

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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Straight and Narrow

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*Behind the lofty bulwarks of the mountains—in all ages the refuge of the persecuted and oppressed—the Waldenses found a hiding place.
(The Great Controversy, pp. 65, 66)*



The Protestant Reformation

Part 2

The Waldenses—Examples to the Protestant Reformers

Rora was under attack. Ninety-five years earlier Count La Trinita had invaded Pra del Tor in the high valleys of the Waldensian strongholds, but this was 1655, and Count Christovel was marching against Rora, having crossed the Pellice River. He had successfully annihilated the Waldenses on one side of the river and now planned a similar attack on the other side. Christovel did not know, however, that Janaval and a small band of determined men from Rora were secretly watching his approach.

The evil army was confident of an easy victory, one in which no sword would need to be drawn in defense and no shot fired. The news of their recent victories was expected to result in no resistance at Rora. Christovel and his men, intent on pillaging, burning, and slaying and unaware of Janavel perched above them, casually rode on, discussing the business before them.

. . . Christovel and his battalion—three hundred strong—had now reached a point of the ascent where a rocky outpost, covered with dense chestnut-trees, runs seemingly across the pass, closing the view to the south, and commanding the approach from both flanks, as well as from the centre. “What an admirable post of defence!” said Moustache, looking up to the wooded rocks that hung half suspended over the road; “so well guarded by nature these barbets [a derisive term for the Waldenses] might render their fastness impregnable at very small expense. . . A score of musqueteers—men like ourselves—planted on these rocks, might keep an army at bay. But, abandoned to destruction, all thoughts of defence have been given up, and they only wait to bid us welcome.”

“We do!” exclaimed a voice of thunder, suddenly interrupting the colloquy; and, before the speaker could finish his sentence, a volley of musketry from right and left carried death into the advancing column. No enemy visible; but the volume of curling smoke that rolled down the

rocks told the direction of the shot, and furnished indubitable evidence that Christovel and his vanguard were caught between two fires. Thrown into utter confusion by this unexpected salutation, the battalion retraced their steps in terror and precipitation—the rear, who had not yet come up, overthrown by the van—all hastening towards Villar. But having in their retreat to cross a dense forest, where their haste was necessarily impeded, the same invisible agents were again upon them, and every tree seemed to discharge a bullet. The havoc thus renewed put Christovel and his band completely to the rout, and saved Rora from meditated destruction; while Janavel and his eight co-patriots hastened to concert further measures for its defence.” (William Beattie, *The Waldenses*, p. 53)

Only nine men sent the advancing troops into retreat. And it happened a second time (with a few more men) and a third, but the fourth time the enemy approached Rora from three paths, and Janavel’s group was too few in number to defend



The Trebbia River and its valley, north of Bobbio, Italy

them all. Rora was taken and its saints utterly and tragically destroyed.

They asked for freedom—but the monarch gave
Freedom of conscience, only in the grave;
For there alone the heretic transgressor
Might hope to find a refuge from the oppressor.

The Waldensian Valleys

The ancient land of the Waldenses is a beautiful land, a land where the northwest of Italy meets the east of France and where snow-topped mountains form a mighty barrier between them. On the west and east of these beautiful mountains, high valleys are concealed in pockets of rocks and trees, below which the land spreads out into plains. One of these hidden valleys has been called the Valley of Light, twelve miles in length, with green summer meadows, through which the beautiful Pellice River flows. Another valley, the Valley of Dews, is like a vast cup fifty miles in circumference, with craggy peaks along its rim and the valley itself decked with meadows and fields and with fruit and forest trees. A third valley is the Valley of Groans, a valley that is long and narrow and that winds through rough spots of projecting rock and great trees, finally opening into a “circular basin, feathery with birches, musical with falling waters,” and topped with jagged “crags fringed with dark pines” (J. A. Wylie, *History of the Waldenses*, p. 9). A mountainous wall across the top ends this valley, but an opening through the jagged rocks of the wall allows a path to thread upward through a dark chasm, along a narrow ledge carved into the mountainside, under towering summits leaning overhead, and over the waters of a rushing torrent far below. We are nearing one of the rugged homes of the Waldenses. If we were to proceed along the narrow ledge for two miles, the pass would widen, light would break in, and we would then stand before Pra del Tor, one of the Waldenses’ inner sanctuaries (*Ibid.*, paraphrased).

When Count La Trinita attacked the Waldenses in 1560, he first entered through the Valley of Angrogna, “a noble breadth of meadow and vineyard, running on between magnificent mountains, with their rich clothing of pastures, chestnut groves, and chalets, till it ends in the savage Pass of Miraboue” (*Ibid.*, p. 83). Beattie described this valley as a miniature Switzerland, with “all the ingredients of Alpine landscape, torrents, rocks, precipices, gloomy ravines, and gushing fountains—forests, that at once afford shelter and sustenance—verdant meadows, to which the meandering streams carry freshness and fertility,” as well as with fields and gardens “clinging to the very precipices,” showing that “unwearied industry on the part of the inhabitants . . . has purchased the means of life under the most unfavourable circumstances” (Beattie, p. 66). After the Valley of Angrogna, La Trinita entered the sister valley of Lucerna (or the Valley of Groans) which Beattie described as winding and climbing in a grand succession of precipice, gorge, and

grassy dell until the path opened into a funnel-shaped valley, surrounded by ice-crowned mountains.

The high Italian valleys of the Waldenses certainly were breathtaking and because they were nestled in the eastern side of the Alps, they provided a strong protection against any disturbance to their sweet tranquility, a tranquility which fostered virtue and unassuming industry. Every piece of open earth was carefully cultivated to produce something of value for the humble residents. “Chestnut-trees of luxuriant growth shade the inferior acclivities; and from these, in seasons of scarcity, a wholesome bread is prepared . . . Over the higher grounds, Nature has spread a rich carpet of vegetation; and thither, as the pastoral season arrives, the inhabitants repair with their families and cattle” (*Ibid.*, p. 50).

Who Were the Waldenses?

On the western side of this great mountain divide, in Lyons, France, lived Peter Waldo. Some credit Peter Waldo as being the founding father of the Waldenses, but according to William Stephen Gilly, the Waldenses did not originate in France. Long before settlements in France, there were settlements in Italy, and Gilly states the people were called Waldenses because of the mountain valleys they inhabited on the eastern side of the Cottian chain of the Alps. “The terms, Vaudois in French, Vallenses in Latin, Valdesi, or Vallesi in Italian, and Waldenses in English signify nothing more or less than ‘Men of the valleys’ . . . (William Stephen Gilly, *Waldensian Researches*, pp. 5, 6), but “in whatever country their lot was cast, we find them the same sort of people, and for an obvious reason—their principles, temper, and conduct had no dependence on the climate, customs, or government of the country. They took their rise from a quite different source, and that was, the word of God, and particularly the New Testament, which they received as their sole and exclusive directory in all matters of faith and duty—it was the man of their counsel and the guide of their lives . . .” (William Jones, *Ecclesiastical History in a Course of Lectures*, p. 450). They were “a race of simple mountaineers, who from generation to generation have continued steadily in the faith preached to their forefathers, when the territory, of which their valleys form a part, was first Christianized” (Gilly, p. 8) and were, according to Theodore Beza, the French Protestant reformer, “the very seed of the Primitive and pure Christian Church, being those who have been so upheld by the wonderful providence of God, that neither those numberless storms and tempests, whereby the whole Christian world hath been shaken, nor those horrible persecutions which have been so directly raised against them, have been able to prevail upon them to yield a voluntary submission to the Roman tyranny and idolatry” (*Ibid.*, p.10).

. . . when universal conformity became the grand object of the Bishops of Rome, and they endeavoured to force their corruptions upon the little flocks that desired to remain independent of them, the strong holds and inaccessible wilds of the valleys of Piemont presented a

secure retreat from the arm of violence. Even the power of ancient Rome, with Caesar at the head of the Legionaries, could not capture a prince of this country, when, relying upon the intricacy of its glens, and the impervious nature of its hiding-places, he chose to take up his retreat amidst rocks and snows, and there to maintain his independence.” (*Ibid.*, p. 65)

Ellen White tells us that Jesus himself taught them:

In their lonely retreats they [the Waldenses] often met their Redeemer and conversed with him, as did the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. He would there open to them the sublime truths of his word, and strengthen them in their determination not to put confidence in false guides, but to obey and worship Him only who made and governs the world . . . (*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, p. 243)

Angels were their companions:

Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful, and, carrying their minds above the tops of the highest mountains, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which the overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne. (*Ibid.*, p. 242)

The Waldenses also took the word of God, which was their rule of life, to others. They hand-copied the Scriptures, hid the copies among their wares, and went from village to village, selling their wares and sharing the word of God with whomever would listen. They were the early colporteurs, as E. Naenny suggested in his report of a publishing meeting held in the valleys of the Waldenses:

. . . we visited the Collège des Barbes [in the Angrogne Valley], called so because the Waldensian missionaries wore long beards. In a very primitive shed, around a stone table the Bible was studied, committed to memory, and partially copied. After a thorough preparation the young people went out accompanied by an older, experienced man. Two by two they were sent out into the world to diffuse the light of the word of God until they met with death or martyrdom. This is really the origin of book evangelism. (“Publishing Department Secretaries’ Course in the Waldensian Valleys,” *Quarterly Review—Organ of the Southern European Division of the General Conference of S.D.A.*, September 1969)

Seeds of truth were thus sown by the Waldenses which helped prepare a harvest in the soon-coming Reformation.

Another unforgettable excursion was made to the church of La Tana . . . In this cave the Waldenses gathered to be able to worship their God in peace. Well-hidden by trees and rocks we had to bend low to enter this grotto. By the light of torches and candles Brother Herbert White gave a moving talk on the 200 victims massacred at this place during the time of persecution. (*Ibid.*)

William Jones explained more about the Waldenses in his lectures:

Were I called upon to describe the Waldenses of the valleys of Piedmont, and their brethren scattered abroad, throughout France, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Bohemia, Poland, etc., etc., so as that their real character might be known, I should prefer doing it in a negative way. Thus I should say, they were not of the church of Rome, nor of the church of England, nor of the church of Scotland, though they held some doctrinal sentiments common to each. But their views of the nature of Christ’s kingdom, as a kingdom *not* of this world, agreeably to his own confession before Pontius Pilate, compelled them to dissent from the communion of the church of Rome, and would for the very same reasons, have led them to decline communion with those of England and Scotland. They considered the catholic church to be that unchaste woman that committed fornication with the kings of the earth, and had intoxicated the nations with the wine of her fornication. ‘The church of Rome,’ say they, ‘is the whore of Babylon’—‘the pope and bishops are the wolves of Christ’s church’—‘so many orders of the clergy, so many marks of the beast.’

. . . ‘Their clothing is of the skins of sheep—they have no linen. They inhabit seven villages [in France]; their houses are constructed of flint stone, having a flat roof covered with mud, which, when spoiled or loosened by the rain, they again smooth with a roller. In these they live, with the cattle, separated from them, however, by a fence. They have also two caves set apart for particular purposes, in one of which they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves, when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being, through constant practice, excellent marksmen. Poor as they are they are content, and live in a state of seclusion from the rest of mankind. One thing is very remarkable, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation. They can all read and write. They know French sufficiently for the understanding of the Bible and the singing of psalms. You can scarcely find a boy among them who cannot give you an intelligible account of the faith which they profess. In this they resemble their brethren of the other valleys. They pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is peculiarly noted in their confession of faith. If, by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity pay it to the king’s tax-gatherers.’ (Jones, pp. 453–454; 471–472; emphasis in original)

Martin Luther was also familiar with the Waldenses:

Luther, in the year 1533, published the Confessions of the Waldenses, to which he wrote a preface. In this preface he candidly acknowledges that, in the days of his popery, he had hated the Waldenses, as persons who were consigned over to perdition. But having understood from the

‘Confessions’ and writings the piety of their faith, he perceived that these good men had been greatly wronged whom the pope had condemned as heretics; for that, on the contrary, they were rather entitled to the praise due to holy martyrs. He adds, that among them he had found one thing worthy of admiration, a thing unheard of in the popish church—that, laying aside the doctrines of men, they meditated in the law of God, day and night; and that they were expert, and even well versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures; whereas, in the papacy, those who are called masters wholly neglected the Scriptures, and some of them had not so much as seen the Bible at any time. (*Ibid.*, p. 477).

The pastor of one of the churches of the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont wrote a treatise concerning their life, manners, and religion, in which he said: “We live in peace and harmony one with another, have intercourse and dealings chiefly among ourselves, having never mingled ourselves with the members of the church of Rome by marrying our sons to their daughters, nor our daughters to their sons. Yet they are so pleased with our manners and customs, that catholics, both lords and others, would rather have men and maid servants from among us, than from those of their own religion, and they actually come from distant parts to seek nurses among us for little children, finding, as they say, more fidelity among our people than their own” (*Ibid.*, p. 479).

Persecution of the Waldenses

An example of the fierce persecution leveled against those dwellers of the valleys who would not accept the control of the Church of Rome is that which occurred in Provence, France:

About the time of the Reformation, the Waldenses who resided in the south of France, and who of course were subjects of the French king, were persecuted with the most sanguinary severity, particularly those resident in the country of Provence. In the year 1540, the parliament of Aix, the chief judicature of the province, passed a law that ‘they should all of them promiscuously be destroyed, that



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Alps in northern Italy

their houses should be pulled down, the town of Merindole be levelled with the ground, all the trees cut down, and the country adjacent converted into a desert.’ . . . The sentence . . . was executed in all its rigour five years afterwards . . . (*Ibid.*, p. 483).

Ellen White called the Waldenses “the people of God in past ages” (White, p. 239). In 1885, when she was fifty-eight years old, she visited the Waldensian valleys in Italy:

. . . it was in the friendly shelter of the surrounding rocky peaks that they [the Waldenses] found protection when the fierce persecutions of the Roman church drove them from the fertile plains of Northern Italy. In these plains they had succeeded in maintaining their independence of Rome many years after others had yielded to her power. . . . But the very fact that her authority was disregarded on what might be called her own territory, was very humiliating to a power to whom all the world was then bowing down; and, after repeated unsuccessful attempts to induce the bishops of Milan to yield their independence, they were finally forced to submit.

The submission, however, was by no means universal. Many refused to yield their rights, and fled, some to one country, some to another, while many retired to the Piedmontese Alps. . . .

Every rock upon which we gazed seemed to speak in solemn silence of the wonderful scenes it had witnessed. One place of interest which we visited, was a spot just back of the town of Bobbio, seven miles up the valley from Torre Pellice. We had a beautiful day for our trip. The air was clear, the sky as blue as only an Italian sky can be. Our party numbered seven besides the two drivers. The ride was delightful. After going as far as the carriages could carry us, we took our blankets and lunch-baskets, and prepared to ascend the mountain.

By a zigzag course our path made its way up the hillside, sometimes winding in and out among the rocks that line the banks of a mountain brook, sometimes crossing a



Nicholas Vigier

Footpath in the French Alps



Eastern Alps

little patch of grain which was supported by a great stone wall and thus kept from being washed down the mountain side, sometimes following along the very edge of these great walls which hold in place the mountain terraces, on which are small vineyards, pasture lands, and grain fields; then it would turn suddenly and ascend by rocky steps to the heights above. Now and then we would stop to rest, or to allow to pass us a solemn-looking flock of sheep and goats which some little girl or boy was driving to the small patches of pasture land above.

A climb of three-quarters of an hour brought us to a large open plat of ground. Here we halted, and under the friendly shade of a huge chestnut-tree spread our lunch. A few rods from us was a large house, built of stone, and plastered on the outside. Although about eight hundred years old, it was still occupied. Here it was that many of the Waldenses found shelter when driven by their persecutors from the valley below; but spies soon found them here, and soldiers were sent to exterminate them. The battle was fought on the very spot where we were seated. Although the Waldenses were few in number, they held their ground for some time, and then, attempting to escape, most of them were brutally massacred.

Two who were wounded fled to the rocks a few rods above us, where they dragged their wounded bodies through a narrow passage into a cave which extended thirty feet underground.

But a Satanic spirit drove humanity from the hearts of their pursuers, and led them to devise a means of killing these wounded men whom they could not capture. Wood and leaves were piled at the various crevices of the rock, and set on fire, and the prisoners soon perished from suffocation. After partaking of our simple lunch, we climbed up to this cave, and explored it as far as we could. Then one of our number crawled, feet first, between the rocks, and dropped himself into the inner cave where the poor martyrs miserably perished.

History tells us of several occasions when the same means of extermination was resorted to and that, too, on a much larger scale. The valley of Loyse was the scene of one of the most horrible of these tragedies. The inhabitants were quietly pursuing their vocations, when they were surprised by seeing an armed force twenty times their own number enter their valley. “Despairing of being able to resist them, they at once prepared for flight. Placing their old people and children in rustic carts, together with their domestic utensils, and such store of victuals as the urgency of the occasion permitted them to collect, and driving their herds before them, they began to climb the rugged slopes of the mountains, which rise some six thousand feet over the level of the valley.” “About half way up, there is an immense cavern. In front of the cavern is a platform of rock, where the spectator sees beneath him only fearful precipices, which must be clambered over before one can reach the entrance to the grotto. The roof of the cave forms a magnificent arch, which gradually subsides and contracts into a narrow passage, or throat, and then widens once more and forms a roomy hall of irregular form. Into this grotto, as into an impregnable castle, did the Vaudois enter. Their women, infants, and old men, they placed in the inner hall; their cattle and sheep they distributed along the lateral cavities of the grotto. The able-bodied men posted themselves at the entrance. Having barricaded with huge stones both the doorway of the cave and the path that led to



Alps and the Bergdorf Valley, Italy

it, they deemed themselves secure.” “It would cost them little effort to hurl headlong down the precipices anyone who should attempt to scale them in order to reach the entrance of the cavern.

“But a device of their pursuers rendered all these precautions and defenses vain. Ascending the mountain on the other side, and approaching the cave from above, the soldiers were let down by ropes from the precipice overhanging the entrance to the grotto. The platform in front was thus secured. The Vaudois might have cut the ropes, and dispatched their foes as they were being lowered one by one; but the boldness of the maneuver would seem to have paralyzed them. They retreated into the cavern to find in it their grave. Seeing the danger of permitting his men to follow them into the depths of their hiding-place, the general adopted the easier and safer method of piling up at its entrance all the wood he could collect and setting fire to it. A huge volume of black smoke began to roll into the cave, leaving to the unhappy inmates the miserable alternative of rushing out and falling by the sword that waited for them, or of remaining in the interior to be stifled by the murky vapor. Some rushed out, and were massacred; but the greater part remained until death slowly approached them by suffocation. When the cavern was afterward examined, there were found in it four hundred infants, suffocated in their cradles or in the arms of their dead mothers. Altogether there perished in this cavern more than three thousand Vaudois, including the entire population of the valley of Loyse.”

This one circumstance out of many of a similar character will give something of an idea of what the Waldenses endured for the truth’s sake. Terror, mourning, and death everywhere followed in the footsteps of their persecutors. Whole villages were given to the flames. Nor could the caves, as we have seen, afford any protection to the multitudes who sought refuge in them. When the fire kindled at the mouth of these retreats was extinguished, “all was silent within.”

One can hardly imagine the indescribable feelings with which, after contemplating such scenes, we looked upon the cave now before us. After exploring it quite thoroughly, we climbed still higher, upon the rocks above it, and there bowed in a season of prayer. Jesus seemed very near while we pleaded with him to imbue us with more of the spirit of true devotion and firm adherence to principle that had led so many in these valleys in times past to lay down their lives for the truth’s sake. . . .

We would gladly have remained longer, climbed from height to height, entered the dwellings, and spoken with the people; but we had not time or strength to go farther. As we slowly made our way down the rocky path by the side of a rushing stream, we could but wonder how many pilgrim feet had trod this rugged path before us in the hope of finding an asylum from the wrath of their oppressors. . . .

The next day after our trip to Bobbio we visited an ancient fortress, which is built on a height a short distance from Torre Pellice. Here we found a large open space inclosed by walls within walls, also extensive buildings which were formerly used as a monastery. Within the inclosure is a cave. This we entered, and found ourselves in a room about eight feet square. The walls of this room were covered with a thick, green moss, on which drops of water glistened like pearls. From this room there were openings into two underground tunnels. One of these led down to the village, into a building formerly used as a convent; the other to a Catholic church in another part of the town. Here the secret workings of the mystery of iniquity had been carried on. Here many precious souls had lost their lives, and left their bones to testify of their faith. *But the history of their sufferings will be made known only when every secret thing shall be revealed.* The Judgment alone will bring to light the cruelties practiced in connection with these fortified heights.

There is no question as to whose banner those ranked under who thus persecuted the saints. Their master, Satan, alone could instigate men to inflict such terrible cruelties, such intense sufferings, such excruciating agony, upon their fellow-men. Those ages of cruel restriction of liberty of conscience are now in the past; but, we inquire, how long before Satan will, through his devices, again bring upon God’s people a time of trouble? Satan is a deceiver, a murderer, and *his power will be felt in the near future by those who love and fear God.*

If their voices could be heard, what a history the everlasting mountains surrounding these valleys could give of the sufferings of God’s people because of their faith! *What a history of the visits of angels unrecognized by these Christian fugitives!* Again and again have angels talked with men, as man speaketh with a friend, and *led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful, and, carrying their minds above the tops of the highest mountains, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which the overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne.*

What valuable lessons these pilgrims and strangers must have learned in the friendly asylum of the rocks! As they climb the steep mountain paths, they have in mind, not the homes they have left, although they still hope to possess them again; but they are looking for a home so high that the highest peak of the Alps cannot reach it,—a home with their heavenly Father in the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for them, from which they will never be driven. The bitter venom of the dragon cannot reach them there. Therefore they can well afford to leave their earthly treasures, to grope their way among dark and crooked paths, and to be inclosed in rocky chambers, away

from the light of day, if by this means they can attain that home among the blest,—a home not made with-hands, eternal in the heavens.

In their lonely retreats they often met their Redeemer and conversed with him, as did the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. He would there open to them the sublime truths of his word, and strengthen them in their determination not to put confidence in false guides, but to obey and worship Him only who made and governs the world, “He sees and knows everything,” they continually repeated to themselves. “He will hear our prayers, and attend unto our wants. He who feedeth the ravens will not leave us to perish.” Thus their words of faith cheered themselves and others, and their trials and perplexities only drove them nearer to God and increased their faith.

Such was the character, such the motives, of the Waldenses of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Alas, how changed are this people now! The spirit which animated their fathers, and led them to contend for pure Bible truth, seems to have slumbered; the light which shone from their ancestors no longer shines from them. Religious declension has marked the faith and practice of this once God-fearing people. Many dissembled to conceal their faith, and by thus compromising their religion have become corrupted. It is the old story repeated. Men forget the scenes of most hallowed interest which kept alive their lofty aspirations, and because of hardships they cease to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Scriptures. When they should be advancing, they are retrograding. . . .

As we go from these valleys, it is with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow,—of joy because there ever existed a people who were not afraid, even many years before the first gleamings of the Reformation, to stand in defense of Bible truth; of sorrow because so few of their descendants manifest a desire to continue to walk in the light as it shines from the word of God. (*Ibid.*, pp. 239–249; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

God’s People Today

The Waldenses were the “people of God in past ages,” and we are the people of God in the last days. Will we have a similar fate as the Waldenses? Many will. The Waldenses were martyred for their faith, yet they had an incomplete knowledge of truth, as has had every other person (except Jesus) martyred for his or her faith. A few, or many, things were, innocently enough, not understood by God’s people through the ages, but God knows the heart of each of his children and looks with tender pity upon them. The Waldenses, for example, ascribed to the Apostolic Creed which includes the doctrine of the trinity. Most (some say all) honored Sunday as the Sabbath. Throughout the ages, there has been some element of truth every group of believing saints has lacked, and now God has his eye on our time and on each one of us. Will there be an element of truth missing in our body of

belief? If so, we will, if we are true at heart, have no option but to go the way of the Waldenses because God cannot honor a people as the 144,000 will be honored for eternity if they believe any type of error. Light has abundantly shined on our path, and no excuse can be made for our ignorance. God has high, supremely high, expectations of his people today, and they—of all who have ever lived—will be privileged to vindicate him and his unchanging law and the beauty of his character and his government before worlds unknown, during a time of trouble heretofore unseen, and this can only be done because his end-time people have no guile or error in their mouths. Truth, brothers and sisters, is champion! We must love it, cherish it, search for it, and never turn our backs on an iota of it. The last generation is privileged to know all the truth that has ever been revealed to mankind. May they, who stand on the threshold of eternity, walk in that truth and thus let their lights shine to all in the universe.

So long as the people of God preserve their fidelity to him, so long as they cling by living faith to Jesus, they are under the protection of heavenly angels, and Satan will not be permitted to exercise his hellish arts upon them to their destruction. *But those who separate themselves from Christ by sin are in great peril.* If they continue to disregard the requirements of God, they know not how soon he may give them over to Satan, and permit him to do to them according to his will. . . .

In their lonely retreats they [the Waldenses] often met their Redeemer and conversed with him, as did the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. He would there open to them the sublime truths of his word, and strengthen them in their determination not to put confidence in false guides, but to obey and worship Him only who made and governs the world . . . (Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, p. 243)

Satan is now more earnestly engaged in playing the game of life for souls than at any previous time; and unless we are constantly on our guard, he will establish in our hearts, pride, love of self, love of the world, and many other evil traits. He will also use every possible device to unsettle our faith in God and in the truths of his word. If we have not a deep experience in the things of God, if we have not a thorough knowledge of his word, we shall be beguiled to our ruin by the errors and sophistries of the

enemy. False doctrines will sap the foundations of many, because they have not learned to discern truth from error. *Our only safeguard against the wiles of Satan is to diligently study the Scriptures; to have an intelligent understanding of the reasons of our faith; and to faithfully perform every known duty.* The indulgence of one known sin will cause weakness and darkness, and subject us to fierce temptation. . . .

There have been times since the third angel's message was first proclaimed, when angels in the form of human beings have appeared to men, and conversed with them as they did with Abraham of old. *When the complaints of Satan are entered against the servants of God, angels are often sent down to investigate their course, sometimes conversing with men unbeknown to them. They sometimes question those in error, until they tell all that is in their hearts, and then these angels bear their report back to heaven, relating things just as they exist.* . . .

The work of overcoming is a great work. Shall we take hold of it with energy and perseverance? Unless we do, our "filthy garments" will not be taken from us. We need never expect that these will be torn from us violently; we must first show a desire to rid ourselves of them. *We must seek to separate sin from us, relying upon the merits of the blood of Christ; and then in the day of affliction, when the enemy presses us, we shall walk among the angels.* They will be like a wall of fire about us; and we shall one day walk with them in the city of God.

When tempted to sin, let us remember that Jesus is pleading for us in the heavenly sanctuary. *When we put away our sins and come to him in faith, he takes our names in his lips and presents them to his Father,* saying, "I have graven them upon the palms of my hands; I know them by name." And the command goes forth to the angels to protect them. **Then** [notice this occurs only if sin has been put away] *in the day of fierce trial he will say, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."* What are the chambers in which they are to hide? They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Everyone must stand the test for himself.

There has never been a time when the people of God have had greater need to claim his promises than now. Let the hand of faith pass through the darkness, and grasp the arm of infinite power. While we speak of the necessity of separating from sin, remember that Christ came to our world to save sinners, and that "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." *It is our privilege to believe that his blood is able to cleanse us from every spot and stain of sin. We must not limit the power of the Holy One of Israel.* He wants us to come to him just as



Marco Bernardini/flickr

Varaita Valley, Piedmont, Italy

we are, sinful and polluted. His blood is efficacious. I entreat you not to grieve his Spirit by continuing in sin. If you fall under temptation, do not become discouraged. This promise comes ringing down along the line to our time: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I feel that for this one promise a continual song of thanksgiving ought to go forth from the lips of mortals. Let us gather up these precious jewels of promise, and when Satan accuses us of our great sinfulness, and tempts us to doubt the power of God to save, let us repeat the words of Christ, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (*Ibid.*, pp. 154–158)

Whether we walk in the steps of the Waldenses or in the path carved by the 144,000, God will be our strength and our salvation.

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isaiah 12:2).

Onycha Holt

European Trip Report 2012

by Allen Stump

The last part of September and the first part of October found me in Europe for two camp meetings in France and for visits to Moldova and Ukraine. This report is written in the spirit of Acts 14:27, to encourage our brothers and sisters.

Two years ago I visited Ukraine for meetings and made contact with a Seventh-day Adventist conference church that was in the midst of breaking away from the conference over issues of organization. Our meeting time was short, but we agreed to try to set aside several days of study, if I could return to examine the biblical teaching on God and to search other matters. It was with this in mind that I accepted the invitation to be in Europe for these meetings and for the camp meetings in France, organized by the brethren there. During this time I planned to also visit groups of believers in Moldova.

However, God, in his wisdom, had other plans. Arrangements were made for all the meetings, and I had left America. However, while waiting for a connecting flight in Paris, I learned that the father of the pastor in Ukraine had become sick and the pastor had gone to Italy to be with him. The meetings would have to be rescheduled to another time! I felt that this was quite a blow to the message, but trusted in the truth of Romans 8:28. Only later did I realize how true God is to his word.

Southern France

Our meetings began in southern France, with meetings Brother Marc Fury, with the help of his wife, Elisabeth, had arranged the previous year. These meetings, along with meetings scheduled the following weekend in the area south of the Paris, received some interesting advertisement. The French edition of the *Adventist Review* had published a notice about these meetings to warn the church members against attending. Those organizing the meetings were called “The Friends of Michael Servitus,” making reference to Michael Servitus, the non-trinitarian John Calvin had was



Henri Rasolofomasoandro

instrumental in causing to be burned at the stake in Geneva during the year 1553. The *Adventist Review* notice stated (translated from the French by Brother Fury):

From time to time, surprising meetings take place on the fringes of the Adventist church. This is notably the case

the next month of September with this camp-meeting at the Camping de la Cascade on the theme “Christ Triumphant” with different speakers (Allen Stump, Henri Rasolofomasoandro, Germain Trival, Elie Stragapède, Antoine Thomas). The same team will present at the end of September at the Rocheton, in Seine et Marne, a seminar about “God ? and only God !?”, one more way to manifest one’s own antitrinitarian certitudes and one’s incomprehensions about the official Church with givers of lessons of orthodoxy...



This notice actually gave the names of all the speakers except Marc Fury. Perhaps this is because Brother Marc has a brother who is a minister within the mainline church and his



Germain Trival

family is well-known in France, and the editor of the *Review* may not have wished to embarrass Marc’s family with him being a *dark sheep*.

I was told that the editor who wrote the notice declared he was going to some of the meetings to confront the so-called heresy head-on. His coming we would certainly have appreciated, but he never showed up.

These meetings were a real blessing to many. The theme was “Christ Triumphant.” I was glad to see brothers and sisters whom I had met last year or before, as well as some new



Baptism in France

believers. We even had a sweet family fly from the island of Martinique to be with us. They had read the book *The Foundation of Our Faith* and had learned the truth about God through it. They have a music ministry that they have combined

with visiting nursing homes to be a blessing to the residents. I was certainly blessed by their testimony.

Another new brother, John, attended. John had been an Adventist for many years, but his life had become darkened with sin, and he had been studying and seeking change. He was rebaptized at these meetings, and he rededicated his life to Christ. John speaks very fluent English, as well as his native French, and he helped to provide translation for me and other non-French speakers who understood English, including our *Italian Band*, a group led by Brother Maurizio Esposito, who had come from Italy to the meetings.

But I should tell you about Sister Alice (not her real name). Sister Alice was sitting in deep interest near the front in one of my meetings. As I was speaking on Christ being triumphant in our lives, she was obviously interested. I felt the need to make a call for personal salvation and asked any who would like to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour to stand. Without waiting further, Alice rose, with tears in her eyes. I later learned that Alice had been exposed to the Advent message for six years, but had never been baptized. She was at these meetings with her friend, Robert (not his real name). He had been baptized before, but had fallen away into sin. He too wished to renew his commitment to Jesus Christ. It was a great blessing to watch Brother Marc Fury baptize them on Sabbath afternoon. Then it was my pleasure to conduct a simple, but beautiful, wedding service for them Sunday after the last meeting of the camp! What a great way to end the camp meeting!

Moldova

After the southern French camp meeting, I boarded a bus, caught a train to Paris, and then flew to Moldova to meet with believers there. Brother Sasha Railean and wife, Ira, were waiting for me and were my hosts during my time in their country. We were able to have some excellent studies in Moldova, including a special meeting over Skype with a sister who had accepted the lunar-based Sabbath, but was open to discussing the matter. We spend over two hours studying the biblical Sabbath and demonstrating from both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy how the teaching of a lunar-based Sabbath was not in accordance with inspiration. This sister was



Sasha is eager to begin.

able to see how she had misunderstood the Scriptures, and she was very happy to acknowledge that she had been wrong and declared that she would keep the Sabbath of the Bible.

Sister Ira was my good translator during our meetings. She was to me as Aaron was to Moses in Egypt. She and Sasha had helped to arrange meetings, including the chance to visit in a high school, where Sister Ira taught a few classes on life issues. In one class I was asked to speak about discrimination and why it was wrong. This class of students aged fifteen to sixteen came dressed with a punk look like most people their age; however, they showed great respect for Ira, whom they have come to greatly appreciate, and they showed great interest as we discussed the basis on what make discrimination wrong. In another class we discussed the foundation of what constitutes right versus wrong.



Students at the school where Ira had taught

One evening we had a meeting with a local Adventist pastor, his wife, and four church elders. The pastor said that he was interested in knowing what I believed and why it was important to me. This meeting lasted over two hours, and the pastor was always polite and kind and even positive, at times,



Home church group in Ukraine

to what was being discussed. While not fully agreeing, he certainly showed a kind, Christlike spirit. I wish I could say the same for the elders. Sadly they were not so generous and interrupted me continually and raised objections over the



Pastor Andrerervich's church in Ukraine

clearest of matters. However, God always provided a good answer for all their questions. At the end of our meeting, one of the elders said he wanted to ask me a question but was sure I would not answer. I suggested he should ask anyway. He then asked "Are you a Jesuit?" I found this question to be almost funny, but tried to answer seriously. I responded by noting first that the doctrine of the trinity, which the elder had been supporting, was the central doctrine of the Catholic faith and upon it all the other teachings of the Catholic Church were based. I told him that I was speaking against this doctrine, something no Jesuit would do. I then told him that he was the one supporting this Catholic doctrine and that perhaps he was the Jesuit. To this one of his friends said, "He put us in our place!"

While in Moldova I encouraged our brothers and sisters in health reform. Many of these brethren still use various kinds of animal products and a free use of vegetable oils. When I noted that Adventist people still have heart attacks and cancer, they all had to acknowledge that truth. Most seemed genuinely interested in wanting to know what they could do to improve their health. At one home meeting, after our discussion, the family wanted to have a meal and took special care to have part of it prepared in such a way that it met all the reforms we had discussed.

Northern France

After most of the week in Moldova, I traveled back to France for another series of meetings during the weekend. These meetings were held near Melun, south of Paris. These meeting focused on the identity and personality of God. We met several new believers and potential believers. I spoke on the biblical doctrine of God and about Jesus and



Marc Fury



Elisabeth Fury

and the Holy Spirit, as well as what Ellen White had to say about God. Other speakers brought out complementary truths, such as Brother Marc Fury's presentation on the subject of the alpha and omega of deadly heresies.

These meetings also had a lively and interesting question and answer session, where everyone could submit any question and the panel of the speakers would attempt to provide biblical answers. Many of the questions directly or



Some members of the church in Ukraine

indirectly dealt with the issue of what composed the true church of Christ and how the individual members were to relate to that body. For example, one question asked about where tithe should be returned. Should it be given to an apostate church and ask God's blessing upon it, or should we look elsewhere? We first noted that Malachi 3:8-10 states:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, Even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be meat in mine house, And prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, If I will not open you the windows of heaven, And pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

This verse is very clear, but now the question remained as to where the storehouse was. A storehouse was where food was to be kept, and Jesus helps us to further understand this in Matthew 24:45, 46, where he says:

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

The faithful servant is the one who is ministering meat in due season. If the truth is not being proclaimed, then it would be folly to place one's tithe toward the support of those servants who feed the household of God food that is not nourishing and that is even poisonous. The tithe should be returned to where the truth, as it is in Jesus, is being ministered.

Ukraine

After finishing these meetings it was back to the airport in Paris for a trip to Ukraine. As we noted earlier, we had planned on having meetings in northern Ukraine, but now we were able to have meetings in Kiev and in southern Ukraine, instead. In these meetings we were able to meet with new and known brethren and also to have a very interesting meeting with a church of Sabbath-keepers who believed in the truth about God! The pastor of this group, Ivan Andrerervich, is a very kind man who has earned his livelihood as a master woodworker. His home contained evidence enough that he was no novice at his work! He lived under the communist system as a youth and was now so happy that people could openly worship God in freedom.

Upon arriving at Pastor Andrerervich's house, we were made very welcome, and we began to study the Bible. The pastor had questions about what we believed and especially about the sanctuary and Ellen White. It was clear that we had differences on the concept of God's throne, on the veils in the sanctuary, and on other matters, but all was shared in a kind, Christlike spirit.

After a couple of hours we had to quit, as there was a special meeting at their church that had been called, since we were to be their guests that evening. I had heard earlier that I

would be given a chance to speak to this church. After openly discussing some of our differences, though, I was concerned that the invitation would not be still open; however, before leaving his home, Pastor Andrerervich asked me if I would like to speak to the church. "Of course," I said, "I would love to address your people." So off we went and soon came to a beautiful little building that was tastefully decorated as the chapel. We had songs and testimonies, and then I was given time to share anything upon my heart. I wanted to feed the people and yet be careful not to offend Pastor Andrerervich, who had graciously opened his flock to me, despite some serious differences on doctrine. God blessed me to know just what to say, as I spoke on Colossians 2:10 and being complete in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Sister Ira did a wonderful job of translating my words and expressions to the brothers and sisters. All seemed to be greatly blessed, and the pastor was well-pleased, too.

After the service I was able to meet with and to talk to some of the people. One of these experiences was perhaps the highlight of the whole trip for me. During the sharing time of the service, a young girl, who was an orphan, sang two songs. While I could not understand the words, it was easy to understand her sweet heart of love for Jesus. After she finished and was going back to her pew, I motioned for her to come to me and as best I could, I thanked her for her efforts and gave her a soft hug. Later on the way out, she gave me a small white teddy bear as a gift! Here was an orphan girl giving me one of her few toys, and how could I refuse her gift of love? I took it and tried to spend some time with her and with some of the other young people.

On Sabbath we were able to meet in Kiev for both Friday night and Sabbath day meetings. During these meetings we studied a lot on the sanctuary and the final atonement. These meetings helped many to clarify issues that they had not understood and presented the beauty of the gospel in a clearer light than they had before understood. One brother, Nicholas, decided to dedicate his time to the work of sharing the gospel. He certainly has a wonderful heart that is willing to do whatever is needed. To be able to attend one meeting, he had to accept a ride in the closed trunk of the car I was traveling in, for lack of room in the seating area. But to Brother Nic, this did not seem to matter. Please pray for him, Sasha, Ira, Marc, Elisabeth, and others in Europe, as they continue to lift up the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

I certainly wish I could tell you all the stories and experiences that I was able to be experience, but time and space limit what I can write. I know that many were blessed by this trip, but I am sure that nobody was blessed as much as I was. That is a lesson for each of us. The Bible says, "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Proverbs 11:25). May this be the experience of each one—that as we share to water others, we will be watered ourselves.

Allen Stump

NEW YORK CONFERENCE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
Union Springs, N. Y.

H. W. CARR
SUPT. LOCKPORT DISTRICT
164 BAXTON STREET
LOCKPORT, N. Y.

Jan. 24 1935.

FROM THE FILE CABINET
OF HISTORY

Eld. W.C. White,
St. Helena, Calif.

Dear Elder White:

Your recent reminder of the efficient provision for carrying forward Sr. Whites work, and the gems of thought which accompanied your announcement is very much appreciated, "She being dead yet speaketh" God has lead this people on, and is still leading, through His chosen servant, for which we praise Him.

In the first paper of Great Controversy, it is stated that the "Father had an associate--An worker...The only being that could enter into all the councils and purposes of God. "The Father wrought by His son in the creation of all heavenly beings...."He holds supremacy over them all." Sin originated with Satan, who next to Christ had been most honored of God, and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven "Next to Christ he was first among the hosts of God. The Son of God had wrought the Fathers will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven. "The Son of God was exalted above Satan as one in power and authority with the Father. Christ created Satan. Eze. 28:15.

It is urged by some of our leaders now that The Holy Spirit is a third person of the same nature of the Father and son, a member of the heavenly trio, cooperative in creation and personally active with the Father and son. For many years I have used these statements of Sr. White in combatting false teachings relative to defining the Holy Spirit.

will you kindly tell me what you understand was your mother's position in reference to the personality, the Holy Spirit.

Does Sister Whites writings any where teach that prayer should only be addressed to the Father, or that we should not address Christ in prayer, only through the Father?

Does she anywhere tell what that power is that shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain? *Dea. 11:45*

I know Brother White you would not depart from your mother's teachings, and that you have as perfect an understanding of them as any one. I shall appreciate your opinion very much.

Assuring you of the high esteem and respect I have had for my childhood, your father, mother and family,

I am very truly yours in this blessed faith.

H. W. Carr

**NEXT MONTH:
ELDERWHITE'S RESPONSE**

How Important Are Fathers?

By Onycha Holt

Several months ago we wrote on how the mother's lifestyle affects the epigenes she transfers to her unborn child, and recently Judith Shulevitz has reported on how the epigenes of men affect their offspring. She stated that the children's bodies and minds will reflect the lifestyle choices the father has made over the years. This includes what he has eaten, the toxins to which he has been exposed, the traumas and repeated stress he has experienced, and the poverty or helplessness he has felt. All these experiences, and more, are passed on to his children by epigenes.

“*Epi* in Greek means *above* or *beyond*. Think of epigenetics as the way our bodies modify their genetic makeup. Epigenetics describes how genes are turned on or off, in part through compounds that hitch on top of DNA—or else jump off it—determining whether it makes the proteins that tell our bodies what to do” (Judith Shulevitz, “Why Fathers Really Matter,” *The New York Times*, September 9, 2012).

The importance of epigenetic behavior is illustrated by the work of three Swedish researchers who studied the local records of Overkalix, a northern corner of Sweden that was cut off from the rest of the world until the twentieth century. Prior to the twentieth century, Overkalix could not be reached at all by road or train or in the winter by boat, due to an always impassable Baltic Sea. This meant that during times of bad harvests, food could not be brought in, and the people starved. When the harvests were good, they overate. The researchers were seeking data about the health of the children and its relationship to the availability of food, and what they uncovered was very interesting. They found that when the men who had eaten poorly when they were 9 to 12 years of age due to poor crops later had sons, those sons had lower than normal rates of heart disease as adults. They also found that when boys ate well during the prepuberty years, their grandsons had higher rates of diabetes.



A Father is important to the whole family.

“When the study appeared in 2002, a British geneticist published an essay speculating that how much a boy ate in prepuberty could permanently reprogram the epigenetic switches that would govern the manufacture of sperm a few years later. And then, in a process so intricate that no one agrees yet how it happens but probably has something to do with the germline (the reproductive cells that are handed down to children and to children's children), those reprogrammed switches are transferred to his sons and his sons' sons” (*Ibid.*).
Continued on page 20, column 2



The Sugar Trap

Just as *Science News* magazine has reported on the chemicals produced in rats on a fatty liquid diet, so has Tara Parker-Pope described the chemical reactions in the brains of rats fed a high sugar diet, as reported by Princeton University and University of Florida. These rats show an “opiate-like withdrawal when their sugar is taken away—including chattering teeth, tremoring forepaws and the shakes” (*The New York Times*, September 20, 2012). Even more interesting is the fact that when the rats were allowed to resume eating sugar two weeks later “they pressed the food lever so frantically that they consumed 23 percent more than before” (*Ibid.*).



Researchers at the Oregon Research Institute have found that people who eat ice cream, for example, may need to eat it in increasing amounts in order for their brains to send out the signal that they have had enough and should stop; in other words, sugar seems to be addictive—more and more of it is needed to get the same effect! This is just another reason to adopt a whole-foods approach to eating.

The human body is designed to deal with whole foods, not processed foods, and food companies are manipulating their products to get us hooked, according to Dr. Kelly Brownell, director of Yale's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity—“We don't abuse lettuce, turnips and oranges. But when a highly processed food is eaten, the body goes hay-wire.” “With these foods, personal will and good judgment get overridden. People want these foods, dream about these foods, and crave them.”

How about you? Let's not lose the control of our wills and our good judgment, for we will sorely need them in the crisis ahead.
Onycha Holt

Youth's Corner

Necessity of Thorough Bible Study

We are fast entering the perils of the last days, when views which conflict with the word of God will be presented by men of giant intellects, and we ought to be able to show the falsity of their claims. Our children also should be thoroughly furnished with Bible truth, so that they will not be moved by every new doctrine that is presented in their hearing.

Many parents do not see the necessity that their children should be so particular in learning their Sabbath-school lessons, and often neglect to give them the proper assistance of encouragement. The great object of thoroughness in the study of the Bible is that they may understand why they believe as they do, and that when the test shall come and the question be asked, "Will you obey God, or will you yield to the requirements of the world?" they will decide to serve God, because by studying his word they have learned to love him and his truth.



We desire that the youth shall be able to say, We have become familiar with the Scriptures, and we see that it is of the highest importance that we be obedient to the truth of God found in his word. We want the little children to understand the Bible, and grow up in the knowledge of the truth. And we as parents do not wish to be found among those who

do not see the necessity of their children's understanding the Scriptures for themselves, and who are therefore negligent and cause their children to be negligent; but we want to be in earnest in these matters, and search the Scriptures, and see that our children search them. Christ said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." We should become firm in the truth, the word of God, which

testifies of Him in whom all our hopes of everlasting life are centered. If you would know how to imitate the spotless life and character of Christ, obtain a knowledge of him as presented in the word of God.

Continued on page 20, column 1

Junk Food and Your Brain

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are" (Luke 18:11). In this story, Jesus has warned his followers against having a proud attitude. This pride can take form in many ways, one of which is connected to health. When I first became a Seventh-day Adventist, I learned of the health message and being in a small conservative church where all seemed interested in health reform, I assumed that there could never be an overweight Seventh-day Adventist! I was surprised as I began to visit other Adventist churches and to attend different Adventist functions. I began to think *I am glad I am not like them!* But friends, except for the grace of God, we are all the drunkard in the gutter or the obese person in the checkout line with the cases of cola, packages of bacon, and boxes of doughnuts.

Worldwide one out of every five people is overweight, and half of them are obese. It is much worse in America, where two out of three people are overweight, and half of these people are clinically obese. Even among Seventh-day Adventists, who have been given a wonderful health message, are many overweight members. Why?

Of course, it is true that Adventists have fewer heart attacks and less cancer than the general public, but saying this reminds me of Paul's counsel:

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but

they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. (2 Corinthians 10:12)

The key is that we cannot afford to compare ourselves to a world or a nation that is already extremely sick. Such comparisons mean very little. Yes, Adventists have less heart attacks and less cancer, but we are far from eliminating such diseases from our people. We can say that many of our people abstain from eating meat, and that would be true, but we still find too much disease, and even obesity, within this group. Narrowing things down some, we know that statistically about ten percent of Adventists in the United States abstain from using any animal products, but they, too, still have heart disease and cancer. Why? God promised his people that if they would obey him and follow his ways, he would give them good health and not bring the diseases of the Egyptians upon them (Deuteronomy 7:15). It is known from the examination of mummies that heart disease and cancer were some of the diseases of Egypt. So what is wrong?

You can eat a vegan diet and still be very unhealthy. How? By eating lots of vegan junk food. Now what is a junk food? "Oh," you say, "that's easy; junk food is usually refined foods that have lots of empty calories—calories without any nutrition." Right! And if we ask most people to list the number one junk food, we usually hear *sugar* or *white sugar* because sugar

has lots of calories, but no nutrition. One tablespoon of sugar has fifty calories, twelve grams of carbohydrate and no fiber, omega 3 fatty acids, vitamins, or minerals.

This information is terrible, but what if I told you about a food that has two and one half times the calories of sugar and no protein or essential amino acids? This food also has no fiber and only a trace of omega 3 fatty acids. In fact, it is so low in omega 3 that one would have to ingest eight ounces of it to meet the normal requirements. There is one and a half times more saturated fat in a tablespoon of this food than in a fourth pound of chicken. This food had no minerals and only one trace vitamin. Regardless of what people might proclaim, the numbers do not lie. Surely this food qualifies as a junk food. What is this food? Can you guess?

Before we discuss this refined food, I want to share with you some news from the lead article of the October 6, 2012, *Science News* magazine. *Science News* is the magazine of The Society for Science & the Public. *Science News* is a very reputable magazine, with top-notch articles dealing with cutting-edge science news. The lead article for the October 6 issue is entitled “Tricks Foods Play.” The cover declares that “a busted hunger meter can lead to overeating” because our systems are “stuck on empty.”

So what makes our systems stick on empty, with an appetite that can seem to have no end? Interestingly, the article states:

New animal experiments by [Joseph] Hibbeln and his colleagues have recently shown that the body uses a major constituent in most vegetable oils to make its own versions of the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. Called endocannabinoids, these natural compounds play a role in heightening appetite. So overproducing them unnecessarily boosts hunger, similarly to how pot triggers the munchies (*SN*: 6/19/10, p. 16). (*Science News*, October 6, 2012, p. 25. The entire article can be read at: http://www.sciencenews.org/view/feature/id/345277/title/Tricks_Foods_Play.)

Janet Raloff, the author of “Tricks Foods Play,” states that animal studies have shown that contents in vegetable oil are linked to endocannabinoids. The linoleic acid in the oil especially affects various parts of the body, creating multiple effects.

Diets high in vegetable oil affect the body’s ability to maintain its proper weight.

The central role of endocannabinoids in the nervous system’s regulation of food intake has been known for at least a decade, Hibbeln says. When endocannabinoids bind to cellular structures known as receptors, brain tissues release dopamine, a messenger molecule that elicits a pleasant feeling. Until this reward system turns off, an urge to eat persists (*SN*: 6/19/10, p. 16).

When a person downs too much linoleic acid, it is as if the reward-seeking switch in the brain gets stuck in the “on” position. The impact—at least in Hibbeln’s mouse study—is visible to the naked eye. (*Ibid.*, p. 26)

In other words, you are getting a buzz on oil, even if you do not realize it. Your body is actually addicted to oil and may require four to six weeks of abstaining from processed oil to get over the craving.

It has been said that one meal does not make or break your health, but this may not be true. One meal might just have a terrible effect upon a person. Interestingly, one area of the brain that is affected by linoleic acid, which is in vegetable oil, is the hypothalamus. Rodents fed a high-fat diet showed changes in their brain tissues, with scarring quickly happening. Michael Schwartz, director of the University of Washington’s Diabetes and Obesity Center of Excellence in Seattle, fed a group of rodents a standard meal for eight weeks to eight months. Schwartz then gave the animals a diet high in fat. What were the results?

Within a day, animals getting the fattier diet, but not the others, showed signs of inflammation in a part of the brain’s hypothalamus known as the arcuate nucleus. When nerve cells here are activated, they drive hunger. As activity dials back, animals eat less, sometimes even losing weight.

Within a week of beginning the fatty diet, rats showed biochemical evidence of ongoing cellular destruction in this brain area. Shortly afterward, the cell damage appeared to subside. Two weeks later the damage returned. (Ibid., p. 27; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

The damage is marked by a proliferation of cells which are called astrocytes. This damage has a significant effect upon eating habits.

As the brain damage became chronic, the arcuate nucleus appeared to lose its sensitivity to hormonal cues about how much body fat exists, Schwartz says. The brain interprets a reduced signal to mean that there is not enough body fat, and thus delays any command to stop eating. “Because you get less bang for the buck when you eat, in terms of satiety,” he says, “you eat bigger meals.” (Ibid., p. 26)

There is also evidence that some of this tissue does not repair itself if it is taken off oil. Apparently, after a certain amount of damage is done, the default network that tells your body it is full and no longer needs food never works completely right again. This is one reason why people who gain and then lose weight find it so hard to keep weight off. It is also a good reason that parents should be very careful with their children’s diets and not allow obesity and overweight to plague their children when young, for they then are setting up a condition from which the child may never fully recover and with which the child will have to abnormally fight for the rest of his or her life.

The problem of a high fat diet in relationship to brain damage was also reported by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, of CNN, who referred to Dr. Schwartz’s work in an article dated January 6,

2012, in which he summarized some of Dr. Schwartz's research:

The researchers also found a 25% reduction in the number of POMC cells in the rodents on a high-fat diet. POMC cells play a critical role in the body's fat control system, helping regulate appetite and prevent excess weight gain.

"Losing those cells would help explain why a new elevated level of body weight would occur," Schwartz says. (<http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2012/01/06/study-high-fat-foods-cause-brain-scarring>)

It should be noted that not all research from rodent models translate to the human condition, but this certainly explains a lot.

If the choice of food was all that was involved here, that would be bad enough, but there is more and this part is not related to rodent studies!

Related work linked obesity in teens with a reduction in the size of an area of the brain known as the orbitofrontal cortex, which plays an important role in inhibiting *all types of behavior*. Compared with lean teens, heavyweights showed *impaired decision making, attention and monitoring of behaviors, and exhibited increased impulsivity*, Antonio Convit of the Nathan S. Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research in Orangeburg, N.Y., and colleagues reported last year in *Obesity*. (*Ibid.*, p. 27)

In other words, rational and moral decision-making ability is inhibited by being overweight and using processed foods, such as oil, and is a contributor to the problem of being overweight.

Connected with oil in causing the body to misinterpret food signals are low-calorie sweeteners. Interestingly, almost two thirds of Americans consume sugar-free foods and beverages, mostly in the form of soft drinks. However, most of the people who drink these beverages gain weight! Apparently "artificial sweeteners might be fueling the obesity epidemic that they had been designed to fight" (*Ibid.*, p. 27). The brain is not able to properly interpret the meal calorie count when using these foods and instead of signaling the brain that the stomach is full, the switch again stays open. At some point the brain realizes that the dietary signal from sweetness is untrustworthy and not indicative of incoming energy, and so "the brain abandons sweetness as a gauge of expected calories" (*Ibid.*, p. 28).

The implications here may extend to not only artificial sweeteners like aspartame or saccharin, but also to super-sweet natural substances like stevia. These too may set up the wrong brain signals. While many proclaim stevia, at least as it is has been used in South America, in small quantities is safe, others claim that when stevia is used in large quantities it causes several problems, including reproductive problems and cancer. Energy metabolism has also been listed as an issue when stevia is consumed more than a few times a day. It could be argued that stevia is a natural substance, but

when taken and refined to make table sweetener, it is a changed food. Vegetable oil could be called natural, but by the time it is processed, it, too, is a changed food. Even marijuana, as commonly used, could be considered natural. Dried and shredded marijuana leaves are far less refined than white sugar, oil, or stevia, but we do not support the use of pot because it could be called *natural*.

Long-term exercise appears to help the body somewhat regulate its weight, even when oil exists in the diet, but it cannot be relied upon to undo all the ill effects of improper diet. And remember that while serious exercise can help reduce overall body fat, its effect upon the fat and plague within the blood stream is minimal. Only a low fat diet high in foods that help the body produce nitric oxide (such as leafy green vegetables) can properly clean out the circulatory system. The best way to avoid heart attacks, strokes, and most cancers is simply to eat a plant-based, whole foods diet, leaving out as much processed food as possible. This plan includes the elimination of processed oil. I know that this is contrary to some recent studies that have suggested using certain oils, both saturated and unsaturated, have health benefits. However, if we will consider the original diet God provided man, processed oil was not a part of that diet. Oil in olives and in other foods was certainly a part of the diet, but just as certainly, processed oil was not a part of the original diet.

Now what do you suppose was the second junk food mentioned at the beginning of the article? Remember this processed food has two and one half times the calories of sugar, no protein or essential amino acids, no fiber, and only a trace of omega 3 fatty acids. One and a half time more saturated fat is present in a tablespoon of this food than in a fourth pound of chicken. Regardless of what people might proclaim, the numbers do not lie. Surely this food qualifies as a junk food. What is this food? You must have guessed! It is olive oil! One tablespoon of olive oil has 120 calories, fourteen grams of fat fourteen percent of which is saturated, no minerals, and only trace omega 3 fatty acids and trace vitamin E.

American people and many people of the world have been educated to believe that olive oil, perhaps coconut oil, or oil from other vegetable substances is actually healthy and good for one's health, and it is true that the body requires a certain amount of oil in the diet to be healthy. What we have not understood is that this amount is much less than what is usually consumed by most people and that it is best consumed in a non-refined state—the package that God provided.

It has been noted that Ellen White spoke of certain benefits to be derived from using olive oil. She is careful to note, however, that the oil should come as it is in the olive.

When properly prepared, olives, like nuts, supply the place of butter and flesh meats. *The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat. It serves as a laxative. Its use will be found beneficial to consumptives,*

and it is healing to an inflamed, irritated stomach. (*Counsels of Diet and Foods*, p. 359)

Ellen White goes so far as to say that olives could be eaten at every meal (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, page 134), but she never has said to use the oil without the rest of the olive. When we eat our fats in the packages that God has provided, we are more likely to eat them in the proper amounts.

While many Seventh-day Adventists have given up animal products, they still consume a great deal of vegetable fat and thus still have overweight issues, with its complications, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Even those who are not overweight run the risk of having high cholesterol levels and are, therefore, prone to disease. The debate continues on whether we should eat olive oil, coconut oil, or some other kind of oil. Some people advocate palm oil, and many denounce canola oil, but I have found the easiest way to decide this matter is to simply avoid all of these oils. You will miss nothing needful in this way, and the freedom that comes from not worrying about what happens to the oil when it is heated in frying or how many saturated calories one is getting is like a breath of fresh air. Furthermore, I have found that food can be just as tasty and appealing when made without processed oils. You can actually eat more cheaply, since the cost of oil, especially extra virgin olive oil, is so high.

The Bible says that “no good thing will he [God] withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psalm 84:11). Anciently the children of Israel were not to eat any fat nor blood (Leviticus 3:17). While the context is clearly animal fat, oil is still a type of fat and when consumed as a processed food is a dangerous food. God knows this and has made many wonderful things that are good to eat and are healthy, too. Why not try him and ask him to cleanse your body and mind from defilement that has occurred in the past and to rebuild your cells into the kind of cells that will best aid in the proper nourishment of your body. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

To help supplement this article, I have included two of my favorite foods that are totally free of processed oil. I am sure you will love them.

Allen Stump

Whole Wheat Bread

Step 1: In a warmed bowl and with a warmed spoon, stir 1 C fairly warm water with 1 teaspoon sweetener and 4 teaspoons yeast. Set in a warm environment to rise.

Step 2: In a Bosch or large mixing bowl place 4.5 cups hot water, 3 tablespoons molasses, 1/2–2/3 cup dry sweetener, 5 tablespoons applesauce (room temperature), 4 teaspoons salt, 1/2 cup gluten flour, and 6 cups whole wheat flour. (I freshly ground Prairie Gold wheat. This type of wheat does not produce a bread does that is heavy and coarse.) Mix well. You can use liquid sweetener if you wish, but cut back on the hot water a little if you do.

Step 3: When yeast has risen well, add it to the Bosch or bowl, mix well, cover and let mixture stand 15 minutes.

Step 4: Mix in more of the Prairie Gold flour until the sides of the bowl are clean. Knead eleven minutes.

Step 5: Shape into four or five loaves, place in bread pans, place pans in warm oven (keep oven warm, but not hot) and let dough rise until it is ready to spring (about thirty to forty minutes, depending upon the temperature of the oven).

Step 6: Bake 350 degrees F for about twenty-five minutes.



Bread made with this recipe is great with fruit spread or honey.

Split Pea Soup

- ↪ 1 cup dry split peas (do not need to be soaked)
- ↪ 1–1 ½ quart(s) water, depending upon the desired thickness
- ↪ 1/2 cup celery
- ↪ 1/2 cup carrots
- ↪ 1/2 cup diced onion or 1 t. onion powder
- ↪ 1/2 t. garlic powder
- ↪ 1 T. mock chicken seasoning
- ↪ 1/2 t. salt
- ↪ 1 T. sweet basil

SIMMER . . . peas, onions, celery, carrots, salt, and basil in water until tender (forty-five to sixty minutes).

BLEND . . . using a stick mixer.

ADD . . . seasonings and enjoy.



This soup is great any day of the year!

YouTube Channel: We have recently been granted permission to upload videos to our YouTube account that are longer than fifteen minutes. This allows us to post whole sermons, as well as shorter presentations. We have just started



posting longer videos, and we will be posting more soon. This will include sermons, children’s stories, and youth Sabbath school events, including the popular science demonstrations. Our URL is: http://www.youtube.com/user/swiftkayak?feature=results_main.



“Youth’s Corner,” continued from page 16

The apostle says, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” If, therefore, you would be thus thoroughly furnished, and “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear,” study the Bible with all diligence.

The teachers in our Sabbath-schools should be God-fearing men and women who can have an interest in the spiritual condition of the members of their classes, as well as see that they have good lessons. They should be connected with God, and should feel it a duty to pray with and for each pupil in their classes.

The Sabbath-school teacher who is faithful in little things is preparing himself for a higher responsibility. We should be faithful in everything. It is a sin to forget. Many are heard again and again to excuse themselves for some gross error, by saying that they forgot. Have they not intellectual powers? and is it not a duty to discipline their minds to be retentive? It is a sin to neglect. If you form a habit of negligence you will find at last that you have neglected your own soul’s salvation, and are unready for the kingdom of God.

Parents and teachers, let us awake to our duty; let us sense the responsibility of our position, and take hold of the Sabbath-school work with more zeal and earnestness, that God can approve of our efforts, and that our children may lay up sound knowledge, and with us be prepared for the future immortal life. (Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor*, February 19, 1879)

“How Important are Fathers?” continued from page 15

This is amazing in its consequences, but we have always known this, at least as far as mothers are concerned (Judges 13:3, 4, 14), but now we are learning that the father’s epigenes have an effect on the character of his child. The choices even a male child makes affect his children and grandchildren.

Ms. Shulevitz listed more examples—male rats that were starved before mating produced offspring with less blood sugar and with altered levels of corticosterone; men who chewed betel nuts were more likely to have children and grandchildren with weight problems and heart disease; mice exposed five minutes a day for ten days to an aggressive, violent mouse who tore at them showed symptoms of mouse depression, anxiety, and stress and produced offspring that tended to overreact to social stress, to be anxious and depressed, and to avoid other mice.



Fathers’ lives impact their sons’ lives in many ways.

What we do does affect our offspring. We have no control over the genetic composition we receive, but the piggyback epigenes we transfer to our offspring are malleable and are affected by what we eat and drink and by the activities in which we engage. Let us choose now to live wholesome, godly lives, not only for ourselves, but for the benefit of future generations.

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