

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



He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing. (Job 28:10)

Prayer Requests

We are very thankful for the grace of God that blesses us with life and spiritual courage through our Lord Jesus Christ. We ask for your prayers for Pastor Stump as he spends the next month in Europe, sharing God's word. We also ask for your prayers for Sister Ann Ford, who recently fell and broke her right lower leg. The Waldensian Center is starting a new term this month, and we entreat your prayers that each student and teacher will be filled with God's Spirit.

We would like to also ask you to continue to pray for Brother Aland Ashton in Peru, who is challenged with health issues.

Editor

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God's Grace, The ABCs, (Part 2)

Grace is one of the most important concepts in the Bible, but there are many different ideas of what grace is, how we obtain grace, and what grace accomplishes in our lives. Grace is defined in the dictionary in a non-theological way to be: **1.** A seemingly effortless beauty or charm of movement, form, or proportion, **2.** A characteristic or quality pleasing for its charm or refinement, **3.** The skill at avoiding the inept or clumsy course; a sense of fitness or propriety, **4.** A favor rendered after a deadline has been passed by one who need not do so and, **5.** A prayer said before a meal.

Many times we use the term grace in a sense that is not strictly theological. For example, Ellen Write wrote: "Another precious grace that should be carefully cherished is reverence" (*Child Guidance*, p. 538).

In the Old Testament, the word we translate grace is *chen*, which means favor. The New Testament concept of grace is closer to the Hebrew *cheched*, which is translated lovingkindness.

For thy lovingkindness (*cheched*) is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth. (Psalm 26:3)

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness (*cheched*) and thy truth continually preserve me. (Psalm 40:11)

The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness (*cheched*) have I drawn thee. (Jeremiah 31:3)

Though not always used by its name, the concept of grace is throughout the Old Testament. Adam and Eve, in receiving the promise of the redeemer (Genesis 3:15), received grace. Time and time again, God's love and grace has been demonstrated in his dealings with his people.

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness (*cheched*) shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee. (Isaiah 54:10)

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness (*cheched*), judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 9:23, 24)

While many are familiar with the Old Testament's revelations of God's displeasure with sin, also displayed in the Old Testament are his patience and love for sinners and the grace provided for their salvation.

In the New Testament, though, this grace is more fully revealed through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. John writes:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:14, 17)

In these two verses we see a close link between grace and truth. God's people have been told:

Grace can thrive only in the heart that is being constantly prepared for the precious seeds of truth. The thorns of sin will grow in any soil; they need no cultivation; but grace must be carefully cultivated. The briars and thorns are always ready to spring up, and the work of purification must advance continually. If the heart is not kept under the control of God, if the Holy Spirit does not work unceasingly to refine and ennoble the character, the old habits will reveal themselves in the life. (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 50; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted).

Jesus and Paul are the two strongest proponents of grace in the New Testament. Interestingly, we have no record of Jesus using the word grace, but we are told that "Christ's favorite theme was the paternal tenderness and *abundant grace* of God" (*Ibid.*, p. 40). We see grace in action when the woman caught in the act of adultery was brought before Jesus and he said: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). We see the magnificent grace of Jesus in his treatment of Judas, who betrayed him. Christ's life was one full of grace.

The Apostle Paul speaks of God's initiative in the salvation of the sinner by directly imputing to him both faith and grace. In Romans 12:3 we learn that "*God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*" Furthermore, we read that Jesus:

Hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Timothy 1:9)

The Bible teaches that because of our sinful natures we are born without any power to do good. Jesus said "without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Even our best efforts at righteousness results in "filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).

The emphasis of the teachings of the Apostle Paul is that salvation is the result not of law, books, or nationality but of divine favor freely bestowed and received by faith.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. (Romans 5:1, 2)

Paul pictures one of the blessings of the gospel as “access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” Here we see that grace is the hand of God reaching earthward and faith is the hand of man reaching up to take hold of God’s hand. This process happens because of the great principle and driving force of God’s love which is revealed in the gift of his only begotten Son.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. . . . We love him, because he first loved us. (1 John 4:8-10, 19)

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but *faith which worketh by love.* (Galatians 5:6)

The progression we see is that the foundation of our experience begins with God. We experience his love, and this activates our faith to receive the grace that God supplies. This grace received by faith through love changes the believer. “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).

Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476)

The grace of Christ is to control the temper and the voice. Its working will be seen in politeness and tender regard shown by brother for brother, in kind, encouraging words. (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 102)

Paul not only began his epistles (except Hebrews) with a comment on grace, but also ended each one with a mention of grace. For example, see Romans 1:7; 16:20 and Galatians 1:3; 6:18. Peter and John, inspired by the same Holy Spirit, wrote in a similar fashion (See 1 Peter 1:2; 5:10; 2 John 1:3; Revelation 1:4; 22:21.)

Grace and Justice

As we noted in the first part of this study, God’s grace is unmerited favor towards man. By its very definition, grace is not something we deserve, but, because of God’s great sacrifice in the gift of his Son, God has the right to bestow grace upon his children. The psalmist writes: “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness [Hebrew *tsedeq* from *tsadaq*, as

used in Daniel 8:14 for cleansed] and peace (*shalom*) have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10).

Through grace, righteousness and peace have kissed; that is, they have been brought into an intimate relationship.

The very foundation of God’s throne is judgment and righteousness. The very fact that God’s throne is established in righteousness and justice proves that all which he does, including the bestowal of grace on the unworthy sinner, is right and true. “Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne” (Psalm 97:2). The New King James Version states it this way: “Clouds and darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation (*makown*) of His throne.” Psalm 89:14 says, “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.”

According to John, Christ dwelt among us full of grace and truth. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The Greek word translated full is *pleres* (plhvrhV), which means that there is nothing lacking. “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

Paul boldly declares that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans 5:20). The continual need for grace has been expressed this way:

Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 508)

We ourselves owe everything to God’s free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others. (Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 250)

The kingdom of grace was instituted immediately after the fall of man, when a plan was devised for the redemption of the guilty race. It then existed in the purpose and by the promise of God; and *through faith, men could become its subjects.* Yet it was not actually established until the death of Christ. Even after entering upon His earthly mission, the Saviour, wearied with the stubbornness and ingratitude of men, might have drawn back from the sacrifice of Calvary. In Gethsemane the cup of woe trembled in His hand. He might even then have wiped the blood-sweat from His brow and have left the guilty race to perish in their iniquity. Had He done this, there could have been no redemption for fallen men. But when the Saviour yielded up His life, and with His expiring breath cried out, “It is finished,” *then the fulfillment of the plan of redemption was assured.* The promise of salvation made to the sinful pair in Eden *was ratified.* The kingdom of grace, which had before existed by the promise of God, was then established. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 347, 348)

It is through grace that men and women are called to the service of God. “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen” (Galatians 1:15, 16), and it is by grace alone that men and women respond to the divine call. As Paul told the elders of Ephesus, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32).

God’s grace “which is by one man, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:15), brings “everlasting consolation and good hope” (2 Thessalonians 2:16) and leads us “boldly unto the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16).

No matter how bad you have been, God has grace for you. “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans 5:20), and no matter how good you think you have been, God has grace for even Laodicea. That’s right, no

matter how proud, vain, or full of conceit you are, yet having only filthy rags to cover your sins (Isaiah 64:6), God’s grace can reach you. It is up to you to respond to the love of God, to take the hand of faith, and to reach up to the hand of grace from God so that righteousness and peace may meet in your life. God’s grace can cover you, but you must accept it and respond to his enabling grace.

To make God’s grace our own, we must act our part. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. (*A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 56)

The saving dynamic is the grace of God. Peter begins his famous ladder of Christian growth with “grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord” (2 Peter 1:2). Because we first receive grace, we may grow in perfection.

Allen Stump

God’s Grace and the Gospels

Grace is a word that conveys wonderful hope and comfort to the Christian. Grace was a word that the Apostle Paul loved to use. In fact, Paul used the Greek word *charis*, that we translate grace, nearly one hundred times in his writings. Every epistle that Paul wrote (with the exception of Hebrews), begins and ends with the mention of grace. For example, we read:

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 5:28)

Grace has been said to be “unmerited favor” (*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 182). In this study, we wish to examine this understanding, as well as look at the various shades of meaning to grace that we find in the gospels.

Interestingly, the word *grace* is not found in the words of Jesus in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, but there are some references to the Greek word *charis* in the gospels. Let us notice some of them.

The word grace appears just four times in the gospels. The first is in Luke 2:40: “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the *grace* of God was upon him.” The three other references are in John 1:14, 16, 17:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. . . . And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Grace came by Jesus! We needed grace, and we need grace each day to live right! The Greek words for the expression “grace for grace” is *charis anti charitos* (cavrin ajnti; cavritos). *Anti* is a preposition usually translated *for*, meaning in the place of.

Here the picture is “grace” taking the place of “grace” like the manna fresh each morning, new grace for the new day and the new service. (*Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, reference for John 1:16)

Some other usages of *charis* and its various basic forms in the gospels are given below:

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured (*charitoo*), the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour (*charis*) with God. (Luke 1:28-30)

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour (*charis*) with God and man. (Luke 2:52)

And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious (*charis*) words which proceeded out of his mouth. (Luke 4:22)

For if ye love them which love you, what thank (*charis*) have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank (*charis*) have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank (*charis*) have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. (Luke 6:32, 33, 34)

Here we see the word translated thank, and we can understand this when we remember that we say grace or give thanks before a meal.

Doth he *thank (charis)* that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. (Luke 17:9)

Here the meaning of *charis* is closer to showing favor.

The Words of Jesus Were Spoken with Grace

As noted in Luke 4:22, the words of Jesus were spoken with grace, and, according to Jesus, they bring life: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). Think of the beautiful gospel invitation of Jesus:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

In the place of our burdens and weariness, Christ offers rest and life.

The gracious words of Jesus offer pardon. To the man with palsy, Jesus could say, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matthew 9:2). To the woman caught in the very act of adultery, Jesus could say, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more” (John 8:11).

Of Jesus it was predicted that he would “come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth” (Psalm 72:6). Just as the gentle showers refresh the earth and cause the barren places to have life, Jesus would shower this earth with love, mercy, and grace. His words were seasoned with such grace that even hardened guards sent to arrest him came back empty-handed and could only say, “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46). Police officers are not usually carried away by public speech, but these men had fallen under the power of Jesus. They heard not dry, boring, and lifeless rounds of senseless mumbo-jumbo but the real meat. It was foretold of Jesus “...that grace was poured into His lips, that He might “know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary [Isaiah 50:47]” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 336).

Paul learned from Christ, and he knew how to measure his speech to have gracious words. He said, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Colossians 4:6).

You may speak words that will heal or hurt. The words we use are important. Solomon said, “The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth” (Ecclesiastes 12:10), but words of truth may cut, hurt, and kill if used wrongly. It would not be kind or wise to tell an ignorant person that they are stupid. This would not edify the person. Our words must be spoken in the proper manner. There are three dogs that live on my property (notice I did not say I owned three dogs). Two have

moved from the neighbors’ homes to mine, and the third has been slightly adopted. Their names are Bear, Lady, and Ginger, but I sometimes call them Dumb, Dumber, and Dumbest. If I tell Dumber that she is such a dumb dog but say it with cheer in my voice, she will wag her tail and lick my hand. On the other hand, if I speak in a rough voice to Ginger but tell her she is a good dog, she will cower down. The words we speak are important, but the way we speak them is also important. Ellen White noted, concerning Jesus:

He made truth beautiful by presenting it in the most direct and simple way. His language was pure, refined, and clear as a running stream. His voice was as music to those who had listened to the monotonous tones of the rabbis. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 253)

Common conversation today covers many ranges of thought, but we should center our words upon Jesus. Even in the desire to present the gospel, we may try to match logic with logic and reason with reason, but we should simply present Jesus. Paul found this plan to be most satisfying:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. (1 Corinthians 2:1-4)

The Teachings of Jesus Were Filled with Grace

The teachings of Jesus were filled with the grace of God’s plan of salvation. We see this in the many parables of Jesus.

In the parable of the publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14), Jesus revealed the grace of God by means of contrast. In the front of the “church” was the self-righteous Pharisee, and in the back was the publican. Luke gives the purpose of the parable: “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.” The proud Pharisee did not go to his house justified, but the humble publican, who simply fell upon the mercy and grace of God, was justified. In fact, the word translated righteous is simply a noun form of the word translated justified in verse 14, where a verb form of the word is used.

The parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7) teaches the grace of God leads him to seek for the lost sinner who is in the wild and cannot find his way back to the fold. Whose fault was it that the sheep was lost? It was not the fault of the Good Shepherd. The sheep had disobeyed and did not deserve mercy. We might think that having ninety-nine sheep in the fold would be enough for the shepherd, but any mother who has welcomed all of her family for a holiday gathering save one lone, lost son or daughter knows that even if all the children, save one, are at the table healthy and happy, her heart is still broken and sad due to the one lost child. A God of

infinite love yearns even more, beloved. The love of the shepherd provided grace for the lost sheep.

The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) tells of a wayward son who was completely lost, but a father of love was watching the road each day in eager anticipation that the son would remember the father's love and come home. One day the son came home, and the father received him back into his family by grace.

We have all been lost sheep or rebellious sons, undeserving of mercy, but love prevents the Father and the Son from giving up on us, and because of their grace we may become sons and daughters of God.

Some of the most sublime teachings of Jesus were given in the Sermon on the Mount, especially in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12). Here we see the teachings of Jesus full of grace. Here the the poor become rich; the mourners are comforted; the meek inherit the earth; the hungry are filled; the merciful, though they deserve no mercy, receive mercy; the pure in heart, by God's grace, will see him; the peacemakers are the children of God; and those who are persecuted can have joy.

The Actions of Jesus Were Filled with Grace

In connection with the parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son, we read:

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. (Luke 15:1)

Jesus drew near to these people who were not well-loved or favored by others. It is not apparent in the English translation, but in the original Greek of verse 1, both the word *publicans* and the word *sinners* are preceded by the definite article (*oi*-nomative plural), as we read in *Young's Literal Translation*: "And all the tax-gatherers and the sinners were coming nigh to him, to hear him." The two articles do not separate the two classes but rather show them to be on the same level as outcasts or sinners.

The story of Zacchaeus reveals the grace of Jesus in action. The Bible says:

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. (Luke 19:5-7)

Jesus' acknowledgment of Zacchaeus and his self-invitation to dinner was hardly expected by Zacchaeus or anyone else. However, the actions of Jesus were full of unmerited favor and not only the family of Zacchaeus, but countless believers have received the grace of God by this story.

One of my favorite stories of the Bible is very short but extremely intense. It is found in Mark 1, and I call it the magnificent touch of Jesus!

And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. (Mark 1:40-42)

Verse 41 has the key action, but let us notice the request. The leper asked to be clean. He had learned that Jesus could simply speak the word and the seeker would find forgiveness and cleansing. But he had leprosy. Stephen Haskell describes well the plight of the leper:

Of all the diseases to which mankind is heir, there is none more loathsome than leprosy. The individual lives for years with this dread disease slowly eating away portions of his body until he longs for death as a release.

From earliest times leprosy has been a type of sin; and a very fitting type it is of that loathsome spiritual disease which destroys the soul of the one who violates his conscience again and again until he has no power to resist, and becomes wholly surrendered to evil.

When Miriam became jealous of her sister-in-law, and she and Aaron murmured against Moses, "the anger of the Lord was kindled against them. . . And, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow." After God had taught the lesson that the sins of jealousy, murmuring, and fault-finding are to the spiritual life what leprosy is to the physical being, then, in answer to Moses' prayer, she was healed. (Numbers 12:9-15)

When Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, coveted the treasures of Naaman, and told a falsehood and dissembled to obtain them, the decree came to him from the Lord, "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee." (2 Kings 5:20-27) It is not strange that, with the record of the experiences of Miriam and Gehazi before them, the Jews should look upon leprosy as a judgment from the Lord.

The leper was not allowed to mingle with the people. There was no exception, from the king on the throne to the lowliest bondservant. The command of the Lord was, "The leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. . . He shall dwell alone; without the camp, shall his habitation be. (Leviticus 13:45,46)

... leprosy was a type of the worst sins,... (*The Cross and Its Shadow*, pp. 162, 163)

In fact, in all of sacred history there is no record of anybody ever willingly coming in physical contact with a leper. But Jesus not only spoke health to this poor wretch, but he also reached out his strong hand and gentle fingers and touched the untouchable. What a lesson in grace this simple gesture makes, a lesson that still speaks to us today!

The incarnation shows the grace of Jesus in being willing to come to this earth as a man. In all the universe, save the fallen angels, there is nothing more vile than humanity. Humanity looks upon the cockroach with disgust and disdain. We think of them as dirty, filthy, and repugnant, yet they simply are roaches who have no free will or choice to be better. They feed on filth and at least fulfill their purpose well. Humanity, which has fallen into sin, has marred the image of God, yet the Lord Jesus who “had always been God by nature, did not cling to his privileges as God’s equal, but stripped himself of every advantage” (Philippians 2:5-7, Phillips) and consented to be a slave by nature and to be born as a man. Paul writes in Hebrews:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. (Hebrews 2:14-18)

Ellen White describes it this way: “He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181).

Jesus demonstrated grace in all of his healing, for none deserved mercy, but he, nevertheless, granted health. When the Jews pressed Jesus to heal the centurion’s servant, they declared “that he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue” (Luke 7:4, 5). Note, worth here was based on his good works, but the centurion himself plainly said, “Trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee” (Luke 7:6, 7).

Jesus healed the two demoniacs, as recorded in Mark 5:1-15. These men had, by their own course of action, allowed Satan to enter them, but God’s grace reached them even where they were. We, too, have, by our courses of action, allowed Satan to enter into our lives and maybe into our very being, but God still has mercy upon the soul that longs to be free. Jesus forgave the man with palsy (Mark 2:1-12,) but he wants to do something equally fantastic, splendid, and great for us. By his grace, he wants to forgive us for putting him on the cross. His cry as he hung between heaven and earth, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34), still rings out loudly and clearly today!

Finally we see the grace of God and Christ in the ministry of Jesus in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary today, where he lifts his nail-pierced hands and cries, “My blood, Father, My blood, My blood, My blood” (*Early Writings*, p. 38).

Allen Stump

God’s Grace Requires Holy Living

The minister exhorted his congregation, “Ye are not saved by grace through faith... to be free to do whatever ye wish and please.” While the salvation of God is freely offered by his grace, his grace is not a cloak for our sins. Paul, writing to Titus, noted:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. (Titus 2:11, 12)

God’s grace teaches us to deny “ungodliness and worldly lusts.” God’s grace declares that we can live “soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” We are not to wait for heaven to live righteously. As we live righteously, we are to look “for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (v. 13).

As Paul continues, he explains that Jesus gave himself for us so that he “... might redeem us from *all iniquity, and*

purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (v. 14). The unmerited favor of God is no excuse to continue sinning!

Holy Living Requires God’s Grace

To live “soberly, righteously and godly” requires the grace of God, but we must remember that our righteousnesses are but filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Without Jesus, we can do nothing (John 15:5), but with God’s help we can be the people he is preparing to stand in the last days as the final generation. God has promised that if we will ally our wills with his, he will work in us to do his good will:

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12, 13)

Through Christ's strength we can do all the things that he desires us to do: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

The Need to Grow in Grace

No person can live a holy life who is not growing in grace. Peter commands us to grow in grace: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18)

Justification is important and a work of grace; however, it is not enough just to experience God's grace in the forgiveness of our sins. God has much more to share with us, both in this life and in the life to come. Paul says "that in the ages to come he [God] might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7), and this helps to explain Paul's salutations and benedictions (such as 1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 5:28) that we mentioned in the beginning of part 3 of this series.

The Bible teaches that we might grow in grace through obeying the revealed will of God through his word. Paul noted to the elders of Ephesus:

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. (Acts 20:32)

Paul says that when we come boldly, through prayer, to "the throne of grace, ... we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

A Warning

The Bible teaches that we can receive the grace of God in vain. Paul pleaded with the Corinthians that they would "receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1). This should close the door to foolish discussions on the once saved, always saved issue.

Salvation is "by grace through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). Let us not make the mistake of the Galatians who sought to be justified by the keeping of law (Galatians 5:4), though those who are justified will be keepers of the law (Romans 2:13).

If we seek to be justified, by any system of salvation, by works, we will fall from grace!

According to Jude 1:4, God's grace is not an excuse for licentiousness: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." This verse tells us that some were using grace as an excuse for shameless behavior, yet God's word tells us that grace requires holy living.

Beloved, as we come to the conclusion on this series on grace, I want to ask you a question: Would it not be a terrible thing to have received God's grace in vain, to have received God's grace at one point but then to make it all vain (useless)? I certainly know it would be terrible, but it is no worse

than to not receive the grace of God at all or to receive it and yet fail to grow in it!

Beloved, I want to share these encouraging and uplifting words from Hebrews:

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled ... let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ... For it is good that the heart be established by grace. (Hebrews 12:15, 28; 13:9)

Have you received the wonderful grace of God in your life? If not, please turn your life over to Jesus today and receive the grace of God into your life. It matters not if you have attended Sabbath School for years and have never missed the divine worship service. If you have not given your sins to Jesus and received his grace, you are lost. On the other hand, if you have given your life to Jesus, you must grow in grace by surrendering your life anew to Jesus each day, receiving the promised empowering that he has for his people. "Grace be with you all. Amen" (Hebrews 13:25).

Allen Stump



Spirit of Prophecy Gems on Grace

[We are] never to regard the most hardened sinner as beyond the reach of the **grace of God**. (*Gospel Workers*, p. 267; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

Paul pleaded with those who had once known in their lives the power of God, to return to their first love of gospel truth. With unanswerable arguments he set before them their privilege of becoming free men and women in Christ, through whose **atonement grace** all who make full surrender are clothed with the robe of His righteousness. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 388)

The **blessing of grace** is given to men that the heavenly universe and the fallen world may see as they could not otherwise, the perfection of Christ's character. The Great Physician came to our world to show men and women that through His grace they may so live that in the great day of God they can receive the precious testimony, "Ye are complete in Him." (*Counsels on Health*, p. 593)

It is through Christ that we receive every blessing. We may come to him in our poverty and need, and he will listen to our petitions, and supply our every want. **We are dependent upon him every moment for grace and strength to maintain our integrity and to continue in his love**. How often we need

to have the bread of life broken to our souls! How often we need to be refreshed at the fountain of living waters! Every temporal as well as every spiritual blessing, is a continual witness of his beneficence, The recurring seasons, with the rich and varied blessings which they bring, the refreshing rain and the glad sunshine, every good thing we receive, attests the continuance of our Creator's gift to man. (*The Review and Herald*, December 26, 1882)

Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 507)

The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day. We cannot retain self and yet enter the kingdom of God. If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the **transforming grace** of God cannot be manifest upon us. (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 143)

Grace is unmerited favor, and the believer is justified without any merit of his own, without any claim to offer to God. He is justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who stands in the courts of heaven as the sinner's substitute and surety. But while he is justified because of the merit of Christ, he is not free to work unrighteousness. Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest of precious fruit. Where faith is, good works appear. The sick are visited, the poor are cared for, the fatherless and the widows are not neglected, the naked are clothed, the destitute are fed. Christ went about doing good, and when men are united with Him, they love the children of God, and meekness and truth guide their footsteps. ... Christ and the believer become one, and His beauty of character is revealed in those who are vitally connected with the Source of power and love. Christ is the great depository of justifying righteousness and **sanctifying grace**. (*Selected Messages, book, 1, p. 398*)

Tell the poor desponding ones who have gone astray that they need not despair. Though they have erred, and have not been building a right character, God has joy to restore them, even the joy of His salvation. He delights to take apparently hopeless material, those through whom Satan has worked, and make them the **subjects of His grace**. He rejoices to deliver them from the wrath which is to fall upon the disobedient. Tell them there is healing, cleansing for every soul. There is a place for them at the Lord's table. He is waiting to bid them welcome. (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 234)

God loves the sinless angels, who do his service, and are obedient to all his commands; but he does not give them grace. These heavenly beings know naught of grace; they


have never needed it; for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace upon every one who hungers for it. To every one he presents terms of mercy, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive this gift. (*The Review and Herald*, September 15, 1896)

The kingdom of grace was instituted immediately after the fall of man, when a plan was devised for the redemption of the guilty race. It then existed in the purpose and by the promise of God; and through faith, men could become its subjects. Yet it was not actually established until the death of Christ. Even after entering upon His earthly mission, the Saviour, wearied with the stubbornness and ingratitude of men, might have drawn back from the sacrifice of Calvary. In Gethsemane the cup of woe trembled in His hand. He might even then have wiped the blood-sweat from His brow and have left the guilty race to perish in their iniquity. Had He done this, there could have been no redemption for fallen men. But when the Saviour yielded up His life, and with His expiring breath cried out, "It is finished," then the fulfillment of the plan of redemption was assured. The promise of salvation made to the sinful pair in Eden was ratified. The **kingdom of grace**, which had before existed by the promise of God, was then established. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 347, 348)

The lessons of Christ, setting forth **meekness and humility and love as essential to growth in grace** and a fitness for His work, were of the highest value to John. He treasured every lesson and constantly sought to bring his life into harmony with the divine pattern. John had begun to discern the glory of Christ--not the worldly pomp and power for which he had been taught to hope, but "the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14.

The depth and fervor of John's affection for his Master was not the cause of Christ's love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ he did become meek and lowly. Self was hid in Jesus. Above all his companions, John yielded himself to the power of that wondrous life. He says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen it." "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." 1 John 1:2; John 1:16. John knew the Saviour by an experimental knowledge. His Master's lessons were graven on his soul. When he testified of the Saviour's grace, his simple language was eloquent with the love that pervaded his whole being. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 544, 545)

Transcriber Needed

Smyrna Gospel Ministries is in need of a volunteer to transcribe sermons and send the soft copies to our office via the Internet. If you can help, please contact Pastor Stump at allen@smyrna.org. 

A Letter from Abraham Hershberger

Dear Parents, Siblings, and Friends,

“Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith growth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth” (2 Thessalonians 1:2, 3).

We spent most of the first month cleaning up here after the flood, and we also had a lot of visitors. Then on May 31, Virginia Custer took us for a week trip. We went to Dennis J. Yoders (my sister Emma) for the first night in Webster, Kentucky. Then the next day, Tuesday, we went to my parents in Albany, Ohio, and stayed until Friday.

Mom has congestive heart failure and a problem with fluid build-up. She was at home when we got there, but the next day she had to go to the hospital for fluid drainage. We were also able to visit her in the hospital in Athens, Ohio.

My parents are now living with my brother Daniels in McIntosh, Minnesota. They had none of their children nearby in Albany, Ohio, and they really needed children and grandchildren’s help. It does not sound like Mom is doing any better.

We were able to visit the Randall Morris and Loren Martin families in Liberty, Kentucky; Brooks Fullers and Mark Chupps in Edmonton, Kentucky; David Klingbeils in Somerset, Kentucky; Isaac Schrocks (my sister Salome) in Summer Shade, Kentucky; and Enos J. Yoders (my sister Sarah) in Dubre, Kentucky, on the way home. We also got some straw hats from my step-aunt Susie Miller in Hestand, Kentucky.

After we got home from our trip, we started searching for a small farm to buy. We were hoping to stay in this area or move within buggy distance of some of our siblings in Ethridge, Tennessee.

We have a neighbor who can find anything on real estate in middle Tennessee. So he started searching, and we would go look at the places. Roger Hays often took us looking for land, and then we would work in their garden a day to pay for the transportation.

We were really surprised how hard it is to find a small farm for sale that is suitable for us. As of August 8, we have looked at twenty different places in Perry, Wayne, Lewis, and Lawrence Counties. Most of those places were either prone to flood, or steep rocky or cherty hills, or clear-cut with the stumps still in the ground. Two of those places would have been suitable for us but too expensive. Isaac Schrocks have searched in Barren, Metcalf, Cumberland, and Monroe Counties in Kentucky and could not find anything suitable for us either.

We are avoiding the counties with zoning, as far as we know.

Our real estate agent neighbor called an agent in east Tennessee to look for land for us out there, but that agent said it is not worth looking for us out there because any farmland there will be \$4,000 to \$5,000 an acre.

Roger Hays took care of our horse that was crippled in the flood for a whole month. His wounds were healing, but it seemed like his leg or foot is probably broken because he could hardly put any weight on it. Felse, the horse, started laying down overnight and could not get back up, so Roger would lift him back up with a boom on his tractor. Felse kept getting weaker, where Roger would have to get him up several times a day. Roger finally gave up and put him to sleep and buried him. So we lost our three Belgians in the flood. I was relieved to know that Felse is not suffering any more.

Living in tents and waiting so long to find a place has been very discouraging to me at times, but I was always encouraged to know that we do not have to live in tents for forty years the way the children of Israel had to. It was very hard for me not to be farming this summer, even though we worked some in Carla Shafer’s field for produce to eat, and we also planted some things in James Quessy’s garden. It was also hard for me to realize that we could be building and developing our farm if we would have found it months ago, instead of sitting here spinning our wheels. We were praying that our heavenly Father would lead us to the right area and the right place, and it made me wonder if we are not looking in the right area.

Our neighbor realtor finally found a place in Decatur County that looked suitable for us. I looked at it one day and the next day it was gone. We did not want to make a quick decision, and we were also hardly sure if we wanted to move to Decatur County, but we came to realize that there is much better farmland available at a much lower price on the west side of the Tennessee River. So we started looking, and as of today, August 15, we have looked at twenty-three different places in Decatur, Henderson, Carroll, Chester, McNairy, and Hardin Counties.

This is now early morning, August 30, and I am very excited. We saw a very nice place in Decatur County quite a while back, but the price was almost \$3,000 an acre, and I felt like that is too much for us, but the owner said he would divide. So I finally asked him what he needs for thirty acres in the back and he said \$69,500. I soon made an offer of \$60,000, and he accepted it. This is around a fifteen acre hay field along the top of a ridge with a small creek in the back corner. We ended up taking thirty-six acres at \$64,000 (\$1,777 an acre) so that we will have some woods all the way around the field and a thirty foot right-of-way out to the road.

The timber has been cut around ten years ago, so there is hardly any good timber on it.

Continued on page 23

Anniversary of Signs of the Judgment

Seventh-day Adventists have the real hope that Jesus is coming soon. Half of the name declares a belief in the coming of Jesus and since the beginning of the judgment and final atonement in 1844, Adventists have had hope that Jesus was coming very soon.

God foretold signs in the earth and heavens that would usher in the final day of judgment. Jesus said:

There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars. (Luke 21:25)

The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. (Mark 13:24-26)

These sobering statements were amplified in the Revelation under the events that would happen during the beginning of the sixth seal. Three special events were foretold: a great earthquake, a dark day and mysterious night, and the falling of the stars or a great meteorite shower.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. (Revelation 6:12, 13)

These events were fulfilled in their order as given in the Revelation. The great earthquake happened on November 1, 1755; the dark day occurred on May 19, 1780; and the falling of the stars on November 13, 1833. In the May 2010 issue of *Old Paths*, we published an article on the Dark Day, and this month we will be noting the Lisbon earthquake and the meteor shower of 1833.

The book *The Great Controversy* gives an excellent description of the Lisbon earthquake:

Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles. In Africa the shock was almost as severe as in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed; and a short distance from Morocco, a village containing eight or ten thousand inhabitants was swallowed up. A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain and Africa engulfing cities and causing great destruction.

It was in Spain and Portugal that the shock manifested its extreme violence. At Cadiz the inflowing wave was said to be sixty feet high. Mountains, "some of the largest in Portugal, were impetuously shaken, as it were, from their very foundations, and some of them opened at their

summits, which were split and rent in a wonderful manner, huge masses of them being thrown down into the adjacent valleys. Flames are related to have issued from these mountains." – Sir Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, page 495.

At Lisbon "a sound of thunder was heard underground, and immediately afterwards a violent shock threw down the greater part of that city. In the course of about six minutes sixty thousand persons perished. The sea first retired, and laid the bar dry; it then rolled in, rising fifty feet or more above its ordinary level." "Among other extraordinary events related to have occurred at Lisbon during the catastrophe, was the subsidence of a new quay, built entirely of marble, at an immense expense. A great concourse of people had collected there for safety, as a spot where they might be beyond the reach of falling ruins; but suddenly the quay sank down with all the people on it, and not one of the dead bodies ever floated to the surface." – *Ibid.*, page 495.

"The shock" of the earthquake "was instantly followed by the fall of every church and convent, almost all the large public buildings, and more than one fourth of the houses. In about two hours after the shock, fires broke out in different quarters, and raged with such violence for the space of nearly three days, that the city was completely desolated. The earthquake happened on a holyday, when the churches and convents were full of people, very few of whom escaped." – *Encyclopedia Americana*, art. "Lisbon," note (ed. 1831). "The terror of the people was beyond description. Nobody wept; it was beyond tears. They ran hither and thither, delirious with horror and astonishment, beating their faces and breasts, crying, 'Misericordia! the world's at an end!' Mothers forgot their children, and ran about loaded with crucifixes. Unfortunately, many ran to the churches for protection; but in vain was the sacrament exposed; in vain did the poor creatures embrace the altars; images, priests, and people were buried in one common ruin." It has been estimated that ninety thousand persons lost their lives on that fatal day. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 304, 305)

Critics might charge that history has recorded earthquakes that have had much higher fatalities. For example, the Shaanxi earthquake, which occurred in China in the sixth century, resulted in an estimated one million deaths. While there was no way to measure the actual shaking of the earth in 1755 and since the Richter scale was not developed until the 1930s, it has been estimated that some quakes were stronger in their epicenters. What made the Lisbon earthquake so important was its strength, its death toll, and the extent over which the shaking occurred. Unlike some quakes, the Lisbon earthquake extended over most of the earth.

It is one of the few events of nature by which people, two hundred fifty-five years later, are still affected. Today the daily lives of the people of Portugal, as well as those of the rest of Europe, are different from what they had been. Because of the Lisbon earthquake, the course of rivers has been dramatically changed, the accessible passes through the mountains are different, and the outline of the western coast of the country and other physical features have been altered; and these changes affect the way the people of Europe live.

The Falling of the Stars

Let us go again to the book *The Great Controversy* for an overview of this great event:

In 1833, two years after Miller began to present in public the evidences of Christ's soon coming, the last of the signs appeared which were promised by the Saviour as tokens of His second advent. Said Jesus: "The stars shall fall from heaven." Matthew 24:29. And John in the Revelation declared, as he beheld in vision the scenes that should herald the day of God: "The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Revelation 6:13. This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfillment in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833. That was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded; "the whole firmament, over all the United States, being then, for hours, in fiery commotion! No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another." "Its sublimity and awful beauty still linger in many minds. . . . Never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth; east, west, north, and south, it was the same. In a word, the whole heavens seemed in motion. . . . The display, as described in Professor Silliman's Journal, was seen all over North America. . . . From two o'clock until broad daylight, the sky being perfectly serene and cloudless, an incessant play of dazzlingly brilliant luminosities was kept up in the whole heavens." – R. M. Devens, *American Progress; or, The Great Events of the Greatest Century*, ch. 28, pars. 1-5.

"No language, indeed, can come up to the splendor of that magnificent display; . . . no one who did not witness it can form an adequate conception of its glory. It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point near the zenith, and were simultaneously shooting forth, with the velocity of lightning, to every part of the horizon; and yet they were not exhausted—thousands swiftly followed in the tracks of thousands, as if created for the occasion." – F. Reed, in the *Christian Advocate and Jour-*



An old church with only the outside walls still left from the Lisbon earthquake

nal, Dec. 13, 1833. "more correct picture of a fig tree casting its figs when blown by a mighty wind, it was not possible to behold." – "The Old Countryman," in *Portland Evening Advertiser*, Nov. 26, 1833.

In the *New York Journal of Commerce* of November 14, 1833, appeared a long article regarding this wonderful phenomenon, containing this statement: "No philosopher or scholar has told or recorded an event, I suppose, like that of yesterday morning. A prophet eighteen hundred years ago foretold it exactly, if we will be at the trouble of understanding stars falling to mean falling stars, . . . in the only sense in which it is possible to be literally true."

Thus was displayed the last of those signs of His coming, concerning which Jesus bade His disciples: "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:33. After these signs, John beheld, as the great event next impending, the heavens departing as a scroll, while the earth quaked, mountains and islands removed out of their places, and the wicked in terror sought to flee from the presence of the Son of man. Revelation 6:12-17.

Many who witnessed the falling of the stars, looked upon it as a herald of the coming judgment, "an awful type, a sure forerunner, a merciful sign, of that great and dreadful day." – "The Old Countryman," in *Portland Evening Advertiser*, Nov. 26, 1833. Thus the attention of the people was directed to the fulfillment of prophecy, and many were led to give heed to the warning of the second advent. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 333, 334)

This storm of meteors was unique. As with all meteoric storms, the meteors came from a common source, but unlike others the falling stars did not flow in a common direction

but in all directions, thus fulfilling the words of the Revelator, who noted that the stars would fall as a fig tree casting its figs out of season when they were green. Such untimely figs would not drop straight down. Instead they would have to be shaken off the tree, thus producing figs traveling in different directions.

If you are perhaps tempted to think that this event did not register well in the minds of those living at that time, you might find it interesting that in 1876 a book was published, entitled *Our First Century*, which carried descriptions “of the One Hundred Great and Memorable Events of perpetual interest in the history of our country” (title page). This book covers such notable events as the War of Independence; the Civil War, including the battles of Bull Run, Vicksburg, and Gettysburg; and the assassination of President Lincoln. Among the list of the one hundred great events is the falling of the stars in 1833. An account of that event includes the following:

“I was suddenly awakened by the most distressing cries that ever fell on my ears. Shrieks of horror and cries for mercy, could be heard ... While earnestly and breathlessly listening for the cause, I heard a faint voice near the door calling my name. I arose, and taking my sword, stood at the door. At this moment I heard the same voice still beseeching me to rise, and saying, ‘O, my God, the world is on fire!’ I then opened the door ... Upwards of one hundred lay prostrate on the ground, some speechless, and others uttering the bitterest moans, but with their hands raised, imploring God to save the world and them. The scene was truly awful, for never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell towards the earth; east, west, north, and south, it was the same.’ In a word, *the whole heavens seemed in motion.*” (*Our First Century*, p. 333)

The following account is given by Elder Samuel Rogers, a 19th century circuit-riding preacher, in “The Great Leonid Meteor Storm of 1833”:

We had but little rest that night, for, before three o’clock in the morning, we were all aroused from our slumbers, making preparation for an early start. Some one, on looking out of the window, observed that it was almost broad daylight. “That can not be,” another answered, “For it is scarcely three o’clock.” “I can’t help what the clock says,”

replied the first speaker, “my eyes can not deceive me; it is almost broad daylight --look for yourselves.”

After this little altercation, some one went to the door for the purpose of settling the question. Fortunately, there was not a cloud in the heavens; so by a glance, all was settled. I heard one of the children cry out, in a voice expressive of alarm: “Come to the door, father, the world is surely coming to an end.” Another exclaimed: “See! The whole heavens are on fire! All the stars are falling!” These cries brought us all into the open yard, to gaze upon the grandest and most beautiful scene my eyes have ever beheld. It did appear as if every star had left its moorings, and was drifting rapidly in a westerly direction, leaving behind a track of light which remained visible for several seconds.

Some of those wandering stars seemed as large as the full moon, or nearly so, and in some cases they appeared to dash at a rapid rate across the general course of the main body of meteors, leaving in their track a bluish light, which gathered into a thin cloud not unlike a puff of smoke from a tobacco-pipe. Some of the meteors were so bright that they were visible for some time after day had fairly dawned. Imagine large snowflakes drifting over your head, so near you that you can distinguish them, one from the other, and yet so thick in the air as to almost

obscure the sky; then imagine each snowflake to be a meteor, leaving behind it a tail like a little comet; these meteors of all sizes, from that of a drop of water to that of a great star, having the size of the full moon in appearance: and you may then have some faint idea of this wonderful scene. (http://spacescience.spaceref.com/newhome/headlines/ast22jun99_2.htm)

November 2010 is the 255th anniversary of the Lisbon earthquake and the 177th anniversary of the falling of the stars. The coming of Jesus is certainly very soon. “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Romans 13:11).

Allen Stump

A backsliding church closed their eyes to the signs of the times. (The Great Controversy, p. 316)

Christ Triumphant, Part 3

(Triumphant in Death)

In the first two parts of this series, we noted that Seventh-day Adventist theology has been blessed due to an understanding of what we call the great controversy theme. We owe a debt to God for the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy to help us in understanding this concept in a way that no church, no people, and no group under heaven has understood.

The great controversy theme is really the theme of Christ triumphant. In our first study we looked at the beginning of this controversy in heaven and how it spread to this earth. Last month our study covered this controversy in the life of Jesus, from his incarnation up to his triumphal entry into Jerusalem — his triumphant life. This month we will seek to know more of the last week of the life of Jesus — his triumphant death.

The Triumphal Entry

The beginning of the focus of the last week of Christ's life centers around his triumphal entry into Jerusalem:

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. (Matthew 21:1-11)

The Spirit of Prophecy has some wonderful insights into this event. (Much of the quoted material in this series can be found in the book *Christ Triumphant* by Ellen White. This book systematically covers the triumphant life of Jesus in detail. We highly recommend it to our readers.)

The time of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was the most beautiful season of the year. The Mount of Olives was carpeted with green, and the groves were beautiful

with varied foliage. Very many had come to the feast from the regions round about Jerusalem with an earnest desire to see Jesus. The crowning miracle of the Saviour in raising Lazarus from the dead had a wonderful effect upon minds, and a large and enthusiastic multitude was drawn to the place where Jesus was tarrying.

The afternoon was half spent when Jesus sent His disciples to the village of Bethphage. . . . This was the first time during His life of ministry that Christ had consented to ride, and the disciples interpreted this move to be an indication that He was about to assert His kingly power and authority, and take His position on David's throne. Joyfully they executed the commission. They found the colt as Jesus had said. . . .

As Jesus takes His seat on the animal, the air becomes vocal with acclamations of praise and triumph. . . . He bears no outward sign of royalty. He wears no dress of state, nor is He followed by a train of men of arms. Instead He is surrounded by a company wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement. They cannot restrain the joyous feeling of expectancy that animate their hearts. . . .

The shout echoes from mountain and valley, "Hosanna to the son of David: . . . Hosanna in the highest." "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." . . . Those who have once been blind . . . are the first to lead the way in that wonderful procession. . . . One whom He has raised from the dead leads the animal on which He is seated. The once deaf and dumb, with ears opened and tongues unloosed, help swell the glad hosannas. Cripples, with buoyant steps and grateful hearts, are now most active in breaking down the palm branches and strewing them in His path as their tribute of homage to the mighty Healer. The leper, who has listened to the dread words of the priest, "Unclean," . . . is there. The widow and the orphan are there to tell of His wonderful works. The restored dead are there. Their tongues, once palsied by the power of Satan, take up the song of rejoicing. . . . The demoniac is there, not now to have the words wrenched from his lips by Satan's power. . . . On the crest of Olivet the procession pauses. (Manuscript 128, 1899; *Christ Triumphant*, p. 253)

The Bible says that as Jesus was coming to the city, he began to weep: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it" (Luke 19:41). We are told that

[a]mid the universal rejoicing of the triumphal entry, while palm branches waved, while glad hosannas awoke the echoes of the hills, and thousands of voices declared Him king, the world's Redeemer was overwhelmed with a

sudden and mysterious sorrow. He, the Son of God, the Promised One of Israel, whose power had conquered death and called its captives from the grave, was in tears, not of ordinary grief, but of intense, irrepressible agony. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 17)

The sorrow of Jesus was intense and could not be held back. After Jesus was in the temple, the Bible continues the record with Jesus saying:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple. (Matthew 23:37-24:1)

God had pleaded with Israel long. “So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations” (Psalm 79:13). His people were as sheep to him. This was written of Jesus: “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

Through Ezekiel God pleaded: “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel” (Ezekiel 18:31).

But now Israel was at the end. The house that had been his Father’s house three and a half years before (John 2:16) was now their house (Matthew 23:38).

The Night of Betrayal

Not only did Israel as a whole wound the heart of Christ by their rejection, but each of the disciples were to forsake him. Often Peter is singled out due to his betrayal of Jesus. In fact, Jesus had said to him, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31, 32). On the last night, however, Jesus told all of his disciples that they would forsake him: “Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad” (Matthew 26:31). Just as Jesus prayed for Peter, he now prays and intercedes for each of us.

After leaving the upper room where the Passover was held, Jesus and the disciples minus Judas went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My

soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. (Matthew 26:36-45)

Ellen White comments upon this:

As Christ left the disciples, bidding them pray for themselves and for Him, He selected three—Peter, James, and John—and went still farther into the seclusion of the garden. These three disciples had seen His transfiguration; they had seen the heavenly visitors, Moses and Elias, talking with Jesus, and Christ desired their presence with Him on this occasion also. . . .

Christ expressed His desire for human sympathy, and then withdrawing Himself from them about a stone’s cast, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”

The superhuman agony with which He had been wrestling had brought Him to His disciples, longing for human companionship. But He was disappointed; they did not bring to Him the help He expected from them. . . .

Hear that agonizing prayer of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane! While the disciples were sleeping beneath the spreading branches of the olive trees, the Son of man—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—was prostrate upon the cold earth. As the agony of soul came upon Him, large blood drops of perspiration were forced from His pores, and with the falling dew moistened the sod of Gethsemane. . . .

Here the mysterious cup trembled in His hand. **Here the destiny of a lost world was hanging in the balance.** Should He wipe the blood drops from His brow and root from His soul the guilt of a perishing world, which was placing Him, all innocent, all undeserving, under the penalty of a just law? Should He refuse to become sinners’ substitute and surety? Refuse to give them another trial, another probation?

Separation from His Father, the punishment for transgression and sin, was to fall upon Him in order to

magnify God's law and testify to its immutability. And this was to settle forever the controversy between the Prince of God and Satan in regard to the changeless character of that law.

The Majesty of heaven was as one bewildered with agony. No human being could endure such suffering; but Christ had contemplated the struggle. He had said to His disciples, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Now is the "hour, and the power of darkness." Manuscript 42, 1897. (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 266; emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

During that time in the garden, Jesus began to feel the separation from his Father, and he said to his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matthew 26:38). While praying in the garden, he sweat "as it were great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). The body of Jesus is in distress, "the divine Son of God was fainting, dying" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 206). Now the foretold betrayal happens:

Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him, and fled. (Mark 14:42-50)

Though Judas was the one who sold Jesus and though Peter would openly speak against Jesus three times, the record is that they all forsook him, and Jesus counted that as a betrayal. How careful we should be not to forsake the Lord in our lives and conversation, for in so doing we are betraying him.

The human nature of Christ was like unto ours. And suffering was really more keenly felt by Him, for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. The aversion to suffering was in proportion to its severity. His desire for the removal of suffering was just as strong as human beings experience. . . .

How intense was the desire of the humanity of Christ to escape the displeasure of an offended God; how His soul longed for relief is shown in the words of the Sufferer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;

nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." . . . All the accumulated sin of the world was laid upon the Sinbearer, the One who was innocent of all sin, the One who alone could be the propitiation for sin, because He Himself was obedient. His life was one with God. Not a taint of corruption was upon Him.—Manuscript 42, 1897. (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 268)

Before Pilate

Jesus was first brought to Annas and then to Caiaphas. In the morning he was taken to Pilate, and against overwhelming evidence Pilate condemned Jesus. Even the hardened Pilate could see the injustice in the condemnation of Jesus and "sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar" (John 19:12).

Pilate was unwilling to condemn Christ, and he thought he could, irrespective of the rulers, make an appeal to the sympathy of the human side of the character of the mob. He knew he had nothing to hope for in this line from the priests and rulers. He made a short speech declaring that he found no fault in Christ at all. He confirmed the testimony of Herod that the witnesses against Christ were worthless—they did not agree. . . .

Pilate was moving against light and overwhelming evidence and conviction. The priests and rulers saw that they could obtain all that they desired. Pilate had evidence and justice on his side, and if he had taken his stand firmly on the ground of Christ's innocence, he would have saved himself the after remorse and despair of a man who had sacrificed innocence to the deadly enmity and hatred of an envious, professedly religious people. Jesus was scourged.

[Matthew 27:19] A message from God warned Pilate from the deed he was about to commit. . . . While Pilate was examining the prisoner, his wife was visited by an angel from heaven, and in a vision of the night she beheld Jesus and conversed with Him. . . . She heard the condemnation of Pilate and saw him give Christ up to His murderers. She awoke with a cry of horror. Calling for pen and paper, she wrote him words of warning. Now, in Pilate's dilemma, a messenger makes his way to him with the message from his wife, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Manuscript 112, 1897. (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 272)

Pilate now sought a way to free his guilty conscience of the thought of condemning Jesus. Matthew records:

Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom

will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? (Matthew 27:15)

The answer was quick: “And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas” (Luke 23:18). Pilate tried to argue with them, but “then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas” (John 18:40). Instead of the spotless Son of God, the people chose a robber.

We may be tempted to think that we would never have done what they did, but each time we choose sin over Jesus, we, too, have made a choice. Perhaps there is a music performer whose music appeals to our lower nature, but we know we should not listen to his carnal music. Each time, however, we insert the CD or play the mp3, we are choosing this person over Jesus. Who will we choose?

Calvary

Jesus was crucified among criminals. “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left” (Luke 23:33). This was prophesied of Jesus: “*I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me*” (Isaiah 63:3). Prior to his betrayal Jesus could confidently say, “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29). In fact the very night of his arrest Jesus said, “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me” (John 16:32). Upon the cross Jesus was tested in a manner that heretofore had not been expected. Though he knew he must have the weight of the sin of the world upon him, Jesus expected to be able to know of God’s abiding presence with him during that crucial and critical time. What does Jesus experience now?

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matthew 27:45, 46)

Jesus was experiencing the darkness the sinner will feel in the day of judgment. Jesus was saying in his soul, “Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none” (Psalm 69:20). Not even his Father, the one who had always been with him, could be there to comfort his son.

The agony that both Father and Son felt was immense. The agony of the Father is reflected, to a small degree, in the story of Genesis 22, where Abraham is required to take Isaac to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him, typifying the gift of God in his only begotten Son.

The thoughts of Jesus upon the cross are given in outline form in the 22nd Psalm, where Jesus says, “My God, my

God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring” (Psalm 22:1)? Jesus describes feeling as a worm (v. 6). He thinks of how God has helped the fathers of Israel but he is alone (vs. 4-6). Jesus feels like he is being pulled apart by bulls and dogs are upon him (vs. 12, 16). His bones are out of joint and he is as water (v. 14).

Jesus had united with the Father in making the world. Amid the agonizing sufferings of the Son of God, blind and deluded men alone remain unfeeling. The chief priests and elders revile God's dear Son while in His expiring agonies. Yet inanimate nature groans in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author. The earth trembles. The sun refuses to behold the scene. The heavens gather blackness. Angels have witnessed the scene of suffering until they can look no longer, and hide their faces from the horrid sight. **Christ is dying! He is in despair!** His Father's approving smile is removed, and angels are not permitted to lighten the gloom of the terrible hour. They can only behold in amazement their loved Commander, the Majesty of heaven, suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 209)

The picture painted by inspiration is one of intense mental horror for Jesus. He had always had the sympathy and support of his Father, but at the cross this was all withdrawn. It was the Father turning his back, as it were, that broke the heart of Jesus.

The Death of Jesus

Paul noted, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3). While some claim that Jesus did not truly die for the sins of humanity, the record is clear that he died in totality. Isaiah 53 records the totality of the death of Jesus, and while much of the chapter clearly speaks to this important truth, verses 10 and 12 are explicit:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make *his soul an offering for sin*, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ... Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath *poured out his soul unto death*: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:10, 12)

The Scripture says that Jesus made not just his body but his soul, the whole person, an offering for sin. He poured out his soul not to suffering but to death.

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. **The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb.** Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to

God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753)

As the final shadows of death pour over Jesus, by faith he did not let go of his Father's love and care. Through faith, he knew that the Father had heard him "from the horns of the unicorns" (Psalm 22:21). God's love triumphs all and in faith Jesus could declare "it is finished, ... Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (John 19:30; Luke 23:46).

The death of Christ proves the love of God. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). This love is what motivates the Christian: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Corinthians 5:14). Christ is the perfect revelation of the character of God. When Paul beheld Jesus lifted up on the cross, he didn't just see Jesus. He also saw the Father crucified with his Son. Of course God did not physically die, but the message of righteousness by faith that Paul shared was a message from the cross of the revelation of the eternal, unselfish principles of God's character. Through Christ, God has declared that he will serve his creation, no matter what the personal inconvenience, pain, and suffering to himself is. God demonstrated that he was willing to serve and save man at any cost to himself. Referring to the charges that Satan had made against God, Ellen White wrote:

Satan had accused God of requiring self-denial of the angels, when he knew nothing of what it meant himself, and when he would not himself make any self-sacrifice for others. This was the accusation that Satan made against God in heaven; and after the evil one was expelled from heaven, he continually charged the Lord with exacting service which he would not render himself. Christ came to the world to meet these false accusations, and to reveal the Father. (*The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1890)

Not only did the cross answer questions concerning the character of God, the death of Christ revealed the true nature of Satan and sin. Calvary exposed the character of rebellion. It revealed that Satan would go to any length to cause suffering to God. There is no limit to the effort Satan would put forth to have things his way. Satan was demonstrating the principle that has motivated him — he expects others to serve him at any expense necessary. Unlike God, who is willing to offer service at his expense to us, Satan expects our service to him at our expense!

Jesus said in Matthew 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." What Christ is telling us is that as our love for him grows, we will accept the principle of the cross — a willingness to serve others at our own expense. The unconverted heart follows the principle of Satan. The

converted heart follows the principle of Christ. Only the true death of Christ as demonstrated at Calvary can motivate men's hearts to make such a change. His triumph is our triumph.

Allen Stump

(Next month, we will study the triumphant resurrection, the High Priestly ministry of Jesus, and his triumph completed in the person and lives of his saints!)



Quiz on Job 34, 35

1. Who is the main speaker in Job 34?
2. To whom are the words of the first fifteen verses primarily directed?
3. Explain Job 34:5.
4. How is the Hebrew word for "wound" in Job 34:6 most usually translated?
5. The speaker accuses Job of charging God with injustice. Was he being fair with the words of Job?
6. The speaker attributes to Job a false charge. Please give a reference from Job to refute this charge.
7. On what basis is God declared to be just in Job 34:10-30?
8. In the light of the big, eternal picture, Job 34:11 is true. Can you find a passage from 2 Corinthians that agrees with Job 34:11?
9. Where in Job 34 is there a reference to the formula for the life and death of man?
10. To whom is the speaker directly appealing in Job 34:16-37?
11. How is the Hebrew word for "wicked" in Job 34:18 most usually translated?
12. What time, in a general sense, is midnight symbolic of in Job 34:20?
13. Whose cry does Job 34 claim is heard by God? But while he may hear, does he always cause the affliction to leave?
14. What is the principle being taught in Job 34:32?
15. What does it mean in Job 34:37 that Job clappeth his hands?
16. Did the speaker correctly quote Job in spirit or in text in Job 35? Give one example to prove your answer.
17. The speaker says our actions cannot help or hurt God. While this sounds logical, it fails to take into account the close ties between the Creator and his creatures. Please find a verse to support this.
18. In Job 35:9-12, the speaker is saying that many cry in their afflictions but are not heard. Why?
19. According to Job 35:13, what will God not hear?
20. How would you have felt if the words of Job 35:16 were spoken to you?

Youth's Corner — Loving Your Enemies

Our story this month is about Isaac, Richard, and Captain Popescu, and it is based on Matthew 5:44 and 45:

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Isaac was born in Kentucky in 1844, and he lived with his father and mother on a farm in Kentucky. His mother was black and his father was white. This was during the days of slavery in the United States, and his mother was a slave. As the closest neighbor to Isaac and his family was ten miles away, they were isolated from other people, but as neighbors gradually moved closer to them, Isaac's father began to be criticized for having a slave for a wife and for maintaining a tobacco farm based on slavery. This criticism was so keen that Isaac's family was ostracized by the community. Because Isaac's father did not like how he was being treated, he decided to leave, and he did! He just disappeared and left Isaac, his mother, and his two younger brothers alone on the farm, but he had a plan! He decided to sell his wife and children as slaves, and after a few weeks the sheriff came and arrested them. He took them to the nearest town, and they were sold into slavery. Isaac was 10 years old when this happened, and he had known nothing about life except his peaceful home in the country, but now he was separated from his mother and brothers and owned by another person.

At his new home he saw the owner of the slaves be very mean and do bad things to the people, and after Isaac became an adult he decided to run away. And he did! But he was caught and brought back to the slave-owner's home in Kentucky and was treated very harshly by the slave owner. Isaac ran away again, however, and this time he was successful. Heading for Canada, he traveled very carefully, hiding as he went. By the time he reached Detroit, Michigan, war had been declared in the United States over the issue of slavery, and Isaac decided to help in the war because he wanted to see slavery ended.

When the war was over and all the slaves had become free, Isaac decided to return to Kentucky to see if he could find his mother and brothers. He also wanted to see his old master, Mr. William Madinglay, the man who had been so mean to the slaves, so Isaac Johnson went back! He found Mr. Madinglay but not his family, although he did find his father's brothers and that is how he learned how he had been sold into slavery. Mr. Madinglay was sick in bed and could not walk, but he was glad to see Isaac, the only slave who had come back to check on him, and he offered him good wages to stay and take care of him. But Isaac knew Mr. Madinglay

too well to think seriously of his offer. Isaac later wrote that he would much rather have been a black person and a slave than to have been a white person like Mr. Madinglay or like his own father, for Isaac knew he had love in his heart (in spite of all he had been through). Because of that love he could never have treated people as had been done Mr. Madinglay and by his own father, white people who seemed to have had everything this world can offer but love.

Matthew 5:44 and 45 tell us we are to love our enemies, we are to bless them that curse us, we are to do good to them that hate us, and we are to pray for them that despitefully use us that we may be the children of our heavenly Father. "To be worthy to be counted one who lives up to [these verses]," wrote Isaac "is my desire, notwithstanding all I have experienced." Isaac was different than his earthly father and different than Mr. Madinglay because Isaac had Jesus living in his heart.

The next part of our story is about Richard. Richard lived in Romania during the time the Communists were in control of the government. Richard was a Christian, and so was his wife. They were arrested, they were beaten, and they were hurt by bad people because they were Christians. In fact, they were even put into prison. In the cell where he was, Richard saw people hurt every day simply because they were Christians. When they would bring a man back to the cell after he had been treated very badly, the other men would see how badly he had been treated and would start to curse and say, "How can anyone treat someone like this!?" The poor Christian man who had suffered so much, however, said, "Wait. Don't do this. I want to pray for those who have hurt me." He stopped the people around him from cursing the guards who had done such horrible things to him, and instead they all prayed for the jailers.

Richard told of another man who was sentenced to be killed soon because of his faith in God, and in his last visit with his wife Richard heard the man tell his wife that he loved the people that were going to kill him because they did not understand what they were doing. Then he said to her, "My last request of you, wife, is that you love them, too." Do you know why this man could have said that? If we are going to be children of our heavenly Father, we have to love our enemies. We have to bless them, do good to them, and pray for them, and that is why this gentleman was making this request of his wife.

The next person I want to tell you about is Captain Popescu. One day the door opened in the cell where Richard and the rest of the Christians were confined, and a man was shoved in who was dirty just like the rest of them (the prisoners had not been able to wash for three years), whose hair was shorn just like the rest of them, who wore the striped uniform of a prisoner, just like the rest of them. In he came, and in the

half darkness of the cell someone said, "Wait! I know that man. I recognize him. That is Captain Popescu!" Captain Popescu had been one of the worst men in the Communist system to Christians. In fact, even in that cell, that very cell, were people he had arrested and treated very badly.

Because Richard wondered why Popescu was in a cell with Christians, he went to him and asked, "Why are you here?" And this is the story that I hope you, as a young person, will remember:

Captain Popescu said, "A few months ago, I was sitting in my office when the man standing guard at my door came in and said, 'There is a young lad outside with a flower for your wife.' The young lad came in, holding the flower, and I asked him why he was there. The young man, who was 12 or 13 years old said, 'Today is my mother's birthday. She is a Christian, and because of you she is in prison. Always on her birthday I have taken the little bit of money I had saved to buy her a flower, but she is in prison now. As I was growing up, she always taught me that I was to love my enemies, so I have brought this flower for your wife. I don't have the pleasure of seeing my mother today, but this flower is for the

mother of your children. I want you to take it home to her and tell her that I love her, and God loves her too.'"

When Captain Popescu heard this, he said his heart was broken. Remember, he was a child of God also. The light that has lightened every one of us was a light into his dark heart too, and from that moment he could no longer hurt Christians. He could not beat them, and he could he arrest them. He was a changed man, all because of a young person who, following his mother's advice to love his enemies, brought a flower into the captain's office. Captain Popescu was suffering with the rest of the Christians, for he was of no use to the Communist system any longer.

We, also, are to love our enemies. We may not have police looking for us. There may not be any one pounding on our doors, seeking to arrest us. People usually do not do mean things to us, although they might say things that are hateful and mean. God tells us that when people call curses down upon us, we are to ask blessings to flow down on them. We are to pray for them, and we are to love them, for it is in this way that we become children of our heavenly Father.

Onycha Holt

Cancer Prevention

Every minute ten million cells divide in our bodies, and complex internal control mechanisms usually ensure that every one of these cell divisions occurs in a precise way at just the right time. When cells divide in an unregulated way, however, cancer is the result. The process of uncontrolled cell division can be caused by foreign substances in the external environment, such as chemicals, radiation, and viruses, which enter the body and are able to somehow disrupt the body's internal control mechanisms. Cancer can also be the result of problems within the body's internal environment, such as hormonal imbalances, immune impairment, and inherited mutations. Regardless of the factors that start the process, the result is the same: A single cell begins to multiply in an unregulated manner, and as this cell multiplies, it passes the characteristic of unregulated growth onto its offspring, resulting in a cancerous tissue made up of many unregulated cells.

Early Detection

If the body detects abnormal cancerous cells at an early stage, these aberrant cells can be destroyed before they have a chance to significantly multiply. In fact many scientists believe that in every person normal cells are daily converted into cancerous cells, but usually the person's immune system destroys these newly-altered cells. New cancerous cells,

however, are not always detected and will silently multiply within the body, ultimately forming a mass or tumor. Then when the tumor becomes large enough, cells may enter the blood stream and/or lymph system and travel to other vital organs. Depending on the growth rate, ten years or longer may be needed before signs or symptoms develop to the point that medical evaluation is sought. Detecting early signs of cancer, therefore, is important because cancer is often curable if detected in an early stage, but many people fail to heed the signals of their bodies until it is too late.

Paying attention to the changes in one's body and seeking prompt medical advice may provide a window of opportunity for cancer to be diagnosed and cured, but even speedy evaluation of signs does not guarantee a swift diagnosis. Screening tests, such as colonoscopies, have been developed, therefore, to detect cancer even before symptoms occur.

Attention to cancer's warning signs combined with the proper use of screening tests save thousands of lives each year. In spite of this cancer is still not detected in every case. So, is it possible to prevent cancer in the first place? Dr. Neil Nedley says unequivocally yes. Most cancers can be prevented before they ever form. We can help prevent cancer from starting by avoiding factors that favor cancer development and by taking advantage of factors that help the body ward off cancer.

Environmental Risks

Experts tell us that simple changes in our lifestyles and in our environments can have a broad, profound impact on our health. Environmental factors refer to any factors apart from our internal body processes and our inherited tendencies and include the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food choices we make, and our exercise habits. The vast majority of cancers can be prevented by paying attention to the things we put into our bodies, the things we allow our bodies to come into contact with, and the things we do with our bodies.

Tobacco

An example of an environmental factor is tobacco. Hundreds of thousands of lives are lost each year due to the use of tobacco, and the negative effects of tobacco extend also to those who breathe tobacco smoke second-handedly. There is a large body of evidence demonstrating tobacco's power to cause cancer. Over four thousand different chemicals have been identified in tobacco smoke. A number of these chemicals have the ability to cause cancer all by themselves. There are specific carcinogens in tobacco that cause lung cancer, others that cause kidney and bladder cancer, some that cause cancer of the esophagus, and others that cause cancer of the pancreas. All told, a long list of cancers has been linked to exposure to tobacco products.

In addition to carcinogens, tobacco also contains co-carcinogens, chemicals that do not cause cancer when acting alone, but can cause cancer when in the presence of other carcinogens. To make matters worse, there are two other categories of cancer-related chemicals in tobacco smoke. Known as "tumor promoters" and "tumor accelerators," these compounds feed the cancers that carcinogens give birth to. Considering all the problems associated with the use of tobacco, it should come as no surprise that tobacco causes more human cancers than any other known environmental factor.

The obvious cancer-prevention message to each person is to avoid all possible tobacco exposure. That means to stop smoking and chewing tobacco and to decrease passive smoking by choosing workplaces and settings for recreation that are smoke-free.

Alcohol

Alcohol consumption also increases the risk of a variety of cancers and undermines the immune system. The list includes cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, breast, and rectum. Although the cancer association is primarily with heavy alcohol consumption, moderate alcohol use may also raise the risk of some of these cancers. Breast cancer is the classic example, with the evidence suggesting that as little as three drinks per week increases a woman's risk.

Why does alcohol increase cancer risk? One reason is that it exposes the body to toxic chemicals in several different ways that could cause or promote cancer. First of all, alcohol

is a solvent, and when body tissues are exposed to it, it allows toxic chemicals that happen to be present to penetrate those tissues. A person who smokes and drinks will have tissues in the mouth, esophagus, and larynx exposed to alcohol and chemicals in tobacco smoke at the same time. If these chemicals can cause or promote cancer growth, the stage is set for cancer to begin. This is one explanation for the dramatic rise in mouth and throat cancers when a person both smokes tobacco and drinks alcohol. Although smoking increases your risk of these cancers, if you both smoke and drink, your risk is further multiplied. The two habits work together to increase risk beyond that of simply adding the risks of tobacco and smoking independently.

Secondly, there is concern that one of alcohol's breakdown products, acetaldehyde, can actually potentiate the cancer-inducing effects of other chemicals. This has been particularly noted with rectal tissue. Thirdly, alcohol increases the chances that more carcinogens will be produced from certain pre-carcinogenic chemicals to which we are exposed. Fourthly, other chemicals found in alcoholic beverages may have roles in causing cancer. Whiskey, for instance, has certain hydrocarbons that are some of the same carcinogens found in tobacco smoke and in smoked meat.

In addition to toxic chemicals, alcohol impairs the immune system by weakening the strength of certain white blood cells to fight diseases. Also, drinkers of alcohol tend to falter in getting proper nutrition, which can weaken the immune system. Beyond this problem, alcohol weakens the protective effect of two key nutrients, folate and methionine, which have a vital role in cancer prevention.

Compared to non-drinkers, more than two alcoholic drinks per day doubles the risk of forming benign tumors of the colon that can later become cancerous, but if a drinker's diet is low in folic acid and methionine, the risk of colon cancer triples. Fresh green vegetables and certain fresh fruits will provide adequate folate intake. Methionine, like all amino acids, is found in the right amounts in a total vegetarian diet. Beware, however, of thinking that the higher the methionine, the better. Adequate supplies of this nutrient appear to be important, as the research demonstrates; however, excessive amounts of methionine may be dangerous.

There are several mechanisms as to why alcohol use is associated with cancer — toxic influences, immune effects, dietary relationships, and hormonal associations — yet these broad-ranging mechanisms tell us nothing about the total impact of alcohol on cancer. Newer studies link even relatively moderate alcohol consumption with two major cancers, breast and colon, and the fact that even relatively small amounts of alcohol can increase one's risks of common cancers leads to the following conclusion: Anyone who wants to keep their cancer risk as low as possible will totally avoid alcoholic beverages. Indeed, eliminating the use of both alcohol and tobacco will decrease your lifetime cancer risk by a significant amount.

Nutrition

The impact of nutrition on cancer is one of the most powerful factors increasing our cancer risk, and this increased risk is related to fat intake. Whether the subject is heart disease, cancer, or a host of other problems, dietary fat emerges as the villain in many cases, and there are good reasons for this. Excess fat in the diet, especially the saturated fats found in meat and dairy products, increases the risk for several cancers. Because of this, many researchers are recommending a plant-based diet, for it is naturally low in saturated fats.

Coffee is another source of carcinogens found in the American diet. In addition to other cancer-causing chemicals in coffee, caffeine has shown potent mutagenic effects in the laboratory, although there is a difference in opinion in its ability to increase cancer risk in humans. Though caffeine may not be a carcinogen in itself, it may be considered a co-carcinogen, which means it can increase the likelihood that cancer will occur when in the presence of other carcinogens. Coffee is linked to various types of cancer, but seems to bear a distinct relationship to bladder and pancreatic cancers.

Reduce the Risk of Cancer

Vitamin A

Few people realize that vitamin A is essential for the proper functioning of most organs of the body and is thus important in reducing the risk of acquiring cancer. Low blood levels of vitamin A has been associated with increased risk of lung cancer, and those with the lowest levels of lycopene (a carotenoid) have a significantly increased risk of developing pancreatic cancer. Lycopene is found only in fruits and vegetables. Vitamin A-related compounds act as antioxidants and help the body dispose of the chemicals we call free radicals that can genetically damage normal cells and set the stage for cancer. Vitamin A-related compounds also help to stimulate the immune system and help cells to develop in an orderly fashion.

Vitamins C & E

Vitamins C and E are also cancer-protective foods. Their main effects are also likely due to their role as antioxidants, similar to vitamin A, thus decreasing exposure to toxic free radicals. They also tend to prevent the formation of carcinogenic nitrosamines from nitrites in the diet.

Eat Whole Plants

Plant foods are powerful in assisting in cancer prevention. One group of foods that are loaded with cancer-protective factors is the cruciferous vegetables. These members of the cabbage family include brussels sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli, kale, turnips, kohlrabi, bok choy, collards, and cabbage. One study showed that those who ate cabbage at least once per week had two-thirds less colon cancer than those who ate it once per month or less. Indoles are among the cancer-protective phytochemicals in these plants, and these compounds

work as blocking agents by increasing colon enzymes that can deactivate carcinogens. Eating whole fruit also dramatically reduces the risk of certain cancers. In the Adventist Health Study involving 34,000 subjects, Seventh-day Adventists that ate fruit twice a day decreased their risk of developing lung cancer by a startling 74 percent compared to those who ate fruit less than twice a week. Stomach and other cancers were also dramatically reduced. Over 90 percent of the 34,000 subjects were nonsmokers, thus they were all at a low risk of developing lung cancer at the outset, but nonsmokers do infrequently get lung cancer, and their risk can be sharply lowered even more by including an abundance of fruit in their diets.

Soy is another food highly touted for its cancer-protective properties. It is a veritable gold mine of cancer-protective phytochemicals. Those who consume the most soy foods have the least cancer. Studies have suggested that soy decreases cancer risk at many sites in the body.

A large study from the Netherlands involving over 120,000 men and women has made the connection between another phytochemical-rich food — onions — and the prevention of stomach cancer. Those eating the most onions (one or more onions every other day) had half the stomach cancer risk of those who never ate onions.

Garlic has been shown to protect against developing cancer, and in mice it is effective in treating cancer. The amount of 50 milligrams of garlic administered in 3 ounces of drinking water to mice with bladder cancer led to significant shrinking of the tumors, while 500 milligrams of garlic not only reduced the cancer size but actually decreased the mortality rate from the cancer. All of this occurred without side effects. The researchers believe that the garlic may have stimulated the mice's immune systems, helping them to combat the cancer.

These examples illustrate the wealth of scientific information relating diet to the prevention, and even treatment, of cancer. The consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with lower rates of cancers of the breast, colon, rectum, lung, prostate, urinary bladder, stomach, esophagus, cervix, larynx, mouth, pharynx, and liver.

Other lifestyle changes that help reduce cancer risk factors are maintaining proper weight, including a good supply of fiber in your diet, and eating less frequent meals per day (two is optimal). Coupling a diet prepared in a variety of ways of fruits, grains, vegetables, and nuts in moderation, with regular aerobic exercise, adequate stress control, moderate sunlight, weight control, and decreasing snacks and meal frequency maximizes the cancer preventive potential of lifestyle habits.

Onycha Holt

Adapted with permission from *Proof Positive* by Dr. Neil Nedley

This place is only about 1½ miles from the Tennessee River, so we were concerned about flooding, especially if for some reason the Pickwick Dam would break. Anyway, we found out that the elevation of the Pickwick Dam is four hundred thirty feet and this place is five hundred thirty feet, so it should be okay. The closing for this place should take place this week.

The flood here has been very devastating and hard on us, but our heavenly Father has turned it around to be a blessing beyond our imagination, above what we ever thought or asked for. We had thought we may never own any land, and we were satisfied without, but many people who heard about our situation donated money, to the point where we are able to buy this land. So God is giving us this land, and he is being glorified. It is humbling to see that we cannot take care of ourselves, but our heavenly Father does.

We want to thank everybody very, very much for helping us out, but let us not forget to thank and glorify our heavenly Father, "for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18).

We are hoping to move over there soon, with our tents, our 8' x 16' cookhouse, produce shed, and corn crib, and the things we salvaged from the flood. We will probably try to build a pole barn first, then a basement with the joists, subfloor and a tarp on top, and move in while we continue building a house.

We also hope to build a small greenhouse, fences, driveway, and get our buggy fixed again and get horses again and a wagon. Of course, we do not know how far the money will reach, so we need to do first things first and be satisfied with whatever God provides. I really like to build, so I am excited.

Please pray for us and send your next letters to our new address. Keep in touch! We pray that God would bless every one of you very much, physically and spiritually.

We liked this place before the flood and we enjoyed many people in this area and we already miss the Vanderzon family who are moving to Bolivia by motor vehicle. They came here a lot for Bible study on Sabbath, and we became very close to each other.

Now September 2, and we are planning to go to Dickson today to close on our farm, and I want to get this [letter] copied.

We went to Green Bank in Lawrenceburg yesterday to get a cashier's check, and took the opportunity to visit some siblings and old neighbors.

Sorry, this is now September 12 and we still have not been able to close on the land. Mack Creasy had hired an unlicensed surveyor, which I okayed, and the lawyer would not close without a certified survey. So, Mack had to hire another surveyor to do it again.

Well, the second survey was finished last Thursday and came out to be thirty-two acres instead of thirty-six and

nobody seems to know why. So I got a ride over there Friday to make sure the line is still the same, and it seems to be. So now, the plan is to close on Monday. We are still paying \$64,000.

I did find out Friday that the lawyer did not accept the uncertified survey because we had the title insured. I may have done it differently if I would have known.

Roger Hays has helped us very much since the flood. We recently cut some tornado-downed cedar poles near Roger Hays and he pulled them out with his tractor and hauled them to our new place. We want to use them to build a pole barn and some for porch posts and fence posts.

We do not have as much money as we thought we are getting, so we do not know if we can build a house, but we hope we will still be able to build a basement this fall.

We got a copy of the new survey this morning and it shows to be 31 ½ acres, so Mack agrees to let us have it for \$63,000.

Ron Daniels of New Horizon Realty is planning to take us to closing at Banker's Title and Escrow in Dickson at 2 o'clock.


God bless you all.

Abraham Hershberger

Editor's Note: Brother Hershberger has informed us that the promised matching funds did not materialize as expected and as we reported in the September 2010 issue of *Old Paths*. He did receive matching funds of \$9,000 but not the full amount of \$30,000. We apologize for our error.

Living Experience

In accordance with the following counsel, we are making a call for short articles of "living experience" that will provide spiritual food for God's people. Please send your articles to allen@smyrna.org.

The articles published in our papers should contain pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from chaff. We are living in a most solemn time. Let our editors call for articles giving living experience. Let the ministers regard it as a part of their duty to send short articles of experience to our papers. It will be food for those who are laboring in isolated places, in foreign countries and the islands of the sea, to hear in this way from their friends with whom they have been associated. These experiences may be to the readers as a love feast, because the writers have been eating the bread which came down from heaven. . . . in the daily life we meet with real experiences, which, if told in short articles, and in simple words, would be helpful to many. Let our workers try this. We want truth, solid truth, from solid, consecrated men, women, and youth. You who love God, whose minds are stored with precious bits of experience, and with the living realities of eternal life, kindle the flame of love and light in the hearts of God's people. Help them to deal with the problems of life" (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 18). 

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Tasty Recipe – Granola Cobbler

Thanks to Bobbie Beck for this delicious breakfast dish!

- 1 whole pineapple, chopped and crushed
- 4 medium Granny Smith apples, cored, peeled, and thinly sliced
- 1 cup frozen cherries, sliced
- 1 to 2 tablespoons dehydrated cane juice (optional)
- 3 to 4 cups honey granola
- 2 to 2 1/2 cups unfiltered apple juice
- 2 tablespoons concentrated cherry juice (optional)

Spread pineapple in the bottom of a 13 x 9 inch baking dish. Sprinkle cherries over the pineapple. Layer apple slices over the cherries. Sprinkle the apples with the cane juice crystals and top with granola. Mix cherry juice with apple juice and pour over granola. Cover with parchment paper and foil, securing edges. Bake at 375 degrees F for 45 minutes. 

In this issue you will find:

- Special material on biblical grace;*
- The third installment on Christ Triumphant;*
- How to prevent cancer;*
- A report from Abraham Hershberger, and more!*

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