

Old Paths

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

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

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“Plain statements must be made. Unvarnished truth must be spoken, in leaflets and pamphlets, and these must be scattered like the leaves of autumn.” (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 231)



Bible Questions and Answers Concerning Man

By A. T. Jones

In the thoughts of man there are a great many questions which arise concerning himself. Some of these are highly important. So important indeed are they that the Word of God itself has recorded them. Nor is that all. This Word has not only recorded the questions, but it has also recorded the answers to the questions. And when the Word of God asks a question and answers it, then in the answer we have the absolute truth on that question, and there is an end of all dispute. There is left no room for controversy; for “thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.” Isa. 48:17. Therefore, whatever the Lord teaches is profitable teaching. Whether we believe it, or whether we like it or not, makes no difference so far as the teaching is concerned. The teaching is profitable, and everything that conflicts with it is unprofitable. The way the Lord leads is the way that we should go, and to follow any other leading is to go in the way that we should not.

IS MAN MORTAL OR IMMORTAL?

In the eighth Psalm and the fourth verse is this question, “What is man, that Thou art mindful of him.” Of course there are more ways than one in which this question can be referred to man, but the thing about man upon which we wish now to bring it to bear is that of immortality. “What is man?” is he mortal or immortal? We have not far to go for an answer. “Shall mortal man be more just than God?” Job 4:17. “O Lord, Thou art our God: let not mortal man prevail against Thee.” 2 Chron. 14:11, margin. Thus we find in answer to the question, that the Word of God calls man mortal, and everything that the Bible says directly about immortality is consistent with this answer.

Says this Word in 1 Timothy: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” Chap. 1:17. Here it is shown that immortality is an attribute of God, equally with eternity, wisdom, honor, glory, etc. None of these belong to man as he is.

Again, speaking of the appearing of Jesus Christ, the Word says: “In His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” 1 Tim. 6:15, 16.

Christ has brought this immortality to light. The purpose and grace of God, says the Word, “is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim. 1:10. What the gospel is, is shown in a few words by 1 Cor. 15:1-4: “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, ... I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” Thus, then, in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is summed up the gospel; and “through the gospel” it is said Christ “brought life and immortality to light.” Certainly it was not by dying nor being buried that either life or immortality was brought to light, for both these things were familiar to all men; but to rise again from the dead, and bring with Him a multitude of the dead, who also appeared unto many (Matt. 27:52, 53), that was to bring to light something that had never been seen before; that was to bring life and immortality to light indeed. Therefore it is through the resurrection that Christ has brought immortality to light.

Again, the Scripture says that God will render eternal life “to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality.” Rom. 2:6, 7. Now as immortality is to be sought for, and as God is the only one who has it, and

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as Christ is the only one who has brought it to light, it follows that immortality must be sought of God, through Christ. Even so says the Scripture: "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:11, 12.

Having then sought and found that immortality comes only through Christ, we ask, When is it bestowed upon us as our own? "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ... Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:51-57.

Thus the story which the Word of God tells about immortality is this: Man, being mortal, has it not; God has it. Christ has brought it to light through the Gospel; man is to seek for it of God, through Christ, and will obtain it at the resurrection of the dead; for then it is that this mortal puts on immortality; then it is that death is swallowed up in victory. This comes "at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible," and the living shall be changed. But when is it that the last trump sounds?-It is when the Lord Jesus comes in His glory. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16,17.

Immortality is obtained of God, though Christ, at the resurrection of the dead. It is the sound of the last trump that awakes the dead. That trump is sounded at the coming of the Lord. Therefore without the second coming of the Lord Jesus we shall never receive immortality. For this reason we long for His glorious appearing. We watch, we wait for Him, who shall change our "vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," for "we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

WHERE DO MEN GO WHEN THEY DIE?

Another important question concerning man, one which has, no doubt, been asked by every person that ever lived long enough to think at all upon the subject, is, When a man dies, where does he go? What is his condition? etc., etc. This question the Bible asks: "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Job 14:10.

Of course, there have been many answers given to this question; and there are yet many, even in this land where Bibles are scattered everywhere. Some say that if he die wicked, he is in hell; if he die righteous, he is in heaven. Others say that he is in neither hell nor heaven, but in purgatory; and yet others, that he is in none of these, but has passed to the "spheres," and still associates and communicates with those who still live. Of course, all these answers cannot be the right ones; and, as a matter of fact, not one of them is the right one. The Bible alone is that which gives the right answer to this, its own question. And as it is alone the Bible answers to Bible questions that we are now studying, that alone shall be what we shall seek on this question of where is man when he has died

"Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Answer: "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead." Eccl. 9:3. To good King Josiah God said, "Thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace." 2 Kings 22:20. Of the wicked He also says, "Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb." Job 21:32. Jacob said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." Gen. 37:35. We shall not multiply texts on this point, but simply show that this is confirmed by the Word of Christ. When He comes to give reward to His people, and when He calls for them, they, all that are dead, are found in the grave: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. Therefore the Bible answer to this question is plainly that he is in the grave.

But what is his condition there? Let us read a verse from Job again: "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job 14:10-12. This shows that man, when he dies, is asleep. Again, Job says that if he had died when he was an infant, "now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest, with kings and counselors of the earth. There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master." Job 3:13-19.

In the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, twenty-five times is the record made of their deaths, "He slept with his fathers."

Not to multiply texts, we again turn to the Word of Christ. Lazarus was sick. Jesus and His disciples were some distance away, and Lazarus died. Jesus said: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said the disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death; but they thought that He had spoken

of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. “John 11:11–14. Here are the Words of Christ: “Lazarus sleepeth;” “Lazarus is dead.” Therefore the plain Word of Christ is that when a man is dead he is asleep.

Paul says that “David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.” Acts 13:36. And Peter says of him, “David is not ascended into the heavens.” Acts 2:34. And the reason is that “David slept with his fathers and was buried.” 1 Kings 2:10.

Of Stephen it is recorded: “He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts 7:60. It is certain, therefore, that the Bible plainly teaches that when man dies he falls asleep. The Word of God plainly teaches the sleep of the dead.

Death is wholly an unconscious sleep, as, in the very nature of the case, it must be when the place of sleep is in the grave. But here is the proof: “The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.” “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.” Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10. “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Ps. 146:3, 4. When men’s love, and hatred, and envy, and their very thoughts, have perished, and their memory is gone, there can be nothing else but unconsciousness. And that is precisely what death is, and that is the condition into which men go when they die—a silent, dreamless sleep.

But the Bible story on this subject does not stop here. For “now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.” 1 Cor. 15:20. “And many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection.” Matt. 27:52, 53. And as God “brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,” so also “them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him;” “for this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend



For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing. (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

which David looked when he fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers: “As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.” Ps. 17:15. This is the time to which Job looked when he said, “Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.” For it is at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead that the heavens roll away. “The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places,” and men cried “to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Rev. 6:14, 16, 17.

Therefore, the Bible answer to the Bible question, When man giveth up the ghost, where is he? is this: He is asleep in the grave until the trump of God awakes the dead; until the voice of the glorious Son of God calls, and all that are in the graves hear His voice; for it is God who gives victory over death, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Reader, this is profitable teaching, for it is the teaching of the Word of God, for “thus saith the Lord, they Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.” Isa. 48:17. This is the way that the Lord Jesus leads us. Will you follow?

DO THE DEAD PRAISE THE LORD?

Another question is, Do the dead praise the Lord? Nowadays it is held, as a matter of course, that if a person be righteous, or even professedly so, when he dies, he has gone to heaven, and has joined the angelic hosts in their holy songs of praise to the Creator of all. But in the Scriptures this question is asked, in connection with certain others, in a manner and in a tone which of themselves admit only of a negative answer.

Says the Psalmist: “Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:15–17. “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.”

Then it is that “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.” Dan. 12:2. Then is the time to

destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Ps. 88:10–12. Here the grave, the place of the dead, is called "the land of forgetfulness." This is strictly in accord with that which we read under our last question, that "the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." They are in the land of "forgetfulness." "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished" (Eccl. 9:5); and "in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:4); and "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9:10. In this respect, therefore, no single expression could better describe the place of the dead than does this one, "The land of forgetfulness." The Psalmist also speaks of it as "the dark." On this Job says: "I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Job 10:21, 22. Those that have been long dead David says "dwell in darkness."

Now it is of those who dwell in this place, the place of the dead, that the question is asked, Do they praise the Lord? And here is the direct answer: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. 115:17. And again: "In death there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" Ps. 6:5. These words are the words of God. They are the truth. Therefore the idea that people go to heaven, or anywhere else but this place of the dead, when they die, cannot be the truth. The Lord who speaks to us in the Bible made man. He knows what is before us. He knows what will be after us. He knoweth our thoughts afar off. He it is who says, "The dead know not anything." He it is who says, "The dead praise not the Lord." He it is who says that the place of the dead is "the land of forgetfulness." We implicitly believe this word, for He alone knows. He teaches us to profit, and though we may have to pass through this land of darkness, this valley of the shadow of death, if our trust is in Him, His rod and His staff will comfort us, for He has gone this way before us. He died and lives again. If our hope is in Him, even though we may have to go to the place of the dead, yet we shall come again from it and live by Him.

King Hezekiah was one of the few good kings that Judah had. He fell "sick unto death." The Lord, by the prophet, sent this message to him: "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." Isa. 38:1. Yet, although this word of the Lord says positively, "Thou shalt die, and not live," now it is believed by the great majority of people that when a man dies he does live, and that he lives more fully, more really, than ever before. It is now held that when a person dies he knows vastly more than he ever knew before, or than he ever could have known if he had not died; but from what we have set forth in these articles, there can be nothing more certain than that such is not the teaching of the Bible.

In this theory of the consciousness of the dead is the promise and potency, the whole sum and substance, of Spiritualism, purgatory, prayers for the dead, worship and invocation of saints, etc. But bring Spiritualism, with all these other things, to the test of these scriptures, and where will it appear? It will appear just where it rightly belongs, that is, in the train of "that old serpent which is the devil and Satan," who said to innocent Eve, "Thou shalt not surely die." People now think it very strange that Eve should have believed the word of Satan. Yet with the example of Eve before them, and its fearful fruits of these thousands of years, and the word of God with its line upon line and precept upon precept-with all this before them, multitudes of these same people, instead of believing the word of God, will yet believe the same story that Satan told Eve.

When the prophet went to King Hezekiah with the message that he should die and not live, Hezekiah was greatly grieved, and turned his face to the wall and prayed, and said, "I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living." This, with much more, he said in his prayer, and the Lord sent Isaiah again to the king, saying, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Then Hezekiah praised the Lord and said: "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; t ... he grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy Truth." See Isaiah 38, throughout.

Take this plain, express statement of the Word of God, "They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth," and by it test the New Theology-probation after death-which is just now being discussed throughout the land, and its utter worthlessness will be seen at a glance. When a man dies, his opportunity to learn the truth is gone. He is dead. He is gone to the "land of forgetfulness," to the grave, and they that go there cannot hope for the truth of God. If they have not learned it, and loved it, before they go there, they will never learn it at all. "Now is the accepted time." "Now is the day of salvation." "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." The living, the living it is, not the dead, who praise the Lord.

Therefore, the Bible answer to this Bible question is, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (*Bible Questions and Answers Concerning Man*, pp. 3–12).

To be continued

Youth's Corner – Beauties of the New Earth

Dear Young Friends:—At the close of my communication in the first number of the Instructor, I stated that I would tell you something of the beauties of the New Earth, in the next paper, and now I will fulfill my promise

The glorious City of God has twelve gates, set with pearls most glorious. It also has twelve foundations of various colors. The streets of the City are of pure gold. In this city is the throne of God, and a pure, beautiful river proceeding out of it, as clear as crystal. Its sparkling purity and beauty makes glad the City of God. The saints will drink freely of the healing waters of the river of life.

On either side of this beautiful river is the tree of life. And the redeemed saints, who have loved God and kept his commandments here, will enter in through the gates of the City, and have right to the tree of life. They will eat freely of it, as our first parents did before their fall. The leaves of that immortal wide-spread tree will be for the healing of the nations. All their woes will then be gone. Sickness, sorrow and death they will never again feel, for the leaves of the tree of life have healed them. Jesus will then see of the travail of his soul [Isaiah 53:11] and be satisfied, when the redeemed, who have been subject to sorrow, toil and afflictions, who have groaned beneath the curse, are gathered up around that tree of life to eat of its immortal fruit, that our first parents forfeited all right to, by breaking God's commands. There will be no danger of their ever losing right to the tree of life again, for he that tempted our first parents to sin, will be destroyed by the second death.

All faces will reflect the image of their Redeemer. There will then be no anxious, troubled countenances, but all will be bright, and smiling in spotless purity. The angels will be there, also the resurrected saints with the martyrs, and the best of all, and what will cause us the most joy, our lovely Saviour who suffered and died that we might enjoy that happiness and freedom, will be there.—His glorious face will shine brighter than the sun, and light up the beautiful City, and reflect glory all around.

Children will be there. They will never be engaged in strife or discord. Their love will be fervent and holy. They will also have a crown of gold upon their heads, and a harp in their hands. And their little countenances, that we here see so often troubled and perplexed, will beam with holy joy, expressive of their perfect freedom and happiness. They will express in child-like purity their wonder and delight, as they behold every thing around them so new and lovely. They will look to the blessed Saviour who has given himself for them, and, with admiration and love for him who is smiling upon them, raise their voices and sing to his praise and glory, while they feel and realized the matchless depths of a Saviour's love.

This earth, dear children, is to be purified with fire; then it will be much more beautiful. The grass will be living green, and will never wither. There will be roses and lilies, and all kinds of flowers there. They will never blight or fade, or lose their beauty and fragrance.

The lion, we should much dread and fear here, will then lie down with the lamb, and everything in the New Earth will be peace and harmony. The trees of the New Earth will be straight and lofty, without deformity.

The saints will have crowns of glory upon their heads, and harps of gold in their hands. They will play upon the golden harp, and sing redeeming love, and make melody unto God. Their former trials and suffering in this world will be forgotten and lost amid the glories of the New Earth. And they will ever have the approving smiles of Jesus upon them, and their happiness will be complete. There will be glory, glory all around.

Dear children, the future abode of the saints will be all over glorious, and will you strive to be there? Let your minds dwell upon the glories of heaven, for this you may do with safety, and this will bring substantial joys, and will make you heavenly minded. If you have trials here, and feel lonesome, look away from this dark world to the bright glories of heaven. Set your affections upon heavenly joys, and then you will not feel so deeply the trials and disappointments of this life, for you will feel that you have a home in glory, a crown, a harp, and a lovely Saviour there. Strive for that blest inheritance which God has promised to those that love him, and keep his commandments. (*Youth's Instructor*, October 1, 1852)

E. G. White




Tasty Recipe

Broth for Potatoes and Gluten

(Adapted from *7 Secrets Cookbook* by Neva and Jim Brackett)

- ↳ 4 cups water
- ↳ 2 tablespoons chicken-like seasoning
- ↳ 1 ½ tablespoons (or more) non GMO cornstarch, dissolved in ¼ cup water
- ↳ Onion, garlic, and soy sauce powder as desired for flavor
- ↳ Crushed dry parsley flakes

Combine all ingredients and simmer until thickened and clear. This broth may be used as a gravy substitute. 

From Patmos, Messages for Seven Churches



Pergamos—The City on a Hill

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” (Revelation 2:12–17)

Religious Life

Understanding the religious life of ancient Rome and Greece will help us better understand life in Pergamos. Religious life for the Roman, Greek, and Jewish people during the time of the early Christian church was a stronghold to society, although almost completely perverted from the worship of the one true God. Greece was a seat of philosophy and art but loose in morality and devoid of spirituality. Today we could easily put the whole Olympian family of Greek gods into prison, for every imaginable crime of lust and greed has been attributed to them. Devout souls, however, still came to the temples as sincere petitioners during the early years of Christianity. Tacitus (Roman) and Plutarch (Greek), for example, refused to yield their strong belief in their gods or their respect for the national religion. In fact, Plutarch wrote: “Sooner may a city exist without houses and grounds than a state without faith in gods. This is the bond of union and the support of all legislation” (quoted in *In the Time of Paul* by Edward G. Selden, p. 88). Yet, young and old in both Greece and Rome eventually came to the point of disbelieving the fables about their gods and spirits, but they had nothing with which to replace them and, as a result, became very superstitious. They knew there was a power beyond their control, but they did not understand who or what was responsible for that power.

In Rome leaders made light of the gods. The “Great Caesar,” for example, announced his skepticism and scoffed at the gods, but he never entered a carriage without first uttering a magical formula (*Ibid.*, pp. 86, 87). Lucretius was sarcastic about religion, as were Cato and Augustus, but they still were fearful:

Augustus, who at banquets had made merry with the gods, dreaded misfortune all the day when he had put a shoe on the wrong foot. Pliny, a self-proclaimed atheist, wore talismans. When a bird of evil omen sat on the Temple of Jupiter [in Rome] all the people were summoned to make solemn expiation to avert disaster from the state. Superstition was almost universal, and everywhere potent.



Hadrian’s Temple in Ephesus is an example of a small temple on a city street where citizens could stop easily as they traveled about town. The four pedestals in front each held the bust of an emperor.

Courtesy of topquark22@Flickr

An earthquake shook the hearts of men, an eclipse shut out all the light of heaven, a flight of birds brought terror to the stoutest souls, and a serpent crossing his path dismayed the boldest warrior. (*Ibid.*, p. 87)

The Roman Senate strictly adhered to a belief in the presence of, and sought to find favor with, the gods. “At every important public transaction the gods were consulted and sacred rites observed. No senator at Rome under Augustus [63–14 BC] could take his place without going to the altar of his deity and there offering libations and strewing incense; and every city and village throughout the provinces had special rites for its protecting divinity” (*Ibid.*, p. 88).

Every important event in the family was also celebrated with services to the gods. The marriage vow obtained its sanctity from the worship of the Lares (guardian Roman deities) and the Penates (Roman household deities).

The goddess Lucina watched over the birth of a child; Rumina attended its nursing; Nudina was invoked when on the ninth day the name was given; to Statina was consecrated the day on which the child first stepped on the ground; while Cunina constantly averted the evil enchantments which threatened its life. . . .

On every ship that sailed out of the harbor at Ostia [the ancient harbor of Rome] stood the image of Neptune, and as it passed beyond his vision the merchant prayed to Mercury for success in all his commercial enterprises. Before the harvest a sacrifice was offered to Ceres for a bountiful crop. The ancient temples stood in their wonted magnificence and were daily visited by multitudes. Feasts and sacrifices were celebrated with pomp, and altars were the resort of suppliants for divine favors. Even emperors performed solemn rites in behalf of the city’s welfare. Whatever may have been the extent and sincerity of disbelief among the intelligent classes it was still necessary to support popular standing by open adherence to the religion of the state. (*Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90)

Life was touched at every point by the forms and rites of religion, but all the gods which had been adopted by Rome were hollow. Both the individual and the state were left undefended against moral evil and uninspired to the nobility of a godly life, for the forms and rites failed to uplift and purify daily life.

They [the forms and rites] were external rather than internal, formal rather than real, emotional rather than ethical, being utterly devoid of influence upon either reason or conscience. They were not constructed upon this basis. They made no attempt to be effective in the realm of conduct and relationship, they made no appeal whatever to the motives or sentiments of the worshiper, they modified in no conceivable degree his view of life or his methods of securing pleasure or profit. A Roman came to the altar with an offering or libation hoping thereby to discharge his debt to the gods, that they might bear him no ill

will, or that they might prosper his enterprise. . . . his “religion” did not bind him to a Being august in righteousness and stern in demands of purity. The gods whom he sought to placate were themselves fickle and lustful, and were, by their reputed character, the last objects in the universe to stimulate men to honesty, highmindedness, and self-control. They had been conceived and created, by the unsanctified fancies of men, and were decidedly materialistic and worldly, even although they were assigned to the mystic heights of Olympus, above the clouds of heaven. (*Ibid.*, pp. 91, 92)

These were the gods of Rome, but the gods and goddesses of Greece were also empty of power to refine a man into pure gold:

The Greek found beauty in his religion and sought to cultivate in connection with temple and image his aesthetic sensibilities, but he never dreamed of holiness in connection with the Celestial City and the palace of Zeus. A solemn procession in which the sacred robe of Pallas was carried up the heights of the Acropolis and within the gates of the Parthenon had no imaginable relation to manhood and womanhood. The attendants of all ages and both sexes pressed forward with oil and cake for the sacrifices, but without the slightest enthusiasm for righteousness or kindly service. They could not fail to be impressed by the majestic proportions of the temple which crowned the summit, nor to delight in the noble pediment which the genius of Phidias [a Greek sculptor] had fitly adorned, but they neither saw nor heard anything to enhance the solemnity of life or to restrain from frivolity or self-indulgence. . . .

The religion of the Greeks never produced a hymn in praise of truth and chastity, nor an inspiration after nobleness and usefulness. . . .

As all the imported religions failed to inspire lives of piety, virtue, and gentleness, so they failed to satisfy the instinctive yearnings of men for comfort and peace of mind. . . . Certainly, out of the thronging millions of the [Roman] Empire not a few souls had voiceless longings for something which did not come to them in fierce battle, in successful intrigue, in hours of revelry, or even in the temple services. Their deeper natures were stirred but no fountain of comfort was known to them. (*Ibid.*, pp. 92–94)

The religions of Rome and Greece failed to comfort the heart and satisfy the mind, but eventually travelers and merchants carried stories throughout the Roman Empire about the Man of Galilee, and wherever Paul went, he proclaimed the good news of a risen and compassionate Saviour. The news of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, was carried to the then capital of the world, Rome, as a religion able to supply the needs of man, but it was rebuffed and hated and later perverted into another lifeless state religion. Though full of ritual, pomp, and great power, this state religion was devoid of meat for the soul, and the story of the transformation of the

gospel of Christ into a controlling state religion of papal Rome is woven into the letter to the church at Pergamos.

The City of Pergamos

The site of ancient Pergamos lies about sixty-five miles north of ancient Smyrna. As you may remember from last month, Smyrna was built at the bottom of a gathering of mountains and along the coastline of the bay. She had a strategic citadel built on top of Mount Pagus, behind and overlooking the city, guarding it against the approach of an enemy. If the approach was by sea, the bay was quickly cut off from the rest of the ocean by stringing fortifications across the top of the bay from one land point to another point on the other side of the bay, but Pergamos was different.

Ephesus was bustling and stunning, with its library, agoras, harbor, and temple to Diana. Smyrna had the only three-storied agora in the world and was beautifully situated on a bay nestled against the mountains, but one could only describe Pergamos as *outstanding*. In the middle of an enormous plain rose (and still rises) a huge granite rock which dominated the large expanse of country around it. The rock



The hill of Pergamos in the background, with the colonnaded Sacred Way in the foreground

ruled, so to speak, over the great plain, and it was upon this large rock, with steep west and south sides, that the Pergamos of which we are most familiar was constructed. This hill rises 1,000 feet above the plain, and the principal buildings of the city during the Hellenistic and Roman periods were built on its plateau. As one travels in from the sea (fifteen miles away) and comes upon this ancient citadel-hill rising out of the plain, one is impressed with its appearance of strength, authority, and permanence:

Beyond all other sites in Asia Minor it [Pergamos] gives the traveler the impression of a royal city, the home of authority. The rocky hill on which it stands is so huge, and dominates the broad plain of the Caicus [River] so proudly and boldly. The modern town is below the hill, where the

earliest village was. (W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 205)

On this large plateau an administrative and religious center was built, but not originally. The first settlement of Pergamos seems to have been in the 8th century BC in the plain below the rock, where the current town of Bergama lies. Little is known about Pergamos until it came under the control of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC. Following this we have a long record of its history and its many rulers. Evidently the Pergamene kingdom was a large kingdom, for the western half of it became the Roman province of Asia, and the city of Pergamos (or Pergamum) eventually became the administrative capital of the province. Some historians dispute this, however, and believe Ephesus was the capital. Ephesus was the *financial* capital of the province because it was thriving, with a harbor and trade routes that traversed it from two directions, but Pergamos, which was set on a rock and not able to foster much mercantile growth, was the *administrative* capital, ruling the whole province of Asia for Rome from its royal, magnificent seat. In fact, the Greek word for Pergamos means elevation or height.

Pergamos is one of the most impressive archaeological sites in all of Turkey. Because it was built on the rocky plateau, future cities did not build over it (they chose to remain in the plain); therefore, much archeological information has been obtained about Pergamos and its structures, such as the large amphitheater carved out of the steep side of the hill, offering a breath-taking view of the plain below. On the acropolis were many temples, including the ones constructed for the worship of the Roman emperors Trajan, Hadrian, and Augustus; the temple of Zeus, with its immense altar surrounded by colonnades; and the temple to the goddess Roma. Room on the plateau was limited, so the city had to eventually spread down, and a middle acropolis was created, then a lower acropolis, and finally construction spread into the plain, with temples to Asclepius (a large health center with a school of medicine) and Serapis. On the upper acropolis,



Amphitheater of Pergamos

Courtesy of Rui Omelas@Flickr

among other things, were shrines to deified heroes, residential buildings, palaces of kings, shops and a large agora (or market place), an important library, an arsenal with stones weighing from six to one hundred sixty-six pounds for use in catapults, and a cistern, though water for Pergamos was brought via an aqueduct from Mt. Pindasos, twenty-eight miles away. The royal palaces had parks and gardens surrounding them, with pavilions and lakes in the parks, and at this time in history architectural skills were also applied to the construction of convenient and beautiful private houses which had entrances, courtyards, and enclosed gardens, and these beautiful houses were also on the main acropolis.

Everywhere we see the skill with which the town has been planned, the regularity with which the separate districts have been laid out, the care with which the sites for public buildings and open spaces were chosen. The haphazard arrangement of houses which had before been normal now gave place to a regular system. Types of public buildings were definitely fixed for the first time and constantly repeated—halls for the city council, the civil courts, and the body of citizens; theaters and concert-rooms; markets and exchanges; lighthouses; gymnasiums and wrestling-grounds; fields for athletics and race-courses. (M. Rostovtzeff, *Greece*, p. 294)

Pergamos was famous for a library that rivaled that of Alexandria. Remember, Pergamos was a Greek city before it became Romanized, and in Greece not only was skill in art valued and well-advanced but so also was the attainment of knowledge. During the time of Greece, for example, public education was first offered:

It is typical also of the Hellenistic Age that learning and the importance of learning were then for the first time recognized and appreciated by the state. The private philosophic schools still went on; but side by side with them rose the first public establishments for the encouragement of literature and science. The Museum (or 'Home of the Muses') at Alexandria was the first learned society maintained by the state. It was a society of savants and men of letters who devoted their whole lives to science and literature. A great library was placed at their service, and also other appliances for study, for instance, a zoological garden. *Pergamum could boast of a similar institution, and so sought to rival Alexandria in this field also.* (*Ibid.*, p. 300; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

In the middle acropolis were shrines, a gymnasium, a Roman bath, one restaurant that we know of with an oven and grill, a smaller theater, and more baths, shops, houses, meeting rooms, etc. The lower acropolis had more of the same. Pergamum was an impressive city overall, and one of its most interesting places was the temple to Asclepius.

The Temple of Asclepius

For the Greco-Romans, Asclepius was the god of healing, and sanctuaries were built in various places throughout the

ancient world for his worship. One of the major sanctuaries was constructed at Pergamos. It was a popular healing center and reached its height during the 2nd century AD. Galen, one of the most important physicians of antiquity, was born at Pergamos in AD 129 and studied at the Asclepeion. He later became the surgeon for the gladiators at the amphitheater in Pergamos and then court physician for three Roman emperors. The famous orator, Aristides, spent two years at the sanctuary in Pergamos, and the treatment he received included baths in cold water, bloodlettings, fastings, exercises, various medications, and the coating of his body with mud. Today we might call these sanctuaries sanitariums, except these sanctuaries were, first and foremost, temples in which to worship Asclepius. Visitors to the sanctuary were expected to bring offerings to Asclepius and to make thank offerings after being healed.

Leading to the Temple of Asclepius was a half mile colonnaded street called the Sacred Way which ended at the courtyard of the temple. Upon entering the courtyard one entered a world intended to heal one's body, mind, and spirit. Shrines and statues met the eye everywhere, pools for bathing were situated in different areas of the complex. Another pool piped in drinking water from a supposedly sacred spring. At a theater (which seated 3,500 people) plays, orations, poetry readings, and musical performances were presented. Sleeping rooms were also part of the treatment, for patients were instructed to sleep in expectation of receiving a visit in their dreams from Asclepius. This visit would either cure the patient or prescribe a treatment which often



The amphitheater in the Temple of Asclepius

consisted of baths in cold or hot water, exercises, mud baths, massages, special diets, colonic irrigation, and the use of herbs and ointments.

There were also terraces on which to enjoy fresh air and sunshine, and a long tunnel, containing periodic openings in the roof for sunlight and ventilation, provided passage underground which was especially appreciated during the heat of the day. The temple complex also contained a gymnasium, a library, and assorted meeting rooms, and long rows of shops

Courtesy of David Spender@Flickr

lined part of the exterior perimeter. Individuals who came for healing sometimes spent weeks at the sanctuary and followed a prescribed regimen of treatment, rest, and exercise.

The Symbol of Asclepius

An important feature of the pagan god Asclepius is his symbol—the snake—and this symbol may help us understand Jesus' words about the seat of Satan. We do not know how the Pergamenes understood the terms "Satan's seat" and "where Satan dwelleth" (verse 13), and we have no explanation from Jesus on his use of these words, but the church at Pergamos most likely understood exactly what he meant. They were living at the time the words were spoken to John and at the time the message was first delivered. As we shall see later, these terms could refer to the use of political power to enforce religious observance, an alliance that officially occurred for the Christian church first at Pergamos, but these terms might also refer to this huge so-called health facility in Pergamos of which Satan was the head. Satan controlled what occurred at the temple, under the guise of the pagan god Asclepius, who was expected to visit the patients in dreams and to either heal them or instruct them. The dreams were then related to the physicians and priests of the temple, who often had to interpret the dreams for the patients, and then their interpretations were put into practice. We know from Deuteronomy such instruction from Satan is witchcraft and an abomination in God's sight.

Pergamos the Administrative Capitol of Asia

Pergamos was the Roman administrative capital for the province of Asia and was also the seat for Rome's state religion in the province. Over the years Rome had awarded Pergamos the so-called privilege of building three temples in honor of three of its emperors—Augustus, Trajan, and Severus—and another temple was later approved to be renovated for the worship of a fourth emperor. No other city was given such a distinction, and this honor bequeathed to Pergamos the guardianship of the state religion, a religion that taught the emperors were gods and must be worshiped. These temples and the Roman emperors appear on many of the coins minted in Pergamos, and it is possibly to this authority in political realms that Jesus spoke when he identified himself as the one who has the sharp sword with two edges. This sword "is the sharp-pointed, double-edged, cut-and-thrust sword used in the Roman armies, not the Oriental scimitar, or the mere cutting sword employed by many nations, and especially by the Greek soldiers. The [Greek] name by which it is here called denoted a barbarian and non-Greek sword (ρομφαία, originally a Thracian term), and therefore was suitable for the weapon borne by the Romans, who were a 'barbarian' race, in contrast with the Greeks" (W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 214).

The symbol of the sword denoted the highest order of official authority—the power of life and death. It is known as *ius gladii*, "the right of the sword," and all Asian readers of this



In this partial model of the upper acropolis of Pergamos, the Temple of Zeus is in the middle to the right of the amphitheater.

letter to the church in Pergamos, according to Dr. Ramsay, would have understood the symbolism immediately, for they understood the power the proconsul of the province exerted. But there was another kind of power to be found at Pergamos—the power of Satan's seat (*θρονος*, *thronos*) or throne—and this is the official authority and power which stands in opposition to the church of God.

Inspiration has characterized the Pergamos period as a time of compromise, apostasy, and popularity, the time during which the Church of Rome was consolidating its power and authority. (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 753)

At Pergamos we find for the first time a formal combination of political and religious power arrayed against God's people. Heretofore, persecution and harassment had fallen on God's people, it is true, but often instigated and intensified by Jewish leaders. Roman emperors did demand recognition of their divinity, but the two efforts of politics and religion were not officially bound together as they were in Pergamos. In Pergamos we see a joining of political and religious energies in an effort to promote the state religion of the worship of emperors because Pergamos was the administrative capital of the province *and* the chief seat of state religion.

Here [at Pergamos] was built the first Asian temple of the divine Augustus, which for more than forty years was the one center of the imperial religion for the whole province. A second Asian temple had afterwards been built at Smyrna, and a third as [sic] Ephesus; but they were secondary to the original Augustan temple at Pergamum.

In this Pergamene temple, then Satan was enthroned. The authority over the minds of its Asian subjects, possessed by the state and arrayed against the church, was mainly concentrated in the temple. (*Ibid.*, p. 215)

Until this point in time, persecution of God's faithful people often came at the hand of the Jewish leaders and at the hand of citizens:

The suffering which had fallen to the lot of Smyrna proceeded chiefly from fellow citizens and, above all, from the Jews; but the persecution that fell to the lot of Pergamum is clearly distinguished from that kind of suffering. In Pergamum it took the form of suffering for the name, when Christians were tried in the proconsular court and confronted with the alternative of conforming to the state religion or receiving immediate sentence of death. Naturally, that kind of persecution originated from Pergamum and had there its center; but many martyrs were tried and condemned there who were not Pergamenes. Prisoners were carried from all parts of the province to Pergamum for trial and sentence before the authority who possessed the right of the sword (*ius gladii*), the power of life and death, namely, the Roman proconsul of Asia. (*Ibid.*, p. 218)

We know Antipas was one of God’s faithful people who was slain, but that is all we know about him. We do not know if he was a citizen of Pergamos or if he was arrested and taken to Pergamos from another part of the province. We also do not know his role in the early Christian church, but God knows, and God calls him his “faithful martyr.”

God’s message to the church in Pergamos praises their steadfastness of faith but cautions against their allowing fellow worshipers to adhere to the doctrine of Balaam and/or to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. This is the second time Jesus mentions the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and for the second time he says he hates it. He first counseled against it in his message to the church at Ephesus, and we addressed the meaning of it in the article on Ephesus found in the August issue of *Old Paths*. In a nutshell it is salvation by works, but let us consider, instead, the doctrine of Balaam. Jesus explains what he means by his application of the principles of Balaam to the church at Pergamos—it is allowing believers to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication. Remember how pervasive the worship of gods and goddesses was in Greece and Rome? In the homes, in the temples, in the courts, in the Senate, everywhere were

sacrifices offered in varying ways and degrees, and somehow the seriousness and the abhorrence of this were lost on some of God’s people, and even lost on the leaders of the church, to the point that they felt safe not only in allowing fornication and the eating of meat offered to idols, but also in participating in it. The lines of distinction between service to God and service to Satan were blurred, so that eating things offered to idols and participating in fornication were accepted as appropriate behavior for Christians. Jesus tells the *leaders* of the church in Pergamos, represented by the angel of the church, to repent for allowing this or else he, Jesus, would come and fight against the followers of Balaam with the sword of his mouth (here is another symbol of a sword).

Let us consider for a moment these two abominations. Eating meat offered to idols by the Gentile converts and fornication among them were issues that Paul and the Christian church had earlier faced (Acts 15), but evidently the decision of the council at Jerusalem which “the Holy Spirit had, in reality, already settled” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 192) had not been communicated to the church at Pergamos or, even worse, they had refused to accept it:

One was the problem [at the council of Jerusalem] as to what attitude should be taken toward the use of meats offered to idols. Many of the Gentile converts were living among ignorant and superstitious people who made frequent sacrifices and offerings to idols. The priests of this heathen worship carried on an extensive merchandise with the offerings brought to them, and the Jews feared that the Gentile converts would bring Christianity into disrepute by purchasing that which had been offered to idols, thereby sanctioning, in some measure, idolatrous customs.

Again, the Gentiles were accustomed to eat the flesh of animals that has been strangled, while the Jews had been divinely instructed that when beasts were killed for food, particular care was to be taken that the blood should flow from the body; otherwise the meat would not be regarded as wholesome. God had given these injunctions to the Jews for the purpose of preserving their health. The Jews regarded it as sinful to use blood as an article of diet. They held that the blood was the life, and that the shedding of blood was in consequence of sin.

The Gentiles, on the contrary, practiced catching the blood that flowed from the sacrificial victim and using it in the preparation of food. The Jews could not believe that they ought to change the customs they had adopted under the special direction of God. Therefore, as things then stood, if Jew and Gentile should attempt to eat at the same table, the former would be shocked and outraged by the latter.

The Gentiles, and especially the Greeks, were extremely licentious, and there was danger that some, unconverted in heart, would make a profession of faith



Temple of Serapis

Courtesy of Rui Ornelas@Flickr

without renouncing their evil practices. The Jewish Christians could not tolerate the immorality that was not even regarded as criminal by the heathen. (*Ibid.*, pp. 191, 192)

Now let us consider the hidden manna and the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17. The Bible does not offer an explanation for the use these two terms. The Greek means just what we read in English—hidden (or secret), manna, white, and stone (or small, smooth pebble). Physical manna was given the Israelites to eat while wandering in the wilderness. Every Israelite knew what it was—there was nothing hidden about it—but the use of manna in Revelation has a different meaning because this manna is hidden and not obvious to the sight. Jesus tells us in John 6:48, 49 that he is the Bread of life, unlike the manna that our forefathers ate and from which they did not obtain eternal life. Perhaps the following quotations, the first from Ellen White, will help us understand:

The manna, falling from heaven for the sustenance of Israel, was a type of Him who came from God to give life to the world. Said Jesus, "I am that Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven. . . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:48–51. And among the promises of blessing to God's people in the future life it is written, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." Revelation 2:17. (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 297)

It [the manna in the wilderness] was a type of Christ, who was the true bread that came down from heaven, (John 6:32, 33). It here [in Revelation 2:17] signifies Christ himself, with all the influences of his grace, whether for strength or comfort. As a feast was wont to follow a victory; so Christ promiseth to those that fought, and overcame in the spiritual fight, to feast them with himself and the influences of his Spirit. (*Matthew Poole's Commentary in Online Bible on Revelation 2:17*)

So we see that the "hidden manna" represents Christ, but what do the white stone and new name represent? Many people believe that the stone represents judgment, for there are references to white and black stones in Greco-Roman times that were used in passing judgment—white for innocence and black for guilt. In fact, the only other time this Greek word is used in the New Testament, beside being used twice in Revelation 2:17, is in Acts 26:10, where Paul says: "Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." The Greek word for *voice* is the same Greek word translated *stone* in Revelation 2, and it refers to the judgment of guilt that he passed on the Christians. Most students of the Bible, however, agree that the use of this Greek word is so varied that it cannot be said with certainty

what is meant by its use in Revelation 2. For example, Matthew Poole writes on this verse in this way:

. . . the use of stones anciently was so various, that it hath given a great liberty to interpreters to vary in their senses of the white stone here mentioned. They made use of them (as we since of counters) to count; they used them also in judgments, acquitting persons by white stones, on which their names were written, as they condemned others by black stones; they also used them in giving suffrages in elections, etc.; they also used them to mark happy or lucky days, and they used other stones to mark such days as they counted unlucky; and finally, they used them as rewards to those who conquered in their [gladiatorial] games. Hence interpreters vary in their opinions, whether this be a general promise of a reward, or a more particular promise of pardon and absolution; or, of the assurance of their election to life. It seems most properly to be interpreted of pardon, or the notification of pardon of sins, or more generally of a reward. (*Ibid.*)

Ellen White tells us, however, that the white stone with the new name is the crown of life that Christ gives each of the redeemed:

The Lord is constantly giving. He pours down the rain and the sunshine. He promises to give to his people the privilege of eating of the tree of life, and the hidden manna. *He holds forth the crown of life, the white stone with the new name written therein. (The Review and Herald, December 17, 1889)*

Let us determine to be among the redeemed who will receive this inestimable crown of life, but it will only be given to those who *obey* the messages to the seven churches. The following quotation is taken from an article written by Ellen White about Revelation, and *the messages being referred to are the messages to the seven churches in Revelation*:

It may seem wonderful to us that Christ should reveal Himself to John as He is, strange that He should thus address Himself to the churches. But we should remember that the church, enfeebled and defective tho it is, is the object of Christ's supreme regard. Constantly He watches over it with tender solicitude, and strengthens it by His Holy Spirit. Will we, as members of His church, allow Him to impress our minds and to work through us to His glory? *Will we heed the messages He addresses to the church?* Let us determine to be among the number who shall meet Him with joy at His coming, and not among those who "shall wail because of Him." ***Let us make certain our redemption by obeying the messages that He gives to His church.*** (*The Signs of the Times, February 4, 1903*)

Onycha Holt

Compromise in Worship—Part 3 “Step-by-Step”

Why do people fall out of bed when they are sleeping? Because they sleep too close to the edge! While that answer may seem simplistic, it is, never-the-less, true. If you get away from the edge, you don't have to ever worry about falling out of bed. That is why people fall off the edge of the Grand Canyon and other places—they just get too close to the edge.

This last summer Shannon Stone made national headlines after he tragically fell to his death at the Texas Rangers' Ball Park in Arlington. A ball had been thrown up into the crowd but did not quite make it to the seating area. Mr. Stone stretched over a safety rail in an attempt to catch the ball, but he reached over too far. He fell twenty feet onto a concrete area, and he died. He was just too near the edge. Shortly after Mr. Stone died, a nineteen-year-old woman from Japan fell to her death off the railing at Niagara Falls. She was sitting on the edge of the safety rail! Then, in the third of a tragic trio of accidents, three hikers in Yosemite National Park fell 317 feet over Vernal Falls, after they had climbed over a safety rail. They, too, were too close to the edge.

Sometimes Christians get too near the edge. However, it is usually never done in one fast and big step. Christians do not go from the safe side of being with Jesus to the far side away from him overnight. No, we do not go from one side to falling over the edge on the other side in one step. It is a step-by-step process, with little conformities and little compromises which, at the time, may not seem like compromises.

When you climb the south side of Mount Everest, you leave base camp and travel through the Khumbu Icefall and then up the Western Cwm. From here the climbers go up the Lhotse face to the South Col. The climbers have now reached the “death zone.” Camping at the South Col, you awake at 10:00 pm to load gear, and then you begin the trek to the top at midnight. By early afternoon the next day, if you are strong, you have ascended the South Summit, have climbed the famed Hillary Step, and then have traversed the final three hundred vertical feet to the top. How did you get there? Everyone who has ever climbed Everest will tell you—one short step at a time!

An adult emperor penguin stands about four feet tall. Though they have wings, the penguin cannot fly. They have very short legs and are capable of only small steps of a few

inches at a time. Yet, the emperor penguin marches in excess of sixty miles over frozen Antarctica to find a secure place to breed and raise a chick. How do they travel such a long distance on such small feet and short legs? One step at a time!

Satan usually works in small steps with borderline compromises among the saints. Satan knows that if the saints are not carefully studying the word of God, they will be easy prey to lure away from the straight and narrow path as long as he only has to take them a small step at a time. The servant of the Lord has told us:



The regal emperor marches over sixty miles, one tiny step at a time.

The Lord has bestowed great blessings upon His church. Justice demands that she return these talents with usury. As the treasures of truth committed to her keeping have increased, her obligations have increased. But instead of improving upon these gifts and going forward unto perfection, she has fallen away from that which she had attained in her earlier experience. *The change in her spiritual state has come gradually and almost imperceptibly. As she began to seek the praise and friendship of the world, her faith diminished, her zeal grew languid, her fervent devotion gave place to dead formality. Every advance step toward the world was a step away from God.* (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 240; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

You see, the world (spiritually) and God are two polar ends apart! There is no equatorial line to walk spiritually, keeping an equidistance between the two. We are either getting closer to God or closer to the world, and each time we take a step toward one, we are going further from the other. John wrote:

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

Today the world and the Adventist Church have, to a great degree, become married, but is this union possible because the world has become more Christ-like? No. Sadly the people of God have let down their standards and compromised in lifestyle and doctrine. These changes have been at first marginal, and ministers have been reluctant to make waves for fear of being called legalistic and judgmental.

When the Apostle Paul first preached the gospel to the churches in Galatia, they were very grateful for his work and held him in high esteem and appreciation, so much so that he could write:

Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. (Galatians 4:13–15)

Yet after the Judaizers had disturbed the Galatians with their sophistries, the Galatians came to look upon Paul differently. They looked at him so differently that Paul asked them, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)?

Satan has arranged matters so that those who were the friends of truth appear to be the enemy of God. Any and all concerns about obedience are quickly labeled as legalism, and those who teach obedience are accounted as an enemy of righteousness by faith.

Without question some pastors have felt guilty about preaching sanctification, and a strange shift has taken place in the pulpits of not only Adventism but within the camp of those who claim to know the truth about God.

Before long the holy law (Romans 7:12) that is a transcript of God’s character became an enemy of righteousness by faith! The plain Bible definition of sin, “the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4), is disregarded, and in its place we are told that sin is a broken relationship. Let it be remembered, however, that “the only definition for sin that we have in the Bible is that it is the transgression of the law” (Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1890). Furthermore, sin is not the broken relationship, but the broken relationship happens because of sin. God says “your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2).

Some have begun to look with contempt upon God’s holy law. With the emphasis upon forgiveness and a shallow justification, we do not hear of obedience or of sanctification. We are told, “Christ did everything for us, including obedience, and our part is only to believe and love.” We are told that we cannot claim the promises because we have been obedient, yet all the promises of God are for the obedient. Peter said: “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:32). Furthermore, all the promises in the book of Revelation are to overcomers. For example:

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. (Revelation 3:12)

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (Revelation 3:21)

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (Revelation 21:7)

Things have changed in the churches that constituted Babylon in 1844. They have fallen even further from the heights that they had once reached, but changes are not limited to those churches:

A religious life once presented difficulties and demanded self-denial. *All is made very easy now.* [No or little standards] And why is this? ***The professed people of God have compromised with the power of darkness.*** (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 222)

Did you get that? “Compromised with *the* power of darkness.” Not just any power, but “the power” — Satan himself! Things appear easier for those who compromise. Does this agree with what Jesus said? It certainly does. During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus proclaimed:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:13, 14)

Ellen White continues in the *Testimonies*:

*There must be a revival of the strait testimony. The path to heaven is no smoother now than in the days of our Saviour. All our sins must be put away. Every darling indulgence that hinders our religious life must be cut off. The right eye or the right hand must be sacrificed if it cause us to offend. Are we willing to renounce our own wisdom and to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child? Are we willing to part with self-righteousness? Are we willing to give up our chosen *worldly associates*? Are we willing to sacrifice the approbation of men? The prize of eternal life is of infinite value. Will we put forth efforts and make sacrifices proportionate to the worth of the object to be attained? (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 222)*

This truth is not compatible with the new theology on righteousness by faith, and this is why we see thoughts quoted from evangelical ministers and not Ellen White in certain publications.

Some teachers declare that it is a sin to “try” to overcome, that such efforts to even surrender to Christ amount to salvation by works. We are told that righteousness by faith is finally being preached, and ministers are reluctant to preach against what is said to be righteousness by faith or in favor of anything that can be seen as legalistic. These ministers are seen by the liberals as sticks in the mud that keep the Holy Spirit from being poured out in full measure among God’s people. No wonder some of our ministers have become intoxicated and reluctant to preach against this slow, but steady, growth of the world and of false theology in the church.

Remember the climb to the top of Mount Everest? One obtains the summit step-by-step. We also reach the valley of sin the same way—one step at a time.

The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have *step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs* will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 81)

Those who accept the lower standards become the most vocal critics of those who, by God's grace, hold the standards high. Standards are equated with works. Furthermore, there is an emotional high that seems to accompany this so-called new-found freedom in Christ and righteousness by faith. These new teachers claim that concerns about the style of our dress or the diets we eat are permeated with "works."

Since all have generally agreed that righteousness by faith has been neglected in the past, it is easy to accept anything that claims it is righteousness by faith, if it is trumpeted long and loud enough.

New tolerant attitudes are developing toward certain areas in our lifestyles. We have slowly adjusted to the appearance of more and more "controlled television," the wedding ring, moderate makeup, three percent caffeine drinks, and *modest* bathing suits and shorts; and the list goes on and on.

Will this compromise consume the truth about God?

Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. (*Ibid.*)

Now is the time to sound the alarm beloved. God, through Isaiah, says: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1).

Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is.

Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 409, 410)

For whom was this written? Was it written for the Baptists or for Catholics? No, of course not. It was written for the Adventist people. God is omniscient, and he well knew what would happen in these last days among his people. Paul also wrote of this to Timothy:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:1–5)

Notice Paul is not speaking about unbelievers or atheists. The people he is speaking of have a *form of godliness*. The Greek word for form is *morphosis* meaning a shape or form. "Morphosis ... emphasizes outward form" (*The Bible Reader's Companion*, comments under 2 Timothy 3, emphasis in original). These people are interested in the outward form of religion but not upon the inner change that is necessary. They deny the power of the gospel to change lives and to empower a man or woman to overcome all sin. In the next chapter of Second Timothy, Paul says that these same people "will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they *heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears*; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3, 4). Satan is preparing his army and marshaling his hosts, even now, for the last great battle. Shall King Jesus have less success gathering his followers to stand for him? Speaking of the faithful few, we read:

In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, *those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any*. Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. *They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church*. The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect.

The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. The Lord commissions His messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: "Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men

which were before the house.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 210, 211)

Who will God be able to use in this last great crisis we are entering? Will it be those who deny God’s power? Can it be those who have their ears tickled? Can it be those who have compromised away our precious, sacred truth? No!

Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 80)

He will call men from the plow and from other occupations to give the last note of warning to perishing souls. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 170)

He will raise up from among the common people men and women to do His work, even as of old He called fishermen to be His disciples. There will soon be an awakening that will surprise many. Those who do not realize the necessity of what is to be done will be passed by, and the heavenly messengers will work with those who are called the common people, fitting them to carry the truth to many places. (*Last Day Events*, p. 204)

Malachi prophesied, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (Malachi 4:5). We know that this finds a partial fulfillment in John the Baptist. Jesus said, concerning him: “And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come” (Matthew 11:14). John was bold and uncompromising in both his teaching and his life. By God’s grace and power, we are to be as bold and as uncompromising as Elijah:

In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, God’s faithful preachers will have to bear a *still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist*. A responsible, important work is before them; and those who speak smooth things, God will not acknowledge as His shepherds. A fearful woe is upon them. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 321)



Courtesy of Alan Arnette

The world’s highest peak is obtained one step at a time.

multitude, “children of poisonous snakes” (Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7 Greek)? John was pointed and fearless. Ellen White, commenting upon John, noted:

He looked upon the King in His beauty, and self was forgotten. He beheld the majesty of holiness, and felt himself to be inefficient and unworthy. He was ready to go forth as Heaven’s messenger, unawed by the human, because he had looked upon the Divine. *He could stand erect and fearless in the presence of earthly monarchs, because he had bowed low before the King of kings.* (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 103)

Beloved, the only way we can be true to God—faithful to his truth, and to stand unflinchingly to proclaim the last great message—is to bow low before Christ daily and have him fill our lives. We cannot stand on our own, but in Christ “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

While John’s life and ministry meet a partial fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy, he did not live just “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.” There is still an Elijah message that is to be direct, plain, and fearlessly given. No compromiser will be allowed to have a part in this work. Nobody who, step by step, leaves the truth for error will be able to give the final call and participate in the loud cry. God is particular, and let us praise him for so being. Heaven will not be filled with the half-hearted but only with those who have given all. The choice is yours. Beloved, you may not see the dangers far ahead if you detour off the Christian pathway. If you realize that you are taking small steps away from the “old paths,” then return to the “good way” now. Do not delay nor stop to listen to the siren’s song that is played in the broad and easy path of Babylon. Today is the day to reconsecrate yourself to God and to the service of the one who died for you. Don’t get near the edge!

Allen Stump



Have you ever heard the expression *reinventing the wheel*? Sometimes we expend time, energy, and funds to replicate work that has already been done. Seventh-day Adventists were given great light on health reform, but we have failed to share it as we could have, and so the wheel has been reinvented and even improved.

Not all the light we as a people have received came at once in the beginning. The world and we as a people sat in great ignorance, and God, in his mercy, took us step-by-step to a better position. This light was given in a progressive manner. For example, Ellen White could write about milk:

The Reformer [health magazine] was about dead. Brother B had urged the extreme positions of Dr. Trall. This had influenced the doctor to come out in the *Reformer* stronger than he otherwise would have done, in discarding milk, sugar, and salt. The position to entirely discontinue the use of these things may be right in its order; but *the time had not come to take a general stand upon these points.* (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 19, written in 1872; all *emphasis* supplied unless otherwise noted)

The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up using any animal food. *Even milk will have to be discarded.* (*Counsels on Health*, p. 245, written in 1889)

In 1872 giving up milk was an “extreme position,” but seventeen years later was shortly before it would have to be given up. We see other such counsel in the Spirit of Prophecy writings. Understanding the principle of taking time and place into consideration is imperative.

Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 57)

A broad study of the *Testimonies*, taking into consideration time and place, clearly reveals there certainly is a need to give up using all animal food. If the time was near to do so in 1889, it certainly must have arrived 122 years later!

When I was first introduced into Adventism almost forty years ago, I learned that a plant-based diet was best for optimal health and clear spiritual thinking. However, as I visited from place to place, I often did not see examples in Adventism that lived up to the light we had on health reform. Interestingly, today only about one half of Seventh-day Adventists abstain from flesh foods and only about ten percent eat a diet that is totally plant-based. While I quickly gave up flesh food, I saw no need to give up all animal food and I continued to use milk, cheese, and eggs for several years. Sometimes I would abstain for a while, but after a few months I would return to the use of these animal products. I knew better, but did not do better.

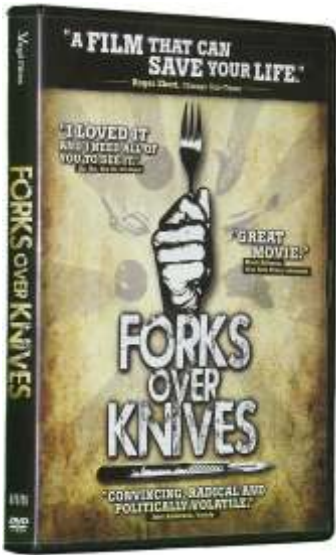
Finally I came to see health reform in a clearer light and gave up the use of these health-destroying substances. Why did it take me so long? Perhaps I was not convinced at times and perhaps the message was presented in a legalistic way that was not appealing, but I have nobody to blame but myself. Today I marvel that I was so slow to adopt better practices of healthful living.

I might argue that if I had been trained as a doctor, I would have had all the right information to have made a wise choice sooner; however, this is not necessarily so. For example, there are many Adventist doctors who still use dairy and eggs. It is hard to take a message of proper eating to the world when we come up so poorly ourselves. We have known so much for so long and have not given the trumpet the sound it needed, so God, in his mercy to the world, has had to raise up people outside of Adventism to sound the message of plant-based food.

This last year I have been made aware of the work of several who have been forced, as it were, to reinvent the food wheel. Two giants in this field are Dr. T. Colin Campbell of Cornell University and Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., of the Cleveland Clinic. At the same time, through different research, they began to see the value of a plant-based, whole food diet. Dr. Campbell’s book entitled, *The China Study*, and Esselstyn’s book, *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*, have changed the way thousands have looked at nutrition.

Dr. Campbell has documented with sound science the relationship between high levels of animal protein, especially the casein protein in milk, with high levels of cancer. Dr. Esselstyn has proven that heart disease need never happen, that it is, as he likes to call it, “a toothless paper tiger” which can be reversed through proper nutrition. Recently both helped to produce a video documentary on health called *Forks Over Knives*.

FORKS OVER KNIVES examines the profound claim that most, if not all, of the degenerative diseases that afflict us can be controlled, or even reversed, by rejecting animal-based and processed foods. The major storyline in the film traces the personal journeys of a pair of pioneering re-



Forks Over Knives DVD

searchers, Dr. T. Colin Campbell and Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn.

Dr. Campbell, a nutritional scientist at Cornell University, was concerned in the late 1960 s with producing “high quality” animal protein to bring to the poor and malnourished areas of the third world. While in the Philippines, he made a life-changing discovery: the country’s wealthier children, who were consuming relatively high amounts of animal-based foods, were much more likely to get liver

cancer. Dr. Esselstyn, a top surgeon and head of the Breast Cancer Task Force at the world-renowned Cleveland Clinic, found that many of the diseases he routinely treated were virtually unknown in parts of the world where animal-based foods were rarely consumed.

These discoveries inspired Campbell and Esselstyn, who didn’t know each other yet, to conduct several ground-breaking studies. One of them took place in China and is still among the most comprehensive health-related investigations ever undertaken. Their research led them to a startling conclusion: degenerative diseases like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and even several forms of cancer, could almost always be prevented—and in many cases reversed—by adopting a whole foods, plant-based diet. Despite the profound implications of their findings, their work has remained relatively unknown to the public.



Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr.

The filmmakers travel with Drs. Campbell and Esselstyn on their separate, but similar paths, from their childhood farms where they both produced “nature’s perfect food,” to China and Cleveland, where they explored ideas that challenged the established thinking and shook their own core beliefs. (www.forksoverknives.com/about/synopsis)

Having met both Drs. Campbell and Esselstyn, I have found them to be gracious, kind men who have no vested

interest in their message except to help people. They are not producing herbal products, food, vitamin-based supplements, or anything else to sell. Their message is one of integrity and sound science. What a shame that they have had to reinvent the wheel! Much of their work that to the world seems ground-breaking has been understood by Adventists for years, but we have sat on the message. So God has entrusted it to others to share.

In connection with these thoughts, my attention was captured by a headline on the cover of the September 8, 2011, *Adventist Review* which read: “Adventist Health Study 2 Awarded \$5.5 Million.” Turning to page 10, I learned that this money was received from The United States National Institutes of Health (NIH). It was awarded to Loma Linda University’s Adventist Health Study 2 “which will allow the study to continue its analysis on cancer and other lifestyle diseases.” Later the article noted:

Though the study is in the beginning states of analysis, it has had several key findings so far, which include a vegetarian diet to lower risk of heart disease and diabetes; linking a high consumption of brown rice, cooked green vegetables, dried fruit, and legumes to a lower risk of colon polyps, a precursor to colon cancer; and revealing that Black and non-Black Adventists report a higher mental and physical quality of life than the average American.



Dr. T. Colin Campbell

The main objective points of this study have already been documented well by Campbell, Esselstyn, and others. It seems that we need to reinvent the wheel again. However, who ever turned down \$5.5 million from the government?

The week after the *Adventist Review* came, I received my September 10, 2001, issue of *Science News*. Again my attention was caught by a headline on health, this time about weight-loss surgery and diabetes entitled “Bypass’s big boon.” This article brought out that most overweight people with type 2 diabetes recover from diabetes after gastric bypass surgery. While there is a complex explanation for this given in the article, Campbell and Esselstyn both have observed that overweight patients who shift to a plant-based, whole food diet nearly always recover from type 2 diabetes, since it is usually caused by obesity. Today diabetes is

Union of Church and State

skyrocketing in the United States in direct proportion to obesity! Bypass surgery need never happen. Obesity should never happen, beloved, but when it does happen, it can be reversed with proper lifestyle changes, and surgery will not be needed. This wheel need not be reinvented. What about weak willpower? Interestingly the *Science News* article notes:

Others think obesity is something that can be fixed without surgery, that all a person needs is willpower. But the truth is, most dieting attempts fail.

Today many weight loss programs work on the idea that you may eat any kind of food you wish, if you simply restrict the amount of food you eat. In other words, reduce the portion size of your unhealthy food. We have failed to realize, however, that hunger and appetite are not wrong; it is the perversion of appetite that is wrong. All people crave air to breathe and water to drink. See how it works to tell people to breathe and drink less to combat those cravings and you can begin to see why cutting back on appetite is almost impossible for some people. That does not mean one may freely eat of anything until appetite is satiated. Obesity comes from

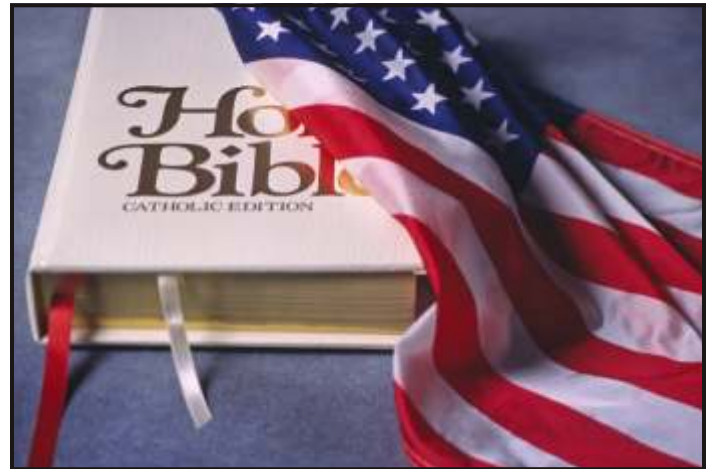


Despite five bypasses, Anthony Yen's heart disease was getting worse until he adopted a plant-based, whole food diet under the direction of Dr. Esselstyn.


overeating not plant-based, whole foods but calorie-rich, processed foods and animal products. When we eat such foods with large amounts of oil, for example, we may take in up to forty times the calories we receive from a similar-sized portion of vegetables! So instead of filling our stomachs with meat and cheese, we can eat broccoli, carrots, legumes, and other whole foods until we are full, and we will never be over filled with calories.

Beloved, we are at the end of all things and if there was ever a time we needed the best health possible, it is today. Let us not sleep at this late hour but go onward and upward in our experience, especially that of our health. "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 1:2).

Allen Stump



"The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.' Revelation 12:17" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 592).

"None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?" (*Ibid.*, p. 593; emphasis supplied). 

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