a test of loyalty and shows whom we worship and how fully we worship.

God is particular about how we worship him. It is not just in the big things concerning the Sabbath that God is particular, but in other details also, such as if we accept worldly employment upon the Sabbath, shop on the Sabbath, or pay for food eaten in a restaurant on the Sabbath. God is concerned about all that we do during the sacred hours.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 356)

To Nehemiah, the Sabbath was a test:

There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be

brought in on the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath. (Nehemiah 13:16:21)

You might be asking, "How does this affect me? "I keep the Sabbath and even worship in a home church." Beloved, the greatest test that will ever come upon the world is almost upon us. Only those who truly know their God will stand.

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. It is this alone that can make us like God in character.

This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come. (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 409)

The seal of God is only placed in the forehead, but the mark of the beast may be in the right hand or in the forehead. There will be many who do not agree in their minds but will in their works follow the command to honor Sunday. They do not have the spiritual experience that knowing the true God and his only begotten Son provides. Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). It is vital to know God and his Son. Daniel says that those who "know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32). I want to be a part of the group who receives the seal of God, don't you?

The importance of the truth about God and his Sabbath is seen in the 9th chapter of Ezekiel, where we learn, as noted earlier, that only those who sigh and cry about these wicked things will receive the pure mark of truth, the seal of the living God. We are not talking about what was essential for all of our forefathers to know. Martin Luther and others did not have the light of the fourth commandment shining upon them, but we do. Wesley did not have the light of the Most Holy Place atonement shining upon him, but we do!

When the sanctuary message was given, light on the commandments was given. These are all interlocking truths and when you disturb one, you will disturb others. This is why, after the truth about God was disturbed in Adventism, the sanctuary message was altered. And it also shows why the strength of the Sabbath commandment has become weakened, resulting, for example, in the many Easter sunrise services and Sunday services that are now entering into Adventist churches, just as they did in ancient times. We see the lowering of the standard on the Sabbath, such as the Adventist Theological Society having a dinner on the Sabbath in a worldly restaurant. There is hardly any choice for them, for they have left the truth about God that would serve as an anchor to them, and the result is the ultimate apostasy, the total apostasy, of leaving the true God and the day

that memorializes his creation and redemption to worship the creature, even Satan!

Ellen White was shown Satan's battle plan against the remnant people of God, and she wrote straight warnings!


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.

Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth? [Shall we not sigh and cry for all these abominations!]

I hesitated and delayed about the sending out of that which the Spirit of the Lord impelled me to write. I did not want to be compelled to present the misleading influence of these sophistries. But in the providence of God, the errors that have been coming in must be met. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 204, 205)

This testimony was written as a direct result of the pantheistic teachings of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, as found in his book *The Living Temple*. Kellogg's confusion on God was tied to his acceptance of the trinity doctrine which came to be the foundation of his thinking. Yet, Ellen White called these teachings worthless, even calling them "a strain of spiritualism" (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 173) and said that those who believed this would finally be swept away. If we refuse to free and to disentangle ourselves from error, we will be finally swept away with the error.

Beloved, the Sabbath is to be a delight (Isaiah 58:13, 14) and honored by those who honor God. Those who have a zeal for the honor and glory of God will not wish to be involved in anything that is disgusting to God. If you wish to be a part of the 144,000, you will have to put the honor of God first. You may not be involved with this abomination of sun worship, but if you fail to sigh and cry for those who are involved, you will not receive the seal of God. That is clear and plain. You may be

considered a troubler of Israel, but so was Elijah. You may not receive the approval of the General Conference, but you may have the approbation of God. I realize that this message will not be palatable to some, but the Bible declares that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18 NKJV). I cannot and will not suppress the truth because it is unpopular. Now what will you do? 

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*"Prayer Requests," continued from page 1*

Our biggest challenge for the General Conference witness effort has been to find adequate and proper housing for those who wish to attend the session to pass out literature and to witness. We had stated earlier that we would provide housing, as we would be able, to those who would like to attend to share literature. At the General Conference Session in St. Louis in 2005, we were graciously offered a church building for use at no cost. This was a great blessing to us; however, we have not been able to find anything similar in the Atlanta area. We have been graciously offered the use of some homes, but they are too far away to be practical.

The best option that we have so far is to rent dorm suites from Georgia State University. The cost is \$30 per person, per night. A quick calculation shows that if forty people were to attend, as happened in 2005, the cost per night would be \$1,200, and for an eleven-day period it would add up to \$13,200. This is not possible for us to even honestly consider. We are considering renting a few suites for the ministers and some who are helping with special parts of the witness, but others who wish to go, as of now, need to either be able to pay the housing costs for themselves or find alternate lodging.

We are certainly challenged by such a matter, but, claiming the promise of Romans 8:28, we know that God has a reason and plan for everything, and we are trusting in his care that something very good will still come out of this issue. Please keep it as a matter of special prayer that something extraordinary might open up very soon.

There are three other matters of prayer that we would like to bring to you this month. One is a request that we remember the widows and orphans, not only in word but in deed and truth. There is a sister who has been abandoned by her husband for over a year now. She is trying to raise her two children and has made an appeal to the brothers and sisters for help. Please pray for her and for similar families, and if you would like to help with this specific situation or would like to know more details, please contact us.

The second matter is for a Sister R\_\_\_\_ in North Carolina who has recently been diagnosed with cancer. She has a disabled husband and is currently raising some of her grandchildren. Please remember her and the whole family in prayer, including her mother who recently lost her other daughter.

The third matter concerns Brother Abraham Hershberger and his family's loss from the recent flooding in Tennessee. If you have not heard of his situation, please see the article on page 24.

*Editor*

# The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

By David Sims

Jesus tells us that our heavenly Father is more willing to give us the Holy Spirit than parents are to give good gifts to their children. Likening the Holy Spirit to rain, God promises through Zechariah that if we ask “of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain,” He will “give showers of rain.” Paul enumerates the gifts of the spirit and instructs us in their use (1 Corinthians 12 -14), and further describes its fruits in Galatians 5. It was something which the believers were instructed about, and it was uncommon for someone not to have the Holy Spirit. Notice the following texts:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38)

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. (Acts 10:44)

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. (Ephesians 1:13)

The Scripture is clear. The Holy Spirit was to be received at conversion when a person believed and or was baptized.

## Factors Preventing the Reception of the Spirit at Conversion

The Scriptures highlight two examples where the Holy Spirit was not given when a person believed and/or was baptized. These examples were the exception, not the rule. One of these examples was in Ephesus:

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve. (Acts 19:1-7)

In this story, twelve men had been baptized with the baptism of John unto repentance. They did not know about Jesus, and when Paul preached Jesus to them they believed and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. What were they believing concerning Jesus? That truth which Paul was preaching. What was he preaching? Scripture tells us his message about Jesus was that Jesus is the Son of God. “And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God” (Acts

9:20). We can learn from this that the Holy Spirit was not given until the person understood the truth clearly and accepted and believed that Jesus is truly the Son of God.

The second example where the Holy Spirit was not received at conversion or baptism occurred in Samaria.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. (Acts 8:14-17)

A look at the context is helpful. There was a time intervening between the time Phillip baptized these Samaritans and the time when Peter and John laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. There is no reason to believe that Phillip was negligent in his duty but rather that the new believers, having been steeped in idolatry and sorcery, needed some time for learning and unlearning. Simon, a man that had been a sorcerer, was even among the baptized believers.

Once again in this story, the believers did not receive the Spirit at conversion because they needed to better understand the truth and put away some of their false concepts. This is in perfect accord with Jesus' instruction and with the descriptive adjective Jesus used in describing the Spirit. He called it the Spirit of Truth:

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (John 14:17)

## Obedience/Sanctification a Condition to Receiving the Holy Spirit

When Peter boldly declared, to the amazement of the Jewish Council, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29), he was jeopardizing his life, and he knew that. Obedience, however, was more important than life itself to this courageous apostle. He went on to tell us in no uncertain terms that the Holy Spirit had been “given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:32).

Inspiration tells us the Holy Spirit is God's seal of his own righteousness (Romans 4:11) but God never will put his seal upon sin for righteousness and no person need ever ask him to do so. For any person to ask for the baptism or the gift of the Holy Ghost while he does not have the righteousness of God is, in itself, though done ignorantly and unintentionally, to ask God to put his seal upon sin for righteousness. Brothers and sisters, God will never put his seal upon sin for righteousness.

Ezekiel 9 tells of an angel clothed in white linen with the writer's inkhorn by his side. This angel goes out to mark the servants of God so that they will be protected in the time of trouble. The sealing work that he performs is upon those who are sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. They are not ones who are participating in those abominations. They are not participating in the idea of a trinity or false teaching, for Revelation 14:5 informs us this group has no guile or deception in their mouth.

## A Preparation Needed

We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for his fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us,--the perfection of his character? When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, "It is finished." (*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1902)

There was a preparation that was necessary before someone received the Holy Spirit. There is a preparation that is necessary today, brothers and sisters, before we receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If we have not received the Holy Spirit as we ought, we need look no further for the fault than to ourselves, for the fault is not with God.

Concerning the preparation that was done in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost, *The Acts of the Apostles* says:

These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. (p. 37)

As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. (p. 36)

Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. (p. 37)

If we do not have the Holy Spirit's presence, it is because we refuse to surrender to the control of Christ, because we have not prepared our hearts to receive it. It is not because we have not gone out into the woods and pleaded with God and prayed for eight to twelve hours a day for a year. God does not work in that way. That is asceticism. It reminds me of the ascetic practices of Ignasius of Loyola who went into a cave and fasted and prayed for weeks on end in order to receive the spiritual ecstasy that resulted in the organization of the order of the Jesuits. The system of asceticism dates far back into the early annals of Catholic church history, and they thought that they could attain God's grace and God's favor by twisting his arm by fasting for days and weeks on end. There are stories of people who went up on top of steeples and lived there for years. There are stories of people, like Martin Luther, that beat themselves, chained themselves, and laid upon the cold, damp concrete and gave themselves disease and sickness. This concept is very alive and well today in Catholicism. Is this what God is asking us to do in order to receive the Holy Spirit?

Enoch is presented in the Bible as being someone who walked with God (Genesis 5:24). What kind of holiness did Enoch have?

Enoch's walk with God was not in a trance or a vision, but in all the duties of his daily life. He did not become a hermit, shutting himself entirely from the world; for he had a work to do for God in the world. In the family and in his intercourse with men, as a husband and father, a friend, a citizen, he was the steadfast, unwavering servant of the Lord. His heart was

in harmony with God's will; for "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (*The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1909)

We further learn that, "Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 51). God tells us if we don't provide for our families we are worse than an infidel, and to live like a hermit or to spend all day on our knees neglecting our duties is not what he is asking anyone to do.

Notice with pinpoint accuracy how Ellen White details the giving of the spirit to the early church, how God still longs to do this today, and what is preventing him from sending his Spirit as he wishes:

The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love.

Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity

*Continued on page 20*



# Youth's Corner — The Story of Chief Logan

Our story this month is about Tah-gah-jute, interestingly a name which means “his eye lashes stick out and above, as if looking through or over something.” Tah-gah-jute was born in 1725, as far as we know, and he lived in America before America was ever a nation. Tah-gah-jute’s father was a Frenchman who had been raised in Montreal, Canada, but was captured by North American Indians when he was just five years old. The Indians named him Shikellamy, and he lived the rest of his life with the Indians. He eventually married an Indian maiden, became an Indian chief, and had sons and daughters, one of whom was Tah-gah-jute.

As tribal leader, Shikellamy moved his tribe south to an area in present-day New York and there established a village home for his people. Because of his background of being captured by the Indians, Shikellamy was always interested in harboring peace between his people and the white man, but it was not only because of his childhood that Shikellamy sought peace. Shikellamy was also a Christian. He had learned about Jesus from Moravian missionaries who had visited his tribe, and Shikellamy accepted Christ as his personal Saviour. Most likely he had been taught about the Sermon on the Mount, where we read “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9), and I expect Shikellamy tried to secure peace because he knew this is what Jesus taught. When William Penn moved into the area we know today as Pennsylvania, Shikellamy became friends with him and sought to negotiate peace between his new settlement and the native Americans.

But Shikellamy grew old. It was time to let someone else become the peacemaker, for he could no longer travel the great distances on foot or by horseback between the various Indian tribes to speak for the white man or to the scattered settlements of white people to speak for the Indians concerning their hunting grounds, their sacred burial sites, and the boundaries for their land. Someone new had to step into his shoes, and that someone new was Tah-gah-jute. Over the years, Tah-gah-jute had watched his father plead for peace, understanding, and respect among all men. He had stood beside his father as he wisely negotiated peace treaties and then gave his word as a pledge that his people would honor such treaties. When disputes arose due to misunderstandings or even due to careless breaches, Shikellamy was the first to seek mercy and forgiveness and to work out an answer that was fair to all men. But the most important quality, by far, that Tah-gah-jute learned from his father was his

Christlikeness. There was no written language for the Native Americans at this time, so no Scripture was available for them to read, but both Shikellamy and Tah-gah-jute stored what the missionaries had taught them in their hearts. Most likely they cherished the many blessings Jesus pronounced on the Mount of Blessing, and most likely they knew they were to do unto others as they wanted others to do unto them. Both Shikellamy and Tah-gah-jute strove to put these principles into action.

It so happened that when these two men were baptized by the Moravian missionaries (Shikellamy as an adult and Tah-gah-jute as a child), Shikellamy changed his son’s name to Logan, in honor of a white man that Shikellamy knew and

respected, and that is why our story this month is about *Chief Logan*. After his father had died, Logan became the leader of his tribe, and he was known among people, white men and Indians alike, as a kind and good person. He was tall and strong, and, at the same time, kind to friends and strangers alike.

Unknown that they were hunting on Chief Logan’s land, for example, Judge Brown and his friend stopped to quench their thirst with the cool water of the chief’s spring. Judge Brown had placed his gun down as he bent over the spring to drink when he suddenly saw reflected in the water the tall form of Chief Logan! In an instant, Judge Brown knew this was the form of an Indian (although he did not know it was Chief Logan), and he grabbed his gun as quickly as he could, for he believed himself to be in grave danger. When he did this, the Indian gave a yell, but Judge Brown could not discern if it was a yell for peace or for war, and so he immediately readied his gun for action. Seeing this, Chief Logan quickly knocked up the

pan of his own rifle, threw out the priming, and extended his open palm toward the Judge in friendship. Chief Logan had quickly averted the threat of a serious calamity. Judge Brown reported that after they had both put their guns down, they met at the spring and shook hands. Chief Logan even spoke a little English and directed the Judge to the home of a white settler and offered to take him there. This is the kind of person Chief Logan was.

Another time, Chief Logan visited a camp the settlers had established and overheard a mother in the camp say, “I wish I had some shoes for my little boy.” The next day, Chief Logan returned to the mother’s home and asked permission to take the child with him for the day. The mother was unsure about such a request, but trusted Chief Logan and let the child go with him. While the child was at his home, Chief Logan made a brand



**Chief Logan**

new pair of little moccasins for him, and, at the end of the day, he returned the child to his mother, wearing his new pair of shoes! This was the way Chief Logan treated others.

Chief Logan also traveled with his fellow Indians to West Virginia and Ohio on hunting expeditions, and on one of these excursions in 1774 something terrible happened. Chief Logan was in Ohio hunting, but members of his camp had remained behind on the banks of the Ohio River. At this time, there was a fear among the white men along the river in West Virginia that the Indians were planning an uprising, so they decided to strike first. Under false pretenses, they called the members of Logan's camp across the river to them on the West Virginian side, and while the Indians were there, they massacred them all, including another group of Indians that rushed across the river in response to the cries of their fellow tribesmen. Among those massacred were all the remaining members of Chief Logan's family. Not one was left alive. His mother, his last sister, his brother were gone. No one was left.

When Chief Logan heard about this, something changed in his heart. He forgot about doing what Jesus would do, and he reverted to revenge. When Chief Logan heard that that his family had been completely wiped out, he went on the war path. He gathered other Indians with him, and they killed many people in revenge for what had been done to Chief Logan's family and to the rest of the Indian camp. His revenge lasted several months, but by then the Indians realized that they were becoming outnumbered by the white men, who were gathering a large army to fight them and that they had better seek peace. The white people wanted peace also, and it was decided to come together at a certain place to discuss a peace treaty, and Chief Logan was one of the Indians invited to attend.

But he would not attend. Instead, he had someone write a letter he dictated and read it to the people. This letter has become famous and is known today as "Logan's Lament":

I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry and I gave him not meat; if ever he come cold or naked and I gave him not clothing.

During the course of the last long and bloody war Logan remained in his tent an advocate for peace, Nay, such was my love for the whites, that those of my own country pointed at me as they passed by and said, "Logan is the friend of white

men." I had even thought to live with you but for the injuries of one man.

Colonel Cresap the last spring, in cold blood, and unprovoked, cut off all the relatives of Logan; not sparing even my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any human creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace. Yet, do not harbor the thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heels to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one. (*Logan the Mingo*, p. 83)

Tears ran down the faces of the thirty sturdy pioneers who had gathered under the old elm tree so many years ago to hear "Logan's Lament" read because they realized that Logan had



Chief Logan's Elm Tree

been a great man, a man who had helped many people, a man who had known Jesus Christ and who had tried to live to the best of his ability as Jesus would have lived, that is, until his family had been murdered. Then Logan turned his back on the message of peace, mercy, and forgiveness and sought, instead, revenge. And he got revenge, but he died a lonely man at the hand of someone else who sought revenge, this time upon him.

Most of us have never experienced anything like what Chief Logan experienced. We do not know what it is like to lose all the members of our families. Jesus told a parable in Luke about a widow who sought vengeance from an unjust judge, and in this parable he taught us that we are to have faith in God, the righteous judge, for any vengeance. We are not to take matters into our own hands, as Chief Logan did, and retaliate, but we are to trust our heavenly Father to do righteously in every situation. Jesus implies this trust will be very difficult to maintain during the the time just before he returns because he asked the question at the end of his parable, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith [trust] on the earth?"

We do not know what Logan's relationship with God was at the end of his life, but we do know that he walked away from the principles of God because of what someone had done to him and to his family. He sought to "get even," and the parable of Jesus is recorded in Luke to keep us from doing just that. If someone has spoken ill of us, for example, or has done something very unjust to us, we are to go to our heavenly Father, who is our Judge, and trust him to do what is right in every situation, and he will!

*Ornycha Holt*

# WV CAMP MEETING

The West Virginia camp meeting will begin Tuesday evening, June 15, and continue through Saturday night, June 19, the Lord willing. All are welcome, and, as always, there is no charge for camping, though all are responsible for their own meals except Sabbath afternoon when a fellowship meal will be provided for all. There is plenty of room for tents and RVs, but there are no hook-ups. There are local motels and stores within ten miles. The theme for the camp meeting is *Christ Triumphant*.

We have a few new and exciting projects for the upcoming camp meeting, including a nature center for the young and young at heart.


We have extended an invitation to the Three Rivers Avian Center (TRAC) to visit the nature center during camp meeting. TRAC is a shelter for injured and endangered raptors. They will bring to camp several birds of prey and discuss such things as habitat, the role of raptors, and their daily hazards.

We are also planning an outreach gospel concert and Health Expo in Welch, West Virginia, ten miles south of Smyrna. Todd

and Rhonda Brown have graciously agreed to spearhead the Health Expo. On Sabbath afternoon, we are planning a nursing home visit, as well.

As usual, there will be a communion service for the baptized believers, as well as programs for the youth. Some new speakers who are planning to share at camp meeting this year are Maurizio Esposito of Italy, Marc Fury from France, and Nader Mansour of Australia. Some of the other speakers will be Elvis Alberto, Lynnford Beachy, Jim Raymond, David Sims, Dr. William Van Grit, Dr. Glenn Waite, and Allen Stump

For those not able to attend, the meetings will be broadcast over the Internet via Skype and by telephone conferencing. Please see our website or call if you need details.

If you have a GPS, our location is N 37° 31' 13" (37.52057° N), W 81 36' 09" (81.60260° W) For a map and driving directions, please see the direction link on our home web page: <http://www.smyrna.org> 

## Tentative 2010 WV Camp Meeting Schedule

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sabbath
6:00—6:30	Camp Set Up	Prayer Bands and Testimonies in the Chapel			
6:35—7:45		Maurizio Esposito	Maurizio Esposito	David Sims	David Sims
7:45—9:15					
9:15—10:30		Nadar Mansour	Elvis Alberto	Elvis Alberto	Elvis Alberto
10:30—11:30					
11:30—12:30		Marc Fury	Dr. Wm. Van Grit	Lynnford Beachy	Lynnford Beachy
12:30—2:00		<b>BREAK</b>			
2:15—3:30		Elaine Nailing	Marc Fury	Dr. Glenn Waite	Health Panel 2:00-3:30 pm
4:00—4:50		Dr. Glenn Waite	Ruben Luna Marte		Baptism 3:45 pm Nursing Home Visit 5:30 pm
4:50—6:45		<b>BREAK</b> and Sabbath Preparation on Friday			
6:45—7:00	Song Service	Song Service	Song Service	Song Service	Song Service
7:00—7:15	OPEN	Testimonies	Testimonies	Music Concert	Music Concert
7:15—7:30		Dr. Glenn Waite	Jim Raymond	Jim Raymond	
7:30—8:45	Allen Stump	Allen Stump	Lynnford Beachy	Allen Stump	Allen Stump

# Let the Dry Land

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit a



Last month, we discussed the concepts of heaven and earth, the waters on the face of the deep, the firmament, and light, among other things, and this month we wish to focus, first of all, on what the earth brought forth—grass and fruit trees, in addition to their seeds—all by the command of God.

It is interesting that in verse 11, two Hebrew synonyms are used which are translated first *grass* and then *herbs*. The Hebrew word translated grass (דֶּשֶׁה, *deshe*) also means herb, and the Hebrew word translated herbs (עֵשֶׂב, *eseb*) can also be translated grass! God is not saying he created three different items on the third day, grass, herbs, and trees; but rather two—the plants and the trees. “The English ‘herb,’ found in the KJV, is used in the broader and older sense of non-woody tissue vegetation, rather than in the more restricted nuance of seasoning or medicinal plants” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, p. 700). This word “herb” corresponds more closely to plants rather than to the concepts we usually associate with healing “herbs.”

Now let us consider the phrase “after his kind” which is the translation for the Hebrew word מִיָּנִי (*miyn*). *Miyn* is found in verses 11 and 12, and there is little agreement among Bible students about what is meant by this word. Some theologians understand it to be what biologists describe with the term *species*, others accept the broader definition of *genus* for the best description, but whatever is meant—*species*, *genus*, or even *family* or *order*—God is saying he created the basic forms or divisions of life. None of these divisions, however, gives “support to the classical evolutionist view which requires developments across *kingdom, phyla, and classes*” (*Ibid.*, p. 504; all emphasis supplied

unless otherwise noted). In other words, God put order to the life he created by grouping and then commanded reproduction to take place after each kind within the groups (not across groups).

Just as the term *grass*, which was created on the third day, seems to include all plant life, do *fruit* trees, created on the same day, include all trees? Before we determine this, it will help to know if the terms *fruit* and *seed* (in verses 11 and 12) are synonymous because trees are described as having both *fruit* and *seed* in these verses. *Grass*, on the other hand, is described as having only seeds. *Fruit* (Hebrew פֶּרִי, *peri*) basically means that which is born; in other words, the result (or consequence) produced through the process of bearing. Our hands can bear fruit (Proverbs 31:31), the ground can bear fruit (Genesis 4:3), children are considered to be fruit (Genesis 30:2), vines bear fruit (Zechariah 8:12), the righteous bear fruit (Proverbs 11:30), and fruit trees bear fruit (Genesis 1:11). In some places in the Bible, *peri* can also mean boughs, as seen in Leviticus 23:40, so *peri* has a broad usage throughout the Old Testament.

The Hebrew word translated *seed* in Genesis 1:11 (זֶרַע, *zera*) is related to the process of sowing, as is done at seedtime (Genesis 26:12). Man can sow his own seed resulting in his offspring, as we see described by the seed of Abraham (Isaiah 41:8). *Zera* is basically used in the Bible as a noun that results from an action, and the verb form of this word (*zara*) is used in the phrase in Genesis 1:11 where it says, “the herb yielding (*zara*) seed (*zera*).” *Zera* is the noun and *zara* is the verb, so really what verse 11 is conveying is the idea of plants sowing (verb) their own seed (noun), but no mention is made of them bearing fruit. Trees, on the other hand, can yield fruit, and, for the trees in

## Appear (Creation Series, Part 2)

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, After his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so" (Genesis 1:10, 11).



verses 11 and 12, the Hebrew word translated *yielding* is עָשָׂה (*asah*). *Asah* does not mean to sow, as *zara* does, but means to make, fashion, or produce. It is used also in Genesis 1:7, "God *made* the firmament"; in verse 16, "God *made* two great lights"; and in Genesis 2:4 to further describe God's creative work, "The LORD God made the earth and the heavens." In Genesis 1:29, we are told that the herbs can bear (*zara*) seeds and trees also can yield (*zara*) seed in their fruit, and both were given by God to Adam and Eve as food, but there is a difference between fruit and seed—all fruit bears (as far as I know) seed, but not all seed is found within a fruit. As far as whether there are trees that do not bear fruit, remember that not all fruit is edible. Trees can have woody fruit, like pine cones, but the seed can still be considered "meat" for us. I will leave it with you to decide if there can be a tree without fruit. I have not found one, but if there is one, the seed of this tree is not intended by God to be food for us.

Let us move now to the fourth day of creation, at which time God said: "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven." The Bible tells us in Genesis 1:6 that the firmament divides the waters, but what are the lights mentioned in verses 14 and 15 that were placed in the firmament? The Hebrew word translated lights here (מְאֹרֹת, *maor*) is a different word than the Hebrew word translated light in Genesis 1:3, where God said "let there be light (אוֹר, *owr*)," although *maor* is a derivative of *owr*. *Owr* basically means the concept of light (whatever that is), whereas *maor* can be thought of as a luminary or luminaries. This is important to understand because the Bible presents *owr* and *maor* as being distinct from each other. Another distinction is that in Genesis 1:3 no specific mention is made of God creating

or making light. He simply says (although I know it is far from simple) to let it be, and he says in verse 14 to let the luminaries be also. Verse 16, however, gives us the added information that God made, or fashioned, these lights. Because of these distinctions, some scholars advocate that the light on day 1 was "scattered and confused" but was "collected and modeled and made into several luminaries" (*Matthew Henry Commentary* on Genesis 1:14). Then, on day 4, to be of service to the earth, the light from day 1 was gathered into specific forms and placed in designated points in the heaven. The only thing we can say for sure is that there is a distinction between the light referred to on day 1 and the lights of day 4, but that distinction is not biblically defined.

David declared, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1) and his son said, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun" (Ecclesiastics 11:7). God's work is a wonder and a beauty to behold but only as we acknowledge him as the author of all creation. Let us remember that God ordered creation and any theory of so-called science that tries to deny that order is from the dark abyss of Satan and is an attempt to destroy the sovereignty of God in our hearts. Beloved, the Bible record is true and the more we examine it, the more brightly it shines forth as truth. Clearly, in more ways than one, when God said, "Let there be light ... there was light" (Genesis 1:3).



*Onycha Holt*

# In the Footsteps of the Dragon

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9).

The Dragon moved from the Garden of Eden with more purpose and more jubilation than the steps of Nebuchadnezzar, commander-in-chief of the Chaldean army, must have contained as he strode into the smoking royal palace of Sin-Shar-ishkun, the conquered and now dying King of Ninevah. Nebuchadnezzar found on the walls of the captured palace artistic reliefs depicting the torments to which Ninevah had subjected Babylon for centuries. This night, however, was his moment of victory, for Ninevah was now in flames and heavy clouds of smoke spread across the dark sky. The Assyrian empire had reached its end. The Tigris River was swollen with the bodies of fallen soldiers, and the vast plain of Mesopotamia lay hidden under a multitude of lifeless warriors. In the morning, crows would swoop in, and in the morning Nebuchadnezzar, as head of the Babylonian army, along with the commanders of both the Scythians and the Medes, would decide the fate of what remained of Assyria.

The *first* great war on earth, however, involved no nations, no multitude of people, and no armies. Only two people were to be attacked, and the first battle involved only ONE of them. This first war was one of the greatest wars ever fought on this earth, and in this first war the Dragon claimed victory. His symbolic stride as conqueror out of the Garden of Eden shook the earth to its core, and out of his mouth issued an exultant scream of victory, a scream which echoed to the very portals of heaven, where every harp was hushed and every countenance gathered sorrow. Man had lost; his rulership in Eden was over.

Since that time, every nation on this earth has experienced the dictatorship of the Dragon. Feuds among royal families have resulted in the demise of many. Roving bands of warriors have plundered and conquered. The more powerful have decimated the weak. When brute force could not control, allurements and enticements have conquered at last. Even in advanced nations, the love of greed and power has reached to the solemn courts of justice and into the hallowed halls of Congress. It is no secret, for example, that John Kennedy looked for himself the democratic nomination for president of the United States and crushed his rival, Hubert Humphrey, by his underhanded politics in the state of West Virginia. In underdeveloped countries, corruption flourishes, but most of us, as readers, manage to live our lives above this thirst for power and control and above an unquenchable desire for possessions. In America, we usually have food on our tables and a roof over our heads. We are satisfied and do not become involved in political corruption or in violence to our neighbor.

But the great Dragon marches on, and he has a confederacy marching with him, intent on overthrowing every pocket of resistance. His master plan for victory includes: Exalting the sabbath of his own creation and influencing popular ministers to turn the attention of their listeners away from the commandments of God; working by signs and wonders to blind men's

eyes to the truth; inciting indignation against Sabbath-keepers; using all his wisdom and subtlety to ensnare those who honor the true Sabbath; using worldliness, lust, and pride to separate men and women from God; causing the possessors of money and land to be filled with the cares of this world; preventing people from obtaining means to use in God's work; causing men and women to care more for money than for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom and the spread of his truth; using the influence of supposedly Christian people to draw others into the snares of Satan; using all his seductive power to prevent men and women from hearing presentations of truth; causing distraction and division and leading men and women to criticize, judge, and accuse others; and, most importantly, preventing God's people from reading the Lord's messages of warning to his church by having unbelieving ones express doubts in them. The Dragon knows that should the people of God read and believe these admonitions, there is little hope in overcoming the redeemed, and the means he uses to try to accomplish all these designs on God's people (and more) falls under the broad banner of spiritualism. (See *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 337-340 for details of this master plan.)

In Acts we read of the experience of a group of people who “claimed to have intercourse with invisible beings, from whom they derived their knowledge of that which was to come to pass” (*The Youth's Instructor*, November 16, 1893). The Bible calls this type of communion the practice of “curious arts” (Acts 19:19), but after these people were converted, they “brought their books together, and burned them before all men” (*Ibid.*) Ellen White tells us this *curious art* is what we would today call spiritualism or communion with spirits (*The Youth's Instructor*, November 16, 1893). Spiritualism, however, is not only communing with evil spirits in order to know the future (a curiosity, so to speak) or a communication with evil spirits under the guise of speaking with our dead loved ones, it involves *all* communication with the Dragon and his minions, on any subject. For example, Roger Morneau explains in his book *A Trip into the Supernatural* that Satan himself personally tutored Charles Darwin on the principles of the theory of evolution (<http://english.sdaglobal.org/testimony/supnatr.htm>) and that the purpose for such individual attention was to destroy among men any confidence in the biblical record of creation week and to destroy their belief in the fall of mankind and in God's plan of redemption. And all the world is wondering after the beast.

But there is more. The Dragon marches on the field of health:

*Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. (Counsels on Health, p. 460; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)*

The Dragon adapts his strategy to all classes and to all conditions:

To persons of culture and refinement he presents spiritualism in its more refined and intellectual aspects, and thus succeeds in drawing many into his snare. . . . He who could appear clothed with the brightness of the heavenly seraphs before Christ in the wilderness of temptation, comes to men in the most attractive manner as an angel of light. He appeals to the reason by the presentation of elevating themes; he delights the fancy with enrapturing scenes; and he enlists the affections by his eloquent portrayals of love and charity. He excites the imagination to lofty flights, leading men to take so great pride in their own wisdom that in their hearts they despise the Eternal One. . . . The claim that men can hold intercourse with evil spirits is regarded as a fable of the Dark Ages. But spiritualism, which numbers its converts by hundreds of thousands, yea, by millions, which has made its way into scientific circles, which has invaded churches, and has found favor in legislative bodies, and even in the courts of kings—this mammoth deception is but a revival, in a new disguise, of the witchcraft condemned and prohibited of old. (*Darkness Before Dawn*, pp. 20, 21)

The Dragon spreads his darkness among the ministers:

I have been shown that some, even of those who are teachers of the Word of God, are in great danger of being overcome. I saw some linking their arms in the arm of Satan, while he talked most earnestly with them, telling them of the many things that needed to be changed in the church. Afterward his words were repeated by those to whom he had talked. They were delighted with what seemed to them to be clearer perception and better methods of working.

I say to all, Be on your guard, for as an angel of light Satan is walking in every assembly of Christian workers, and in every church, trying to win the members to his side. I am bidden to give to the people of God the warning, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 171)

And today, spiritualism closely imitates *nominal Christianity*:

Spiritualism is now...assuming a Christian guise. . . . While it formerly denounced Christ and the Bible, it now professes to accept both. But the Bible is interpreted in a manner that is pleasing to the unrenewed heart, while its solemn and vital truths are made of no effect. Love is dwelt upon as the chief attribute of God, but it is degraded to a weak sentimentalism, making little distinction between good and evil. God’s justice, His denunciations of sin, the requirements of His holy law, are all kept out of sight.

There are few who have any just conception of the deceptive power of spiritualism and the danger of coming under its influence. (*Darkness Before Dawn*, p. 22)

As spiritualism more closely imitates the *nominal Christianity* of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order

of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many *undeniable* wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power... (*Ibid.*, p. 33)

One weapon the Dragon often pulls from his arsenal in an effort to heal the sick and perform “undeniable wonders” is applied kinesiology. This is not to be confused with kinesiology which is a scientific study of human movement. Applied kinesiology is a form of diagnosis using muscle testing which supposedly reveals how a person’s body is functioning. A weak muscle is said to point to illness in a corresponding internal organ. Applied kinesiology techniques are also believed to be able to evaluate the nervous, vascular, and lymphatic systems; the body’s nutritional state; and the flow of supposed energy (chi) along what are believed to be acupuncture meridians. Practitioners of applied kinesiology believe muscles reflect this flow and that by measuring muscle resistance one can determine the health of bodily organs and nutritional deficiencies. But, take one spiritualistic step towards the Dragon, and you will be trapped!

There are few who have any just conception of the deceptive power of spiritualism and the danger of coming under its influence. Many tamper with it merely to gratify their curiosity. They have no real faith in it and would be filled with horror at the thought of yielding themselves to the spirits’ control. But they venture upon the forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. *Let them once be induced to submit their minds to his direction, and he holds them captive.* It is impossible, in their own strength, to break away from the bewitching, alluring spell. *Nothing but the power of God, granted in answer to the earnest prayer of faith, can deliver these ensnared souls.* (*Ibid.*, p. 22)

Practitioners of applied kinesiology are communicating with Satan just as surely as did the Ephesians when they practiced their “curious arts,” and it should not surprise us that this New Age healing technique is reported to be successful, for we are told that the Dragon will perform “undeniable wonders.” What *is* important is the source of the success, and that source is the Dragon. A dear sister shared her experience with applied kinesiology several years ago at a camp meeting, and we are including an edited transcript here to help you understand the very real spiritualism of this so-called philosophy and practice of health.

*An Important Testimony:* in 1984, my husband and I opened a restaurant, and I really wanted this work to be the Lord’s work. I wanted to reach the world, and I had two dreams—I wanted to succeed in the world and have respect in the world, and I wanted to serve the Lord. We prayed when we opened the restaurant, “Lord, we want this to be your restaurant,” but I did a lot of halfhearted praying.

With the restaurant work came nutrition counseling. A brother who is sitting with us here today was sixty-nine when we met him. He walked with two canes and had many problems. He was barely able to work and seemed to be ready for the wheelchair, but now he is eighty years old. He sent us many people who asked questions about natural remedies, and I was so happy to share with them. I started getting involved more and more in counseling people with nutrition. I would go to conventions where there were many healing techniques, and I said all along, "I would *never* do this or do that." For example, if you ever go to one of the holistic conventions, you will find pendulums that you swing over an herb or over the food, and you will find people who feel the food and can feel energy. There are many strange things that happen. Biofeedback machines were there. Little by little, I was surrounded with people who were doing all of these techniques, and I was getting confused because I wasn't studying Ellen White's counsels on the health work.

I do not know if any of you have seen a biofeedback machine, but with it you hold some metal probes and they touch a reflex point, and the meter on the machine goes positive or negative. So, you hold a certain herb, a certain food, a homeopathic remedy, a drug, or whatever you like, and the machine will tell you [supposedly] whether it is going to help you or not. I was really excited about this. I went to Texas, and I bought a machine. A woman in Texas, an herbalist, taught me how to use the machine, and it worked in Texas! It was just great! I came home, and the machine did not work. I didn't understand why. I could sort of make it work, and people were excited about it, but I knew it wasn't working. I knew I was just making it do what I wanted it to do.

In 1994, I started doing something else, and it is called muscle testing. I wanted to become a better healer. People had already started to come and ask me a lot about herbs, but there is a technique used in healing called muscle testing or kinesiology which [supposedly] helps you to pinpoint the exact herb that someone needs. For example, if someone had an ulcer, I needed to know if they needed goldenseal, licorice, cabbage juice, or something else, and, amazingly, it is very accurate. The biofeedback machine gives you a yes or a no answer. There are many techniques. The pendulum works in the same way—one way is yes, the other way is no. I knew the pendulum was wrong, but I didn't know the biofeedback machine was wrong.

I now started doing muscle testing, and I tried doing it for probably a year or two but just couldn't do it for months. I tried and tried, and I wanted to be able to do it. Finally, Satan gave me the power. I could have a client of mine hold a certain herb, and I would challenge their muscles and know exactly if they needed the herb, how many capsules they needed, and how many times a day. I could also tell exactly which disease they had. I would just say the name of the disease or the body system that was involved, and I would get a response. Eventually, I didn't even need to touch the person.

I could just use my own muscles, and I didn't even have to talk out loud but just talk in my head. I convinced myself that because Satan cannot read our thoughts, this must be of God, for in my mind I could think about a person, do my testing on my own muscles, and know exactly what was wrong with the person, what the person needed to do, what foods he needed to eat, and what vitamins or herbs he needed. I had people with cancer coming to see me and my testing would show, for example, that their cancer count was going down 20%. They would go to the doctor the next day for a blood test, a PSA count, or something like that, and it would be 100% accurate with what I had said. They would come back and say, "It went down 20%; that's what told me yesterday!" And I said, "I know. It's always accurate. It doesn't lie. Your body doesn't lie." I used all New Age terminology. It was absolutely accurate.

Sometimes people would come to me whose doctors didn't even know what their problem was. I would get out the thick Merck manual and go through each body system. I would just put my finger down the chapters and find out what chapter the problem was in, narrow it down, find out exactly what disease they had (I had never even heard of these diseases), read it, and it would exactly describe their condition. I had never read the book and had never heard of the disease, and their doctors were baffled.

People were starting to come from all over. They were starting to realize that I had a gift. This was in 1994 for nine months, and the whole time Satan was giving me wonderful arguments for people who would say something like, "What do you mean you can get this kind of information? How do you do this? This is not of God." I would have an argument for everyone. In addition, a lot of people were being helped. Another thing is my mother was at our house and because of her condition with Epstein-Barr, I met a lot of doctors who were using this technique who were very respected, and they were baffled when we would separately do our tests on patients. They would call me in to test their patients, and I would do my test in one corner of the room, they would do it their way in the other corner of the room. We would come back with the exact same results each time, even to the number of capsules that somebody needed to take, and we were doing it not even looking at each other. The thing is, the same demons were giving the same answers to both of us. Incredible accuracy; incredible power. I got to the point that if someone could not come to see me in the office, they could fax me their handwriting. I could touch their handwriting and tell what was wrong with them.

In nine months, Satan knew whom he had. In nine months, I had talked to a lot of Christians and convinced them that this was okay. I had talked to Adventists and convinced them this was okay. I was teaching my dear friend a lot about herbs. I started teaching her muscle testing, but she did not feel good about it. She started praying for me.

In nine months with kinesiology, or muscle testing, I was so advanced that I had reached the point most people in the



industry only dream about, but Satan wanted to give me a lot of power so that I would be firmly in his grasp.

Well, in September 1994, I was just starting to teach my friend, and she told me one Sabbath after church, “I am praying for you, Marlene, because this is not right.” At that moment, it was like the earth opened, and I felt like I was going to fall into the earth. I got white, but I pretended everything was normal. I don’t think she knew how her words impacted me. In 1994, Satan worked with a lot of power to get me firmly in his grasp, but I didn’t realize how much God was working for me in 1994. I don’t know all the people who were praying for me, but my sister-in-law told me that she had started praying for me in 1994. Never in my life has there been such a struggle where you hear the two voices. Casually, every day for those nine months, I would pray, “Lord, if it is not from you, take it away.” I also started reading the Bible a lot more, and there is such power in intercessory prayer. It is so amazing.

On the particular weekend my friend told me she was praying for me, the Holy Spirit really impressed me, and that was the beginning of what I call my Jacob’s struggle. I got in the car with my mother and husband to go home, and I told my husband, “I have to find out who this is really from. It is really bothering me.” I shared with him what my friend had told me. He said, “Just pray about it,” and for three days and three nights I prayed. I knew that on Tuesday I would have to start counseling again and by Tuesday I had to make up my mind. Was I going to do this? Was it right or was it not?

The third night, God impressed me to read *The Desire of Ages* and become familiar with the way that Christ healed. I wanted to recognize the Spirit that worked in Christ, and I realized that this was not the spirit that was using me. For the whole night on that third night, I left our bedroom and went to our guest bedroom. I couldn’t sleep. I was reading and praying, and I could tell that there were demons and God’s holy angels in my room, and they were fighting for my soul. I knew that I had to make a decision for God that day. It was life and death.

I can still see in my mind that it was like I was walking on a tightrope, and if I would fall, demons were below ready to devour me, but I prayed and I gave it all up. I didn’t pray casually. I said, “Lord, I don’t care about my reputation, my business. I don’t care what people think.” I had a lot of New Agers come to me, and I knew it was going to be hard to face them and tell them I don’t do this anymore. I just said, “Lord, I give it all to you. I don’t care if I lose my business. I don’t care if people don’t respect me anymore for nutrition, for advice, or for anything. I want you to bless my work. I don’t want the enemy to be healing my clients.”

That same night I found a book in my bookcase by John and Kathy Rhodes [spelling ?]. They had been involved in psychic healing, and he had done psychic surgery where you just go in and pull out tumors and blood clots without a knife. I read parts of the book. I had never read it before, and I recognized the spirit that he had been using was the spirit that

was using me. On the other hand, I was recognizing in *The Desire of Ages* how God worked.

I knew I needed to talk to somebody the morning before I started work, and at the end of the Rhodes’ book was a phone number for them (they are Adventists), but I had had this book for ten years and I was afraid they would not be there. But who could I talk to? I felt like even my brothers and sisters would not understand what I was struggling with, so I dialed the phone number and somebody answered the phone. I asked, “Is this the Rhodes’ residence?” and the person said, “Yes.” I said, “Is John there?” and she said, “Yes.” And both John and Kathy got on different extensions, and I said, “This is a miracle. I can’t believe it. I have this old book with your phone number in it!” Immediately Kathy Rhodes said, “Tell me why my husband fell off the ladder on Friday, and we are at home now.” They were supposed to have been on a missionary trip. I related my experience and my struggles. They had come out of psychic healing and had become Adventists. Then they became involved in nutrition and natural healing and got involved in the same thing I was involved with. God had showed them and delivered them. They prayed with me, and I felt really strengthened because somebody had been through this same experience. That is why it is important that we share our testimonies.

That day I had many appointments, and I had to leave my consultations many times to go and pray because Satan harassed me—“How are you going to know what to do for this person? How are you going to help that person?” For months, I had harassments. Six weeks later my sister-in-law called me, and she said, “Marlene, are you okay?” and I said, “Yes, I am okay.” She asked if I were really okay three or four times and then said, “The reason I am asking is because six weeks ago I had a dream and for two nights I woke up from this dream crying and screaming because Satan was crushing your head. He was trying to kill you.” I couldn’t believe this because her dream was exactly six weeks earlier when I had gone through my struggle. I related to her what had happened, and she said, “Marlene, I should have called you then. I should have called you.” But I said, “No, God’s timing is perfect. I needed to hear this now because Satan has been putting into my mind that what I have experienced is not real, that it is all imaginary, and that the victory God has given me is something I just made up in my head.” I needed then the assurance that God was with me and that God had been leading me all along.

God is still leading me. He is still changing me every day, and, praise God, he has changed my family and my husband. I tell everyone that I have a new husband.

We don’t always understand, but we still need to obey God. “Trust and Obey” is a song that I always remember. We will understand it all by and by. We are finite. How can we ever imagine to understand all of God’s counsels with our finite minds? He is infinite.

Brethren, I ask you for forgiveness because I have, many times, been a bad example, but I pray that we will encourage

one another in the Lord. I pray, with the psalmist David, that I might be able to say this with my whole heart: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8) and “because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee” (Psalms 63:3).

I pray that we will all surrender everything continually. It is not good enough to do it once. We need to do it moment-by-moment, no matter what the cost. God is preparing mansions for us. It is so exciting because I had power before but now know we have all of heaven on our side, and God is working the healing. I praise his name, for I have been delivered.

Ellen White tells us that Satan has taken the world captive through spiritualism:

I saw the rapidity with which this delusion [spiritualism] was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. It seemed that the whole world was on board. Then he showed me the conductor, a fair, stately person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, “*It is Satan. He is the conductor, in the form of an angel of light. He has taken the world captive. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie that they may be damned. His agent, the highest in order next to him, is the engineer, and others of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition.*”

I asked the angel if there were none left. He bade me look in the opposite direction, and I saw a little company traveling a narrow pathway. All seemed to be firmly united by the truth. This little company looked careworn, as if they had passed through severe trials and conflicts. And it appeared as if the sun had just arisen from behind a cloud and shone upon their countenances, causing them to look triumphant as if their victories were nearly won. (*Early Writings*, p. 263)

Satan “has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: ‘I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; ...they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.’ Revelation 16:13, 14. Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion. The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God” (*Ibid.*, p. 23).

But God had a plan to counteract the designs of Satan, and one scene in this plan occurred long ago...

*The Master Artist* stood before his creative endeavor, and with bold strokes the scene took shape. It was a barren landscape, with ground uneven and dry. Little beauty was here to meet the eye. It was even hostile in a way, with a

foreboding sense of scorpions and snakes just out of sight. The time was approaching to draw the curtain back. A profound drama was about to unfold with only two key players.

A poignant sorrow gripped the Almighty’s heart. He had protected his Son through his years of human growth, but now he was on his own, and even the Father could not now intervene. He could only watch and wait. Everything rested on his Son. All the planning was over, all the options had been explored, all the consequences carefully weighed. Both of them had known there was no other way.

Heaven appeared to stand still in solemn anticipation, and the only sound seemed to be the beat of the Father’s heart, reverberating ponderously through the universe, as though a knell...

*The master deceiver* stood before his victim, acutely aware of his emaciated form and haggard appearance. It had been forty days since this woeful being had eaten. This master could taste victory now. Oh, how he hated him, and he *would crush* him.

He had watched him since birth. He had heard the angel declaration to the shepherds. He had seen his evacuation to Egypt, and, just recently, he had heard the Father himself declare him to be his beloved Son. He remembered the promise in Eden about the bruising his own head, and he wondered if this was the foretold time. He *must* act now. If he could just entice him to sin, then he would be assured of his destruction and of the total failure of God’s plan. And so, he reviewed in his razor-sharp mind his successes of the past.

First, in Eden, he had made a beautiful and captivating appearance, causing distrust in God and disobedience to his word. Then, there was pride and rebellion in Cain, and after that the whole world seemed to fall into his lap. He had even succeeded with Noah on appetite. And so it had been over the years until now.

He knew better than to be fooled by appearances here. It was true this Son of Man was haggard, emaciated, and worn down from the mental agony of the past forty days. He looked awful, even by his own standards, but he knew, despite appearances, that this was the prince of heaven, the one who had forced his own expulsion from heaven and the *hated* one who had been taken into the Almighty’s confidences to his own exclusion. His only desire was to destroy him.

First, he would start as he did in Eden, with a dazzling appearance, then, using the intense hunger the victim must be feeling, work with smooth words to insert a tiny seed of doubt. It HAD to work...

*If Jesus should speak* to you today, he might say, “Your only defense is your trust in and your obedience to the word of God.”

And if Satan should speak, he might be heard to say, “I will overthrow your faith with pleasing sophistry, with lying wonders, and by holding your mind in darkness. I will get you to lay aside reason and the fear of God to follow custom and tradition. I will get you to accept your pastor’s explanations and to not

study for yourself. I will present the world in the most attractive light so that you will lay up treasure there. I will get you to concede that the requirements of God are less strict than you once believed, and, most of all, I will keep you ignorant of my power and cunning.”

*But God wants you to know* that “the weakest soul who abides in Christ is more than a match for the hosts of darkness” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 350).

*So, hold fast your faith!* “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Hebrews 10:37).

*Onycha Holt*



## Quiz on Job 30–31

1. Who is speaking in Job 30:31?
2. In Job 30:1-14, Job states how his honor is turned into complete contempt by outcasts. To what does he compare these outcasts in verse 1?
3. What food did these outcasts eat?
4. Where did they live? No doubt these descriptions represent quite a contrast to Job’s former position.
5. Job says that he had become these outcasts’ song and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. How did these outcasts show their abhorrence to Job?
7. What does the expression “loose the bridle before me” in Job 30:11 mean?
8. What is the meaning of stating that Job’s terrors pursued him as the wind (v. 15)?
9. Who is the “He” in Job 30:19?
10. What despondent accusation does God bring in verse 21?
11. Who is the “thou” in Job 30:23?
12. What can we understand of Job’s thinking, based on verses 19-24?
13. What other possible translation can be used for dragon and owl in verse 29 and what is the meaning of this verse?
14. What other chapter in Job is most like chapter 31?
15. What did Job ask in Job 31:6?
16. Job’s heart had not been deceived by a \_\_\_\_\_.
17. What does Job mean by saying that the poor were “warmed with the fleece of my sheep?”
18. Explain the meaning of Job 31:26.
19. What verse tells us that Job’s convictions did not waver with popular opinion or under threat?
20. Can you find two references for Job 31:39 where Zophar and Eliphaz accuse Job of doing what is mentioned in v. 39?


## Answers to Quiz on Job 29

1. Job 29 is an expression of Job lamenting his former position.
2. Some cross references for Job 29:3 are: Psalm 119:105; Exodus 13:21; Job 18:6; 2 Peter 1:19; Proverbs 6:23; Job 18:6; 21:17; and Proverbs 20:27.
3. The Hebrew word translated “youth” in Job 29:4 means autumn. With this concept, Job is referring to his former state of prosperity when he had great abundance, such as one would have at harvest.
4. Butter and oil in Job 29:6 are symbolic of plenty. Wherever Job walked, butter and oil was in abundance, to the extent that the rocks even produced it.
5. Job declares that youth and princes showed dignity to him, based upon his wisdom in counsel.
6. Some types of social programs Job personally performed were help to the poor, the orphans, the widows, the disabled (blind and lame), the victims of wickedness, and those in need of counsel.
7. Job 29:14 could be referenced to Isaiah 61:10 and Psalm 109:18, 19.
8. The simile “multiply my days as the sand” is used to denote the long life Job had expected.
9. When Job says that his root was spread out by the waters, he means that he flourished as a tree flourishes beside the waters – his needs were greatly supplied.
10. Job’s counsel was highly respected and valued in prior times, to which men gave ear.

*Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence. (Steps to Christ, pp. 94, 95)*

## Tasty Recipe: The Very Good Ketchup!

- 1/2 teaspoon each of salt, onion powder, and dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon Stevia powder
- 6 ounces tomato paste
- 6 ounces pineapple juice

If you like to use ketchup with some foods but wish to avoid vinegar and sugar, you may enjoy this recipe. Simply combine and stir the ingredients until smooth. Crushed basil and oregano can be used instead of dill weed. You may also use 3 ounces of lemon juice, instead of pineapple juice, with enough added water to obtain the desired consistency or use a combination of pineapple and lemon juices. 

*"The Baptism of the Holy Spirit," continued from page 8*

of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 49, 50).

Consider a few points brought out in the passage above:

- The Holy Spirit has been with all who have yielded fully to the Lord. (No mention is made of it coming in a certain manner, such as laying on of hands.)
- They were not by that freed from further temptation and trial.
- They still had to strive earnestly to reach God's standard.
- The promise of the Holy Spirit still applies to us today.
- It is plain that if we do not receive the Holy Spirit it is not God's fault.

### **Baptism of the Spirit to Be a Daily Event**

For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God's workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give. (*Ibid.*, pp. 50, 51)

### **We Are to Pray for It While Not Neglecting the Day's Duties**

Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be "laborers together with God." (*Ibid.*, p. 56)

Laborers are not to stay on their knees all day long but are to pray and then exercise faith that the Holy Spirit will be given, enabling them to be laborers together with God. We are to go forth trusting that the power will be given to us when it is needed. We can be confident that God will supply our needs, and we may trust him. A feeling of ecstasy or some extraordinary tingling or emotion is not evidence one has received the Holy Spirit. There are times when feeling accompanies the power of the Holy Spirit, but often it will not be accompanied by emotion. There are times it gives us a solemnity or simply joy, wisdom, prophecy, or any of these different gifts that come, as well as the fruit of the Spirit. We cannot look at emotion, feelings, or one particular experience and say that this, and this only, is the way to receive the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Miracles of Healing Not God's Method Now**

We read of various instances where people were healed when Christ or the disciples laid their hands on them. Here is one such example:

And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. (Acts 28:8)

In fact, Jesus commands us to heal the sick (Luke 10:9; Mark 16:18), but we are cautioned about how we are to do this.

### **We Are Warned That Satan Will Perform Miracles of Healing**

The spirits of devils ... will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 23, 24; 1888 edition)

As Spiritualism assimilates more closely to the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of Spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and express regard for Sunday, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power. (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 406)

The time will come, Christ tells us of, when many deceivers will go forth, declaring themselves to be Christ. The Saviour says, "Go ye not after them". We need not be deceived. Wonderful scenes, with which Satan will be closely connected, will soon take place. God's Word declares that Satan will work miracles. He will make people sick, and then will suddenly remove from them his Satanic power. They will then be regarded as healed. These works of apparent healing will bring Seventh-day Adventists to the test. Many who have had great light will fail to walk in the light, because they have not become one with Christ. (*Battle Creek Letters*, p. 7)

### **God's Method of Healing Now**

Let us not be deceived. We are told that Satan will come as a great physician performing works of healing. Many Seventh-day Adventists will be deceived by these works of healing. Brothers and sisters, we need to be doing works of healing, but we need to be doing it in God's way, for this time. God's method is to enlighten men and women to the cause and to arouse them to the necessity of obedience to the laws of health. This is because this helps them learn to obey moral law in order to obtain spiritual health. This is the way that God has ordained to work in these last days:

The way in which Christ worked was to preach the word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed," please note this brothers and sisters, "that we cannot now work in this way; for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God's servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.

For this reason the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing

combined with the teaching of the word. Sanitariums are to be established, and with these institutions are to be connected workers who will carry forward genuine medical missionary work. (*Medical Ministry*, p. 14)

There are many ways of practicing the healing art, but there is only one way that Heaven approves. God's remedies are the simple agencies of nature. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 443)

So, are Christ's servants not to work miracles under the latter rain?

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 612)

The passage just quoted shows that God will work miracles through his people, but this must not be understood in a way that contradicts the statements just quoted that shows that the miracles of healing will be through attention to the laws of nature. Furthermore, the statement above mentions miracles as one thing and healing the sick as another. Notice the kind of miracle that this must be speaking of that God will be doing:

Do not forget that a Bunyan and a Newton may again be redeemed from among men. Just as wonderful miracles will be wrought upon human minds in the future as have been wrought in the past. Man is dead, without God, and without hope in the world. But over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ proclaimed, "I am the resurrection and the life." Not only will all who are in the graves hear His voice and come forth, He is to-day the Restorer of those dead in sin. To-day Jesus is working His miracles. The great Physician stands by the side of the faithful worker, saying to the repentant, discouraged soul, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." (*The Signs of the Times*, June 6, 1900)

The time is at hand when Satan will work miracles to confirm minds in the belief that he is God. All the people of God are now to stand on the platform of truth as it has been given in the third angel's message. All the pleasant pictures, all the miracles wrought, will be presented in order that, if possible, the very elect shall be deceived. The only hope for anyone is to hold fast the evidences that have confirmed the truth in righteousness. Let these be proclaimed over and over again, until the close of this earth's history. (*The Review and Herald*, August 9, 1906)

Are we seeing miracles wrought today? Yes! Demons are cast out, and even physical ailments of a supernatural character have disappeared in answer to the prayers of God's servants. Miracles of various sorts happen often. But let us not expect God to do what he has told us he will not do. He has specifically

told us he will not miraculously heal people today without the use of the simple remedies he has ordained.

## Doctrine of the Laying On of Hands

Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. (Hebrews 6:2)

When I was going to college, a friend of mine studied this issue of the laying on of hands, and he was convicted that this needed to be done. So, he told me about it and invited me to go with him to the pastor's house and have him lay his hands upon us for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without giving much thought beyond listening to what he said, I thought that it sounded biblical, so I went with him to have hands laid upon me and to have prayer for me. We went to a prearranged meeting at the pastor's office, and he knelt down and laid his hands on us and prayed that we would receive the Holy Spirit. There were no feelings that came upon us, either at that moment or at any subsequent time immediately. There was no ecstasy or anything out of the ordinary that would show that there was anything different.

I had already had evidence long before that of God's Spirit working in my life. I often saw miracles as a teenager, and even as a young child, when doing door-to-door work and when holding Bible studies with fellow students. God would lead me to just the right home at just the right moment to be the agency for Christ to save a soul and led me to speak just the right word that would click with something in someone's heart. I saw tears come into people's eyes and saw people give their hearts to Christ. And to this day, I have witnessed the Holy Spirit's presence in my life, and have witnessed the hosts of darkness retreat and leave the individuals they had been harassing and possessing in answer to prayer in the name of Jesus. Beloved, we do not need to expect that the Holy Spirit has to be given to us through some particular individual and in some particular means or way. It is our privilege to go to God personally. It is our privilege to ask of him and receive the Holy Spirit right now and daily. The Scripture tells us he is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask than parents are to give good gifts to their children (Luke 11:13).

The doctrine of the laying on of hands is not the practice of laying hands on someone to receive the Holy Spirit. It is something else entirely.

Let us take a look at some of the examples in the New Testament era church, in the early church, of the laying on of hands. We have many instances throughout the New Testament of the laying on of hands. Some of these cases refer to healings, but there are also many examples where other things took place. Let us take a look at some of those examples.

In Acts chapter 6, we have the first example that I wish to examine. The early church decided to ordain seven deacons to assist in the work:

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And

the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. (Acts 6:3-6)

This instance of laying on of hands was for the ordination of seven deacons and was a formal recognition by the church of God's call to these men for a specific work. There is no indication given that these men received any more virtue or any more of the Holy Spirit after they had hands laid upon them. In fact, it tells us that they were *full* of the Holy Ghost and wisdom prior to hands being laid upon them.

Another example of this is in 1 Timothy 4:14, where it mentions the gift that was in Timothy that was given by the laying on of hands. Timothy's gift was ordination. This was not something that was given to everyone, although we have plenty of reason to believe from the New Testament order that deacons, deaconesses, elders, and ministers are to have hands laid upon them and to be set apart for the work that they are doing. This is something which we do, in part, today, but we need to be more careful, for we are counseled to "lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (1 Timothy 5:22). There is to be a very careful investigation of the person's life before any laying on of hands is performed for someone.

This is the doctrine of the laying on of hands that Hebrews 6 talks about. It is the doctrine of recognizing Christ's work through his organized church. It is a doctrine of gospel order and organization. Notice the story of Paul's ordination:

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. (Acts 13:2-3)

Notice what Inspiration has to say about this:

To the Jew this form was a significant one. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. And when the ministers of the church of believers in Antioch laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, they, by that action, asked God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen apostles in their devotion to the specific work to which they had been appointed.

**At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act,** as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work. But in the setting apart of these two apostles, there is no record indicating that any virtue was imparted by the mere act of laying on of hands. There is only the simple record of their ordination and of the bearing that it had on their future work.

The circumstances connected with the separation of Paul and Barnabas by the Holy Spirit to a definite line of service show clearly that the Lord works through appointed agencies in His organized church. Years before, when the divine purpose concerning Paul was first revealed to him by the Saviour Himself, Paul was immediately afterward brought into contact with members of the newly organized church at Damascus. Furthermore, the church at that place was not long left in darkness as to the personal experience of the converted Pharisee. And now, when the divine commission given at that time was to be more fully carried out, the Holy Spirit, again bearing witness concerning Paul as a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, laid upon the church the work of ordaining him and his fellow laborer. As the leaders of the church in Antioch "ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church—Christ's body—is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work.

There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God.

Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown. The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to co-operate with the divine. Every

agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God.

Paul regarded the occasion of his formal ordination as marking the beginning of a new and important epoch in his lifework. It was from this time that he afterward dated the beginning of his apostleship in the Christian church." (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 162-165)

The doctrine of laying on of hands would include laying hands on someone to receive the Holy Spirit, but to receive the Holy Spirit in this way is the exception, not the rule, as we have seen. The doctrine of laying on of hands is the doctrine of organization, harmony, and unity. It is the doctrine that the church is to be organized and to have authority. It teaches us that the church has authority to ordain deacons, deaconess, elders, and ministers; to make known those it acknowledges as authorized to perform ministerial functions; to administer the ordinances of baptism, the Lord's Supper; and to organize churches. Just because we have, at times, had to withdraw from organized bodies because they ceased to allow Christ to be the head and apostasy has crept in doesn't mean we don't need to follow the principles of gospel order.

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


Yet there was strong feeling against it among our people. The first-day Adventists were opposed to organization, and most of the Seventh-day Adventists entertained the same ideas. We sought the Lord with earnest prayer that we might understand His will, and light was given by His Spirit that there must be order and thorough discipline in the church--that organization was essential. System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe. Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God's people on the earth.)

Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the cooperation of the heavenly messengers must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can cooperate with them. But never,

never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder. All these evils are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy our courage, and prevent successful action.

Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and perfect discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These devoted souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course independent of their brethren."

God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinion of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren?

Though we have an individual work and an individual responsibility before God, we are not to follow our own independent judgment, regardless of the opinions and feelings of our brethren; for this course would lead to disorder in the church. It is the duty of ministers to respect the judgment of their brethren; but their relations to one another, as well as the doctrines they teach, should be brought to the test of the law and the testimony; then, if hearts are teachable, there will be no divisions among us. Some are inclined to be disorderly, and are drifting away from the great landmarks of the faith; but God is moving upon His ministers to be one in doctrine and in spirit. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 26-30) 

# Help the Hershbergers

by Dea Davis and Don Blaylock

On May 2, 2010, a horrific and deadly flash flood swept through Pleasantville, Tennessee, and surrounding towns. There are many tragic stories to relay. Ours is of a brave and faith-filled Amish family that is dear to our hearts. They lived near the clear, rippling waters of Cane Creek. This location was where they grew the organic vegetable crops which were to provide their financial means for the whole year. Abraham and Mattie Hershberger, along with their four children, tended the crops and lived a simple off-the-grid lifestyle, as do most Amish families.

Because Abraham and his family chose to follow God and his word, as the Bible instructs, especially concerning the seventh-day Sabbath and the truth about God, Abraham was



**The work horses that drowned**

shunned within the Amish community a few years ago. The Amish make it a practice to shun anyone who does not follow their teachings to the letter. When an Amish person is shunned, they are marked and all Amish, including relatives, are prohibited from buying, selling or trading with them. Abraham could go to the bishop today and clear all this up by denouncing what the Bible says and follow the traditions of man. This would enable him to get back his inheritance, including land, barns, and equipment, and his livelihood by being able to trade again in the Amish community. Abraham has chosen to put all his trust in the Lord and not man. God's people should band together and help anyone who is willing to stand up to any form of religious persecution.

The morning of Sunday, May 2, was the second day of heavy rains and the creek was rising continually when, at last, they came to the conclusion that they must abandon their home. It was to the nearby caves that they retreated on foot, as they do not have the normal means of transportation as most of us do. (They travel by horse and buggy.) So, on foot, they set out for safety, and it was a good decision that they did because the waters rose to a level that swept their wood frame house from its block foundation into the adjacent field and beyond. Their house and the contents thereof were scattered among the tree/fence lines some three hundred feet away. They lost their barn, all of their furniture, much of their household belongings, stored food, their green house, buggy, and, saddest of all, their two beloved work horses which Abraham used to work the fields. The buggy horse was spared.

The fields in which their crops were recently planted were overcome by the rushing current, uprooting all in its path, including their income for the year.




**The Hershbergers' ruined buggy**

We thank God and praise him for his goodness, as the family members have all been saved alive. And it was through this great disaster that Abraham helped save the life of a neighbor who was stranded in the rushing water clinging to the body of his dead wife. Abraham prayed and went forth into the rushing water, at the risk of his own life, to grab hold of the neighbor, and with gentleness and firmness he convinced the man to let go of his wife and save himself from a sure death.

Our friends are brave and an inspiration to us and others around – their faces still alight with a joy that must be deep-rooted in their hearts. Their faith shines in their eyes, and their willingness to accept inconvenience and hardship is remarkable. We pray that hearts will be open to help this dear family. They have a long road to recovery, and your financial help could hasten the process. In fact, an anonymous donor has offered to double your donations by matching up to \$30,000! For more information on how to donate to this dear family, please see the



**Part of their destroyed home**

website: <http://www.helpthehershbergers.com> or write them directly at: 3344 Hwy 438, Pleasantville, Tennessee 37033. The Hershbergers are living out on the property, for now, in tents so they can dedicate more time to picking up the pieces. Above all, include them in your prayers. 

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