

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

Vol. 22, No. 2

Straight and Narrow

February 2013



“Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God.”

Weapon of Control

by David Sims

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

The focus and purpose of this study is to better understand how Satan gains control of people. We are going to be unmasking the deceiver and finding out how we can defeat his chief weapon against us. Satan uses many weapons, but we are focusing on a specific weapon.

In 2 Timothy 1:7, we read about fear: “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” The enemy has gained control of people’s actions by using this tactic of fear. He implants fear in people’s hearts. We read in Luke 21:26 what the state of things is going to be like when Jesus returns: “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” The world is going to be in such a state of fear that it will be completely under the enemy’s control. For an example, John 19:38, 39 tell us how the disciples’ behavior was motivated by fear, but not necessarily in a wrong manner: “And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.” Joseph of Arimathaea had, for some time, been a disciple of Jesus, yet it tells us here that he was so secretly because of his *fear of the Jews*. In John 20:19 we read: “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” Here is an example of how the disciples kept the doors shut for fear of the Jews. They did not want the Jews to know that they were meeting there and what they were doing.

In our day and age, the aftermath of 9-11 has given various entities the power to play on our fears and gain control over us. We have examples of this in the Patriot Act which:

... as a response to the terrorist attacks of September 11th, significantly reduced restrictions in law enforcement agencies’ gathering of intelligence within the United States; expanded the Secretary of the Treasury’s authority to regulate financial transactions, particularly those involving foreign individuals and entities; and broadened the discretion of law enforcement and immigration authorities in detaining and deporting immigrants suspected of terrorism-related acts. The act also expanded the definition of terrorism to include domestic terrorism, thus

enlarging the number of activities to which the USA PATRIOT Act’s expanded law enforcement powers can be applied. (*Wikipedia entry: Patriot Act*)

The Patriot Act strips United States citizens of certain rights that are supposed to be protected by the first and fourth amendments, if there is a suspicion that they might be enemies of the state. The creation of Homeland Security and the tremendous empowerment of the TSA under it have also cut liberties.

Seven years after 9–11, the financial crash of 2008 occurred which has been capitalized upon to cause people to fear. Financial fear is something which drives a great number of people. Hitler used the tactic of fear in World War II, when he broadcast the atrocities which they had perpetrated upon the Jews in Warsaw. The papacy used tactics of fear for over a millennium in the Dark Ages.

There are a number of different methods or aspects of fear upon which Satan capitalizes. He capitalizes on our emotional fears—the fear of losing friends, the fear of losing our reputation. He also capitalizes on our fear for life itself, for health, and for safety. He causes us to be afraid of sickness or what might happen in our sickness or that there might not be someone to care for us in our sickness. He capitalizes on our fear of getting injured, hurt, wounded, beaten, or persecuted. He capitalizes on our fear of losing life itself. He capitalizes on our fear of our future life, our fear of losing our eternal life or of suffering in a place of torment. He capitalizes on things, such as:

- Our fear of financial loss—that we might be in want at the present or in some future time, that we might lose our job or our savings
- Our fear that our standard of living might be lowered—that we might lose our property, our stocks or other assets, or even our houses
- He causes us to fear for our liberties—that we might be thrown into prison or jail or have our liberties taken away.

These fears tend to control us. Satan has found that he can use churches, friends, circumstances, governments, etc., to control us through fear. An example of this we have touched on during the Dark Ages—the confessional, where the person would have to confess his sins to a priest, giving him the power to blackmail the individual. He capitalized on the fear of losing one’s reputation or job or other consequences of

this blackmail. The papacy kept people in fear through the doctrines they held—the doctrine, for example, of eternal torment, the doctrine of an ever-burning hell, and that the church holds the keys of heaven and hell. This made the people dependent on the church and what they tell the people, what they teach, and what requirements they had. They kept people in fear and under control through the fear of losing liberty and life and through the fear of being tortured, after they had established the office of inquisition and even before that when, for centuries, the people were persecuted, tortured, and killed for their faith. The teaching that the pope is god on earth kept people in fear, lest they offend or disobey this man and his teachings. We are told in Revelation 13 that government will use this same tactic of fear. They will threaten that we cannot buy or sell, unless we have the mark of the beast, and finally they will threaten us with death, unless we receive their mark of allegiance.

How can we be free from the control that results from our fears? Let's have a look at a few of these things.

In Romans 8:15 we read: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." God tells us that we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear. Fear brings bondage, and God has not given us a spirit of fear; therefore, we should be people of life and liberty. How does God free us? Let's look in Hebrews 13 and consider the fear of losing our friends and emotional fears:

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (Hebrews 13:5, 6)

God has promised that he will be our friend, and he will never leave us or forsake us. We may trust and rest in this sure promise from God's trustworthy word.

What about the fear of losing our reputation? Jeremiah 20:10 states: "For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him." Basic humanity has not changed; sometimes people are that way in our day. They are just waiting for us to take a misstep, just waiting for us to fall so that they can report it and get revenge. But children of God are not fearful of losing their reputation; they are concerned about character, something that no man can spoil or take. Jesus "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" (Philippins 2:7).

Isaiah 51:7 states: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." God tells we don't need to be afraid of the reproach of men; we don't need to be afraid of their revilings that slander our

reputations. They can take our reputation, but they cannot take away our characters.

How should we relate to threats about life, health, and safety? Psalm 103:3 confidently declares that it is God "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." God promises that he can heal us and he will, if it is for our best good. Brothers and sisters, if we bring our lives into conformity with his prescriptions that he has given to us in his word and in inspiration, we put ourselves in a position where God can help us. If he sees not fit to heal us, however, we can still trust completely in him.

In 2 Corinthians 4, we have the way Paul dealt with similar adversity, the way he dealt with the fear of getting injured, hurt, wounded, beaten, and tortured. He said:

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. . . . For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:8–11, 16–18)

Brothers and sisters, we can look beyond our light affliction, which is but for a moment, and set our eyes on the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is to come. We don't need to be afraid of torture or anything that the enemy might bring upon us. In 2 Corinthians 5:1, Paul continues, saying: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Furthermore, concerning the fear of losing life itself, we read: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11). How could they do this? We find the answer in Hebrews 11:17–19:

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Abraham was able to offer up Isaac because he believed that God was able to raise him from the dead. This can give us strength and hope, when faced with death ourselves. Notice what Hebrews 2:14, 15 says: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might

destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” If we are afraid of death, if we are afraid that we might lose our homes, our property, our money, our friends, our reputations, or any of these things, we are in bondage, and Christ has come to make us free from bondage, the bondage of fear.

What about the fear of our future life and of losing eternal life or the fear of suffering in an ever-burning hell or of going to some intermediate state? Christ assures us that he is the one that liveth, but was dead. Christ was dead at one time but now he is alive, and that should give us hope and courage. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Revelation 1:18). Christ is the one who has the keys of hell and of death, not some church, not some entity that claims to be a successor of Peter, or even some church that claims to be the remnant.

Furthermore, the Apostle John, under inspiration, writes, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous . . . If we confess our sins, [to him, not some priest] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.(1 John 2:1; 1:9).

We have the promise that our sins can be forgiven, that we have an advocate with the Father, that we don’t need to lose our eternal life if we sin, and that we don’t need to worry of hell, certainly not of an ever-burning hell. The light of the scripture dispels the darkness that the papacy has brought in, bringing people into fear. The world has been in bondage to the church because they are afraid. I remember when the stark reality of this hit me just a few months ago. I was doing some colporteur work in Alturas, California, and I knocked on the door of a man’s home. He came out, and we spoke for about an hour. He was the judge for the county, an intelligent, educated man, and yet he expressed that he was fearful of burning forever and ever. This is what caused him to be Catholic, to go to confessionals, and to promote the interests of the Catholic Church—his fear of an ever-burning hell. The gospel sheds light and dispels the darkness that these false teachings have brought. It dispels the fear that the enemy has aroused in us to gain control over us.

What about the fear that we might be in need, presently or in the future, that we might lose our jobs, our savings, our standard of living, or our houses and property, or that we might not have food on the table? Remember what Jesus said: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Notice the experience of Moses, as we read in Hebrews 11:26: “Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” Moses could have gained control of the wealth of the Egyptian nation. He could have sat on the throne of Egypt, but he esteemed the reproach of

Christ greater than the riches of Egypt, for he was looking for the recompense of the reward that would be given him from the one who owns the cattle on a thousand hills and the hills themselves, besides.

Jesus met a man who desired the goods of this world and God, too. Mark tells us of Jesus’ reaction to the encounter: “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (Mark 10:21). Jesus loves us, too, and wants us also to know that if we are faithful, we will have treasure in heaven, if we are called upon to forsake, to leave our earthly stores.

If our possessions are taken away from us, God assures us that we will have treasure in heaven. *Come and follow me*, he says, not simply, of course, because we lose our treasures here on the earth, but because if we forsake all to follow him, we will have treasure in heaven.

What if we have fear of losing our liberty, of being thrown into prison and having our rights taken away? In Revelation we read the following words, addressed to the church at Smyrna: “I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:9, 10). We may lose our temporal lives for Christ’s sake, but these lives will be restored and more abundantly, not simply a mortal life that can be taken away again at will, but immortal life, a life which no one can take from us.

We read precious promises in Psalm 27, as David rose up and praised the Lord in his trials and troubles:

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. (Psalm 27:1–7)

Proverbs 29:25 says that “the fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”

And a verse which I trust most have committed to memory, 1 John 4:18: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

History of Financial Fear

In this part of the study we will look at the history of finances and consider the subject of debt because some financial situations are a great tool of Satan to cause fear.

In Romans 13:8, we are told of a principle that God has laid down in his word, to owe no man anything, and in connection with this injunction, we are reminded that there is, however, one thing that we do owe to one another, and that is love. In the first part of this study, we focused on the weapon of fear that Satan has used through different entities. We learned how different powers through the past have used that fear to threaten believers with the loss of life, liberty, happiness, possessions of material things, etc., and has used fear to controlled people’s behavior. Satan has used fear to especially control men and women’s worship. Satan and his agents do not have any right to control the duties that we owe to God. Governments have been given jurisdiction in their sphere, where they safeguard the second table of the Ten Commandments, but the first four commandments describe our duty to God, and no man is to interfere or dictate how we serve God. Our service is to be heartfelt, something that comes from the heart. God says *give me thine heart*.

With this in mind, let us continue by examining some history. Niccolò Machiavelli in fourteenth century Italy, said that love or fear were the most effective tools in securing power. We looked at the weapon of fear in the first part of this study. The last part will especially deal with current events, but we need to touch on the background of current events—the financial crash of 2008, the depression of 1929, the origins of the central banks in America, the Federal Reserve, etc. In this part we will be laying some background material for that. In the fourteenth century, Machiavelli realized that you could secure power, you could control the masses, through fear or through love. He also said that “it is better to be feared than loved, if you cannot be both” (http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/n/niccolo_machiavelli.html#7gbvcohfJ9mXiTj4.99).

Adolph Hitler stated, “The great masses of the people will more easily fall victims to a big lie than to a small one.”

If we go back in time to the beginning in the Garden of Eden, we find Satan’s efforts to compel the conscience, particularly to disobey God. Cain was angry that Abel chose to worship God in the way that God had specified, and he couldn’t tolerate Abel and he slew him. Within a few centuries, we find that Satan had not only obtained the power over individuals and then using them to try to compel people to disobedience, but now he struck upon a plan to organize a kingdom—a power that would be a worldwide power, seeking to compel people to disobey God in defiance of heaven.

The efforts to compel disobedience of God were further perpetrated after the time of the flood. After the tower of Babel was destroyed, we find Nimrod, a rebel against the Lord, building a number of different cities, building up a kingdom, one of which was the city of Nineveh. These kingdoms were intended from their very origin to be kingdoms that would persecute God’s people, that would compel men through fear to disobey God. We find the nation of Egypt being used by Satan, later on, to compel the children of Israel to disobey the Sabbath, as well as the sixth commandment and others. Later in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon sought to compel disobedience to God in seeking to command all the leaders of the Babylonian realm to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Skipping through a lot of history, we come down to the time of Rome, and once again we find pagan Rome persecuting God’s people, compelling them to worship the emperors, attempting to compel them to disobey God, and when we come to the time of Constantine, an apparent change is made. We find Constantine outwardly accepting Christianity, but he brought the very same principles that had always actuated him as a pagan into Christianity, and once again he sought, through legislation, to compel the disobedience of God’s people through the Sunday law that he enacted. This led to the mingling of church and state which proceeded to persecute God’s people once again. They sought to compel men to worship images. They sought to compel men to worship saints and popes and to prevent men from obeying the law of God.

The Waldenses were just one of the many classes of people that had to flee for their lives before the Catholic armies. During what is known today as the Dark Ages, at least fifty million and upwards to one hundred fifty million or more were slain for their faith. Light began to break in upon the darkness, starting with Wycliffe and later with John Huss, Jerome, and Martin Luther. It began to dispel the darkness that we saw in the first part of this study—how the papal church had kept the people in darkness and ignorance, feeding them lies about God, telling them that there was such a thing as purgatory and an ever-burning hell, and keeping men afraid to disobey the commands of the popes and prelates who sought to compel them to break God’s law. But, light began to dispel the darkness. The Bible was printed on the Gutenberg press and multiplied, translated, and scattered around the world. As men began to see the truth, knowledge began to turn darkness into light, sadness into joy, and despair into hope.

As the Catholic Church began to see the waning of its power, as they began to see that they were losing the hold upon the people, they had to seek new weapons, new ways and means to try to regain the control that they had lost through the Reformation.

The first triumphs of the Reformation past, Rome summoned new forces, hoping to accomplish its destruction.

At this time the order of the Jesuits was created, the most cruel, unscrupulous, and powerful of all the champions of popery. . . . To combat these forces, Jesuitism inspired its followers . . . to oppose to the power of truth all the weapons of deception. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 234)

The Jesuits and their system was going to continue to be the papacy's weapon and her means of conquering, her weapon of deception. Continuing on:

There was no crime too great for them to commit, no deception too base for them to practice, no disguise too difficult for them to assume. Vowed to perpetual poverty and humility, it was their studied aim to secure wealth and power, to be devoted to the overthrow of Protestantism, and the re-establishment of the papal supremacy. (*Ibid.*)

We are told here that there was nothing too wicked for them to do. There was no disguise too difficult for them to assume. They would infiltrate all the different realms of society, churches, and governments. All of their power was to be devoted to the one object of the overthrow of Protestantism. This order was created in 1534 by Ignatius Loyola, It was officially approved by Pope Paul III in 1540. They gained such a power throughout Europe and throughout the world that by the middle 1700s they controlled kings, princes, and rulers all around the globe. And kings began to be afraid. The king of Paraguay banished all the Jesuits from his realm.

Satan, the real antagonist behind the papacy, was now going to use this dedicated group in a behind-the-scenes manner to try to orchestrate the financial affairs of the world through the Illuminati and the wealthy families of Europe.

On May 1, 1776, the Order of the Illuminati was officially founded. It was founded in the old Jesuit stronghold of Bavaria, from which the sons of Loyola had ignited the Thirty Years War in 1618. The organization "is a secret society founded in Bavaria in 1776. Its founder, Adam Weishaupt, a professor of canon law at the University of Ingostadt, labeled it the Illuminati Order" (Dee Zahner, *The Secret Side of History*, p. 26). Thus the Illuminati was formed. Weishaupt established the Illuminati specifically to be a front organization behind which the Jesuits could hide.

At this juncture I want us to take a step back for a moment to look at the financial situation in England in the sixteenth century at the time of the Reformation. People that had gold would deposit it with the goldsmiths for safe keeping, and in exchange they were given a signed receipt, guaranteeing that they could retrieve the value assigned by that note from the gold in the goldsmith's vault. This made it possible for one to use that note in payment. That receipt, actually a promissory note, became money. The person who took it in payment could either use it as money or, at some later point, retrieve the gold from the goldsmith's keeping. The goldsmith, being smart, realized that these notes could actually be in circulation for quite some time, several years, even. He issued further notes as loans, knowing that all claims would not have to be honored at the same time. According to

contemporary economical calculations, he could safely lend at least ten times the amounts deposited. If there was a run of two or more people who suddenly wished to retrieve their gold, he could also rely on the fact that he had debtors who owed him gold, although they originally received nothing but a piece of paper. They would have to pay him in gold, and should they default, he could seize whatever possessions they had, sell these, buy gold, and settle the claim. The goldsmith lent out promissory notes, in other words, for nonexistent gold, at interest. Needless to say, the goldsmiths multiplied their wealth enormously. This sounds like modern-day banking, for good reason.

In 1743, a goldsmith named Amschel Moses Bauer opened a coin shop in Frankfurt, Germany. He hung above his door a sign depicting a Roman eagle on a red shield. The shop became known as the Red Shield Firm. The German word for red shield is Rothschild.

With this little bit of background, we are going to stop in our relation of these events. I'll just mention the tie-in. Remember, we spoke of the Jesuits—the army of the papacy, the army that was dedicated to the overthrow of Protestantism. That army went undercover under the name of the Illuminati, and they were financed and actually totally united with the Rothschilds, and the vast amount of wealth in the hands of the Rothschilds came into the hands of the Jesuits to use against God's people, but before we can really understand and comprehend those aspects and those events, we need to go back to the scriptures and understand the principles that God has laid down in his word.

Bible Principles of Finance

We want to begin this section by noting three principles of finance that God designed his people to live by. They are:

- God's children are to open their hands wide to the poor.
- God's children were not to be surety on loans.
- God's children were not to charge any interest on money that they would loan each other.

The first of these principles is mentioned in Deuteronomy 15:11: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Here is the first principle that we want to look at concerning finances. God's children were to open their hands widely to the poor and the needy. Jesus reiterated this in Matthew 5:42: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Proverbs 11:15 gives some definite instruction in regard to loaning: "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure." To be surety is, in other words, to co-sign a loan for someone, to be the one that pays the debt, if the borrower defaults. God forbade his people from being surety for a stranger. Proverbs 22:26 says: "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts."

The third principle we want to look at is found in Exodus 22:25: “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.” God strictly forbade his people from loaning to their brethren upon usury.

Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. (Leviticus 25:36, 37)

Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it. (Deuteronomy 23:19, 20)

In time we find the children of Israel violating this most express command. In Nehemiah 5:4, 5, we read: “There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king’s tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage

our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.” The poor of the land had borrowed money from their richer brethren to pay their taxes, and their richer brethren now took their sons and daughters as servants because they couldn’t pay. In verses 7–13 the story continues: “Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their

vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.” By God’s grace they saw their error, and they repented and put away the evil of their doing.

That we might fully understand God’s hatred of usury, I invite you to turn to Psalm 15:5; “He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.” Now we may connect this with Proverbs 28:8; “He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.” God’s condemnation of usury (interest) is well-documented in many biblical passages:

He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man. (Ezekiel 18:8)

Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.” (Ezekiel 18:13)

That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. (Ezekiel 18:17)

In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 22:12)

An additional principle we should understand is found in Deuteronomy 15:1–4: “At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or



of his brother; because it is called the LORD'S release. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release; Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it." Every seven years they were to cancel the debts; it was a year of release.

Jesus tells us we are to be liberal with those in need, expecting nothing in return.

And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. (Luke 6:34, 35)

Please also notice a principle that God's children were to follow as a nation. "For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee" (Deuteronomy 15:6). Here we find a principle that was to govern them as a nation, and this is where it begins to get especially applicable to us as a nation and to the events that are leading to the destruction of religious liberty in America and to the destruction of our economy, as well. There is a very close connection between lending and ruling, borrowing and serving. We find this connection in Deuteronomy:

The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them. (Deuteronomy 28:12, 13)

These verses are in the section where God pronounces the blessings and the curses. These particular verses are of the blessings that God promised the people upon the condition of obedience, and likewise there was a curse that was attached to disobedience that related to this very same subject.

He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. (Deuteronomy 28:44)

This was one of the curses that would follow them, that would characterize them, if they failed to render obedience. They would borrow, and they would be the tail. You know there is a very important principle brought out in Proverbs which underlies this whole subject. That principle states: "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). You may not realize it, but while United States federal debtors' prisons were abolished in

1833, some states still imprison people for failure to pay their debts. The book of Revelation teaches that when Jesus returns there will be bondmen and freemen. (See Revelation 6:15.) It is very probable that the bondmen are such due to economic issues and not to that of race.

Matthew 6:24 tells us "no man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Counsels on Stewardship teaches us to: "Be determined never to incur another debt" (p. 257). This was instruction in a specific circumstance, to a specific individual, and Ellen White did not say it was designed to be a hard rule for everyone. We noticed earlier that the poor were to expect to be able to borrow from their richer brethren, but without usury. Ellen White goes on to say: "Deny yourself a thousand things rather than run in debt. This has been the curse of your life, getting into debt. Avoid it as you would the smallpox" (*Ibid.*) So avoiding debt, in general, is an important principle.

What should one do if they are in debt? Psalm 37:21 says, "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth." Brothers and sisters, we have a duty, a solemn obligation, to pay back our debts. In *Counsels on Stewardship*, we find further instruction on what to do if we are in debt:

Make a solemn covenant with God that by His blessing you will pay your debts and then owe no man anything if you live on porridge and bread. It is so easy in preparing your table to throw out of your pocket twenty-five cents for extras. Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves. It is the mites here and the mites there that are spent for this, that, and the other, that soon run up into dollars. Deny self at least while you are walled in with debts. . . . Do not falter, be discouraged, or turn back. Deny your taste, deny the indulgence of appetite, save your pence and pay your debts. Work them off as fast as possible. When you can stand forth a free man again, owing no man anything, you will have achieved a great victory. (p. 257)

Brothers and sisters, you might ask what this has to do with our salvation or what it has to do with the gospel. It has a lot to do with it, brothers and sisters. First of all, we have seen that we cannot serve two masters. We cannot do the will of God properly; we cannot do the will of God and go where he sends us, doing what he bids us to do, if we have the ball and chain of debt around us.

Another aspect to remember is what we find in Revelation 18, where it mentions about the judgment upon Babylon. In verse 3, we read: "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." The chapter goes on to describe the destruction of Babylon in words that clearly identify its controlling power

to be the power of finances, the power of debt. Verses 15 and 16 state: “The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!” Another verse to read is verse 23: “And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.” Speaking of her merchandise, we read in verse 13: “And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.” This is why this subject has everything to do with us and our salvation and with the times that we are living in because this power will be dealing with slaves and with the souls of men. They will be dealing with your soul and my soul. They are seeking to gain control of the governments of the world to compel the conscience, to compel to disobedience of God’s law, and we will see that more clearly in the next section of this study. You cannot serve God and mammon.

What shall we do if we are in debt? How can we get out when we see no way? The following story gives us courage and hope:

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest. (2 Kings 4:1–7)

Here was a woman whose husband had died and had left her with a seemingly unpayable debt. The creditors came and were going to take her sons, as payment, to be slaves. Brothers and sisters, God worked a miracle in answer to the prayer of this lady to help her out of debt, and God can still work miracles today.

The Lord calls upon those who believe in him to be workers together with him. While life shall last, they are

not to feel that their work is done. Shall we allow the signs of the end to be fulfilled without telling people of what is coming upon the earth? Shall we allow them to go down in darkness without having urged upon them the need of a preparation to meet their Lord? Unless we ourselves do our duty to those around us, the day of God will come upon us as a thief. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise. (*The Review and Herald*, November 22, 1906)

Brothers and sisters, we have an enormous spiritual preparation to do, and there is also, as we have seen, a physical preparation because if we don’t do the physical preparation, the circumstances that we are brought into could just very well be overwhelming to our faith. We have a physical preparation to do because we are facing the end of all things. We are facing the time of trouble, such as never was, and we need to get our houses, our finances, and all of our things in order and place them upon the altar and to pay our debts and eliminate one more opportunity for the devil, through his agencies, to be able to exercise control and domination over us.

Tying It All Together

Section 2, article 1 of the United States Constitution states that Congress shall have power to:

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures.

No power has ever been granted to Congress to delegate that power to anyone else. It belongs to the Congress, but when they gave that power to a private corporation to coin money from nothing and to then loan it to the federal government as being the only way that money could come into existence, Congress, in that act, sold out the rights of the American people, and we became “the borrower [that] is servant to the lender.” It enslaved the American people like all the other countries in Europe had already become—enslaved through their central banks.

A question might be raised about Jesus’ parable about the talents and how the king required with usury what he had loaned or given to his servants. How do we explain this in light of what we have been studying? The one that received one talent went out and hid the Lord’s money and did not bring it back with usury, but brought it back just by itself and did not multiply it. In this Spirit of Prophecy comment, we read, concerning that parable:

Put it out to usury. Use it to benefit and bless someone who in his turn will benefit someone else. By the blessing of God money put into circulation to help others steadily increases, multiplying itself. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 306; Letter to A. G. Daniells, October 14, 1900.)

How does that work financially? You put your money into the spreading of the gospel; you put your money into the

helping and blessing of humanity to share the gospel, and what results? Souls. People accept the gospel; they accept Christ in their lives; people are won to the truth. That is the usury that God is asking, but even from a financial standpoint, the souls that will come in will then use their means and their money for the promulgation of the gospel. Who is to receive the usury? Not us, but God is to receive the usury, and this is why this system is God's system. We put his money into the blessing and helping of humanity, into the promulgation of the truth, and it results in souls won to God and of them, in turn, giving of their means to propagate the gospel.

In her letter to Elder Daniells, Ellen White said that in her day "in India, China, Russia, and the cities of America, thousands of men and women are dying of starvation. The monied men, because they have the power, control the market. They purchase at low rates all they can obtain, and then sell at greatly increased prices. This means starvation to the poorer classes, and will result in a civil war" (*Ibid.*, pp. 305, 306). Are we going to be among the wise? Are we going to have the knowledge of God's principles of finance, so we can be standing at the right place at the right time, so we can be doing the work that God wants us to be doing?

The angel said, "Destruction is coming like a mighty whirlwind." I begged of the angel to pity and to save those who loved this world, who were attached to their possessions and were not willing to cut loose from them and sacrifice to speed the messengers on their way to feed the hungry sheep who were perishing for want of spiritual food.

As I viewed poor souls dying for want of the present truth, and some who professed to believe the truth were letting them die by withholding the necessary means to carry forward the work of God, the sight was too painful, and I begged of the angel to remove it from me. I saw that when the cause of God called for some of their property, like the young man who came to Jesus (Matthew 19:16–22), they went away sorrowful; and that soon the overflowing scourge would pass over and sweep their possessions all away, and then it would be too late to sacrifice earthly goods, and lay up a treasure in heaven. (*Early Writings*, p. 49)

Brothers and sisters, God is calling for our means today. God is calling for us to get out of debt, out from under the control of Satan and his agents. He is calling for us to get to a financial standpoint where we are no longer a servant to our lenders, where we can use our means as God would have us to use them, and he wants us to simplify our lives so that we are less and less dependent on the financial systems of this world.

Friday night several heard my voice exclaiming, "Look, Look!" Whether I was dreaming or in vision, I cannot tell. I slept alone. The time of trouble was upon us. I saw our people in great distress, weeping and praying, pleading

the sure promises of God, while the wicked were all around us, mocking us and threatening to destroy us. They ridiculed our feebleness, they mocked at the smallness of our numbers, and taunted us with words calculated to cut deep. They charged us with taking an independent position from all the rest of the world. They had cut off our resources so that we could not buy or sell, and they referred to our abject poverty and stricken condition. They could not see how we could live without the world. We were dependent on the world, and we must concede to the customs, practices, and laws of the world, or go out of it. If we were the only people in the world whom the Lord favored, the appearances were awfully against us. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 207)

This was their accusation. They had cut off our resources so that we could not buy or sell. Brothers and sisters, the way Satan is going to enforce allegiance to himself, the way he is going to enforce allegiance to his agencies—the papacy and its image—is through monetary means. Are we prepared for the issues?

Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one. (*The Adventist Home*, p. 141)

What are we to do in light of the fact that the issue of buying and selling is going to be a serious one? Take our families away from the cities into the country, raise our own provisions, simplify our lives, get out of debt. Ellen White says:

We should now begin to heed the instruction given us over and over again: Get out of the cities into rural districts, where the houses are not crowded closely together, and where you will be free from the interference of enemies. (*Ibid.*, p. 141)

There is a surprising indifference among Protestants in regard to the things we have touched on in this article, an indifference in regard to the inroads of Catholicism in this country and its control of our nation, our money, and our lives. People are quick to forget that the papacy claims to be infallible and to never change and that they have been working connectedly for centuries upon centuries—nonstop—to gain control of everything. There was a time when *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* was a history textbook for Protestant children, there was a time when the knowledge of the Catholic banking cartel was taught in economics class to Protestant high school students; but what are your children learning today in the schools, the schools that are taught by the Jesuits and their trained people? What are the learning from the textbooks that are written by the Jesuits? Are they learning any of these things that we have talked about?

Just six months ago, Mitt Romney (Mormon) was campaigning in the state of Ohio on July 7. He spoke the following words in context of the Obama administration's

contraception mandate and its attack on the religious freedom of the Catholic Church:

I know that we're not all Catholic in this room, but many presumedly are, but I feel we are all Catholic today in our battle to make sure we preserve religious liberty and tolerance and freedom in this country.

He received a standing ovation to this remark.

Glenn Beck, like Mitt Romney, is a Mormon. He is also a conservative television network producer who started a new movement last year called *We Are All Catholics Now*. The main goal of the initiative is to ask Americans to reach out to congressional leaders to encourage the passage of legislation that would protect religious groups' (specifically Catholics') conscience rights.


According to the website "The Hill," we have the following on former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, an ordained Baptist minister:

Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee (R) said President Obama has united the GOP over his proposed rule requiring religious groups to pay for contraceptives in healthcare policies. Huckabee facetiously thanked Obama for stirring the issue. "You have done more than any person in the entire GOP field, any candidate, has done to bring this party to unity and energize this party as a result of your attack on religious liberty," he said Friday morning. "Thanks to President Obama, we are all Catholics now," he said to cheers at the Conservative Political Action Conference. (<http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/presidential-races/209937-huckabee-plays-cult#ixzz2IlhPP6iO>)

What is wrong with our country's politicians? What is wrong with the Protestant churches of today that they are so quickly ready to jump in bed with the power that has killed innocent people, millions upon millions, for centuries.

Brothers and sisters, what are we doing? Are we ready to stand up and give the trumpet a certain call, or are we ready to jump back into bed with the Adventist Church, who has united with the apostate Protestant churches and the Catholic Church. This spiritual adultery is not just a recent thing. It has been thirty-five years (1977) since, through its representative B. B. Beach, the church handed itself to the man of sin, the papacy, through the gift of a gold medallion representing the church. It has been over eighty years since the Adventist wrote the trinity doctrine, the central pillar of Catholicism, into its statement of beliefs and over thirty years since it was officially approved by the General conference (1980, Dallas, Texas). Six months later President Reagan was the first president inaugurated facing the Washington Monument which, according to ex-Jesuit Alberto Rivera, was to be the sign that every Protestant church had been infiltrated and taken over and controlled, and that happened in 1981. Again, this was just six months after the Seventh-day Adventist Church accepted officially in the General Conference Session in Dallas the doctrine of the trinity, the central pillar and ground of the Catholic faith.

The Adventist Church has made every effort to distance itself from anyone who is willing to lay open the sins of Babylon and the rapid progress of the papal power. They have said publicly that there are only about a thousand Adventists in all of North America who protest Catholicism or who still hold the view of Catholicism that Adventists used to hold.

Brothers and sisters, it is not anti-Christian to be against Catholicism, for it has become a hold of every foul spirit, a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, a habitation of demons, and by God's grace, I hope that you will join me as one of those thousand who will lay open the sins of Babylon and say *we are NOT all Catholics now*. Beloved, it is not time to be uniting in an ecumenical confederacy with those who do not love and obey God's commandments, but it is time to be a "people [that] shall dwell alone, And shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numbers 23:9). 



Announcements

CAMP MEETING: We would like to remind you that the West Virginia camp meeting will be held June 26–June 30, so mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

YOUTH CAMP MEETING: We are still planning a youth camp for the eastern part of the United States. One suggestion is Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee. If you have a suggestion, please share it with us quickly, as we hope to set definite plans for it soon.

WEBSITE: Our website smyrna.org has recently gone through some difficult times. The site crashed numerous times before we changed servers and now seems to be stable. However, some of the links are not properly working, and we are in the process of restoring all that can be restored. Our problems have stemmed from using outdated technology that is no longer fully supported by most site hosts. We are in the process of updating that technology and redesigning our website. This will be a work in progress for several months, and we ask you to be patient with us while we work on this and to pray that our Father will provide special wisdom for us, as we make these wonderful, truth-fill messages available to much of the world's population via the Internet.

ELVIS ALBERTO is currently planning a trip to Uruguay to help establish a school of the prophets. Please lift this adventure up in your prayers.



May be beaten down by tempest . . .



Storm clouds may shut from her . . .



She may dash to and fro on strong wings, . . .



and mountains may

"The Eagle of

*We may
with dif
discourag
darkness . . .
sunlight of
we may rise
of faith." Edu*

of the Alps . . .

*be surrounded
difficulties,
ement, and
[but] into the
His presence
on the wings
cation, pp. 118, 119*



into the narrow defiles of mountains.



the sunny heights above.



echo her cries, . . .



but soon she'll pierce the clouds into clear sunlight.

Youth Story

This month we begin publishing, with a few edits, the book Youthful Witnesses by W. A. Spicer, published in 1921 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Elder Spicer dedicated his book to the young people of his day, who were called to serve, but those young people have come and gone, and a new generation is on the field who is also called to serve. We pray this book will be a blessing for them.

Open the pages of history where we may, sacred or secular, and in every age we shall find Youth responding with Maturity and Age to the call of the hour. Whether the call was to service or to sacrifice, Youth has been ready to throw his fresh vigor and courage into the scale, to venture all his hopes and prospects and the love of life in the enterprise that claimed the devotion of the soul.

Age and Maturity, going before, have inspired Youth to follow, and the ready response and the enthusiasm of youthful helpers have thrilled the leaders in every great endeavor.

But it is not of young people in secular pursuits and achievements that these pages [of this book] speak. The purpose is to tell of youth who have witnessed for God and his truth in dark times and dark lands, or through experiences, trying or otherwise, that enabled them to leave for us cheering testimony to the grace that strengthens and sustains.

The story begins with the beginning of human history. In that honor list of men and women of faith, given by Inspiration in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, a youth leads the roll call of witnesses:

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. (Hebrews 11:4)

Abel was a young man in the morning of the world's history, when the occasion came for a testimony to be borne, for the truth of God against opposition. Cain was not irreligious, but he would be religious in his own way. That has been the age-long issue, ever recurring. Is it to be man's way or God's way? Abel stood for God's way in religion, the way of the commandment of God and of faith in the promised Saviour. For his loyalty to Christ and the word of God, he was slain, the first martyr to truth.

Apparently he had accomplished little in his short life. Would not just a shade of compromise, a little less conspicuous loyalty under opposition, have brought him opportunity to bear fuller testimony and to do greater good through a long life? Did he too stiffly stand? No, Inspiration bears the testimony that his loyalty honored God, and this first youth to lay down his life for the truth of God "yet speaketh."

Though his years were few, Abel's is the longest-continued witness for God that has been borne on earth. For six thousand years young Abel has been testifying to young and

old that it pays to serve God and to stand loyally for his truth, though it cost life itself.

In the list of the heroes of faith given in Hebrews 11, it is to be noted how often the great decision that shaped the life was made in youth. It was in comparative youth that Abraham turned from the idols of his father's house to give his heart and life to the service of the true and living God, and thus to become "the father of all them that believe."

Many a time since then, youth growing up in the midst of idolatry have heard the call to turn to the living God. The young people in non-Christian lands have often been the first to lead the way for their people from darkness into light. And sometimes the call has come, as apparently it came to Abraham, without human agencies.

So the early Moravians found in the wilds of Dutch Guiana a man who, from youth, had been drawn to forsake evil ways and to pray to the Great Spirit. In vain the witch doctors had tried to bring the young man under their spells, until at last they declared that they had no power over him "because his heart belonged to the God of heaven." When the missionaries arrived, he was waiting there for them, and became a witness for Christ.

Young Joel, of Mashonaland, was told by God in a dream to search for the way of salvation in the white man's school; and setting out, he found our new Mashonaland station, later to become a teacher.

Memo, of Matabeleland, the first inquirer at the Somabula station, appeared at the mission doorway one Sabbath morning, and said he had been told in a dream that they had the words of God in that house. "I would hear the words of God; and I have come. May I hear his words?" "Come," said the missionary, and the young African accepted the gospel, the first fruits of that new station.

"The time would fail," as the writer of Hebrews 11 says, to follow in detail the story of the faithful witness borne of old; and through all the story runs the record of youth who were given the gift to be strong when there was need of strength.

Even amid mistakes and weaknesses, the Lord stood by wayward youth to guide wandering feet back to the path. One of the choicest pictures in all Scripture of heaven's ministry for men is that given to Jacob as he, a fugitive from home and country, lay down to sleep with a stone for a pillow, and feeling that even his father's God, too, must surely have forsaken him for his sin. There in the desert came the vision of the ladder reaching to heaven, with angels ascending and descending upon it, and from above, his father's God speaking words of hope and courage to a discouraged youth. Jacob then realized, as many a youth has since, that the gate of heaven swings instantly wide before the first repentings of a sinful heart. That gate ajar is but one step from a troubled, sorrowing sinner. The one step is only to give Christ the heart, just as it is.

When the way was to be prepared in Egypt for God to bear testimony to all nations, a youth was sent as the messenger,

and Joseph was true in servitude, in business, in prison, and in palace.

Again, as the crisis of ancient times was at hand in the development of the work of God on earth, it was to a young man that the call came to witness for the living God before all Egypt and the world. The youthful Moses had to make decision whether God's cause and truth should have his service, or whether he should follow and serve the world.

On one side was Egypt, with its pleasures, social position, wealth, and honor; and the throne itself was evidently within his grasp. On the other side was the cause of God, the truth that saves, and the people of God. Which should it be?

Moses knew that these people, despised by the world, counted fanatics for their loyalty to God's law and their non-conformity to the popular religion of Egypt, were yet the children of God, and that they represented the cause of truth in the earth. He had learned this at his mother's knee.

It was no blind choice that young Moses made. "He had respect unto the recompense of the reward." He looked things squarely in the face at this deciding period in his life and chose the living God above and his cause on earth.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to he called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. (Hebrews 11:24-26)

Was it a wise choice? To the world it seemed a foolish one. True, he did give up what few youth have ever possessed of worldly prospects. What if he had chosen Egypt? He would have had its pleasures and honors and cares and fleeting glory for a few troubled years; then—the pompous royal funeral, the hieroglyphic inscriptions telling of his deeds, and the blackness of darkness forever!

But Moses chose the living God and his truth, and a part with God's people. After a long life of discipline and of wearing service, his hour of death came, inevitably; but what a hope was his! And as to the funeral scene—far from the pomp of Egypt—let the words of Scripture tell it to us again:

So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day. (Deuteronomy 34:5, 6)

Was young Moses' choice a wise one? Think of him now in heaven (by the special resurrection referred to in the book of Jude), with the angels, with the Father, and with the Christ whose reproach he esteemed greater riches than the treasures of Egypt! Amid the glories of the eternal world of light, could Moses the servant of God ever look back upon that youthful choice as one involving real sacrifice?

Yet so it looked at the time; and Moses, prince of Egypt, choosing rather to be a servant of the King of kings, bears witness to the youth of today that to choose Christ and a part

in his work and with his people, as against any offer the world can hold out, is to make the true and wise decision.

Often the Lord's choice fell upon youth, and his spirit led them to essay the seemingly impossible—and to achieve it by God's help. Young Gideon, least in his father's house, was chosen to lead the faithful three hundred to the deliverance of Israel from the Midianites. David, the shepherd lad, met the Goliath who had long defied the armies of the living God. Young Jonathan and his armor-bearer, climbing the mountain stronghold alone, led the way to deliverance from the Philistines. The young captives in Babylon were the men of opportunity when God had a witness to bear to Babylon and to the nations of all the world for that time.

In New Testament times youth had its call to service for the Master. "I have written unto you, young men," said the aged apostle John, "because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you" (1 John 2:14).

As the phrase is used by inspiration, it means young women equally. Where post-biblical history takes up the story of the conflict between truth and error through the ages, we shall find the maiden witnesses as strong as any to confess the Lord Jesus and to avow their devotion to his cause. Woman has never failed a noble cause calling for loyal boldness and steadfastness.

The glimpses given of women's work in apostolic days show clearly enough that youthful witnesses must have been among that group of whom Paul wrote from prison:

Help those women which labored with me in the gospel . . . whose names are in the book of life. (Philippians 4:3)

The list of names would have been too long, perhaps, for the parchment page. Known they were within a limited circle, but the names are not preserved to history. No matter now. Angel pens have written those names in the book of life. These *lost names* stand for the great throng of helpers who loved the Lord Jesus and let their light shine in humble ministry for him, with no publicity and within a limited sphere of influence. But angels keep the record above, and wonderful surprises await the quiet workers when the scroll of life shall reveal what results God has wrought out of the loving deeds of daily ministry for Christ, unheralded on earth and unknown to fame.

We now may add greatly to the list of the worthies of faith of the Old Testament history, set down in the eleventh of Hebrews. There are the witnesses of New Testament times, and of the centuries since, through the long conflict with paganism and apostasy to the days of the Reformation and of the missionary awakening of our own time. Youthful witnesses have borne their part through it all.

Inspiration draws for us the grand lesson of these lives of faith:

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight,

continued on page 24, column 2

FROM THE FILE CABINET OF HISTORY

436 W. Washington St., Hagerstown, Md., June 25, 1940.

Elder J. L. McElhany,
Box 146, Glendale, Calif.

Dear Brother McElhany:

What a comfort Daniel 2:43,44,45 is in the present terrible world situation, and also the promise in Rev. 11:18 that He will "~~destroy~~ the destroyer." We never needed the book "Daniel and the Revelation" so much as today. And the same man who has almost destroyed the book "Daniel and the Revelation" has almost destroyed the book "Great Controversy," by throwing doubts on it. More and more I believe that it was right that I should answer Prescott's sermon on the Trinity and review his 40 years of destructive doubt breeding criticism. You know one of the chief objections he makes against the book, "Daniel and the Revelation," is that it teaches Arianism, and our old pioneers were Arians, but that He is a Trinitarian. And he seems to feel just the same intolerant spirit toward those who do not see the Trinity as he sees it as the old Catholic church felt toward Arius and his followers. I think it is wicked to say that Daniel and the Revelation is Arian and that Sister White, Elders White, Andrews, Bates, Loughborough, Haskell, etc. were Arians. They certainly were not.

I have heard from several sources that at the Theological Seminary it was stated publicly that Sister White was a Unitarian in the early part of her work but later had become a Trinitarian. That seems to me to be a double falsehood. Sister White never was a Unitarian, and has never become a Trinitarian. It seems wonderful to me that when we consider how many times Sister White wrote about the Father, Son and ^{the} Holy Spirit, never in all the thousands of pages she wrote did ^{she} ever even once mention the word "Trinity." The Lord must have guarded her from using that word. Some tell me that we as a people believe in the Trinity in some form. I do not believe that there is a modified Adventist belief in the Trinity any more than a modified Adventist belief in Purgatory. Of course Prescott and his followers have tried for years to make us Catholics on the Trinity. But as you and I have both seen, the Spirit of Prophecy is squarely against the Trinity doctrine, as much as it is against Purgatory. I hope that those in charge of the Theological Seminary will see that such teaching never again will come from the Theological Seminary. I believe that the Theological Seminary can be made a great blessing, but if Prescott's teaching is found there it will destroy it.

May the blessed Lord guide you in these tremendous days, and make you a tower of strength, to His people.
Psalm 46, Psalm 91. Ps. 55:22.

Praying God's wisdom and power to be with you,
I am your brother in the "Blessed Hope,

J. Hasaburn

John Huss—A Man of God

There is a moving story writ o’re every hallowed grave
Of God’s witnesses who’ve placed their heel upon the serpent’s head.
May such who’ve gone before us be examples for our day,
For truth is marching on.

After the order of The Battle Hymn of the Republic

John Huss was a great man—a true nobleman of God. He was born in Husinec, his father died when he was young, his mother sent him, with her prayers, to Prague to study at the university, where he eventually became a professor and the beloved priest of the Bethlehem Chapel and where also he became the recipient of increasing papal scrutiny.

Bohemia of Long Ago

Only deep in the forests of Bohemia or in the shrouded privacy of a quiet home could a true communion service be observed in Bohemia nearly a millennium ago, for the Catholic Church permitted only the bread of the communion to be served to the laity, and not the wine. A few centuries earlier, however, after Greek monks had arrived in Bohemia, both the symbols of bread and wine were offered to the laity and continued to be offered until the Roman Church later arrived in Bohemia. Then over time, I am sorry to say, mainstream Bohemia became more and more accepting of the yoke of the papacy. By the time of Huss, the little flock of God in Bohemia was forced to retreat to their abundant woodlands or to the shelter of their own homes in order to follow the example of Jesus at the Last Supper.

Bohemia was a beautiful land—partly surrounded by miles of forests and mountains, dark and thick with virgin timber, filled with wildlife, and scattered with semi-open places, where horses could gallop under stately wooded arches. Villages dotted the hills and the valleys, and imperial roadways connected the larger cities. Life in Bohemia was simple for most people in the 1300s, but foment was brewing.

For example, how could the Catholic Church deny a full communion to the people, when the precepts of Christ are so clear? Today the cup of wine is sometimes offered in the Mass, but often not, especially when the congregation is large. In 2008, for example, when Pope Benedict XVI offered a public Mass in Washington, D.C.’s baseball stadium, only the bread was offered to the forty-six thousand laity and the over one thousand priests and nuns in

attendance, all in under twenty minutes, by the way, and the rationale for using only the bread is that when the bread supposedly becomes the very body of Christ, it also becomes the blood of Christ, so the symbol of the wine is not necessary. Seven hundred years ago, however, a different false miracle was cited at the Council of Constance as a reason to deny the cup to the laity. The Council had assigned to a committee of six theologians the task of preparing a position paper on the use of the wine in communion, and these *learned* men agreed that, yes, the early church had used both bread and wine, but since then a *great miracle* had occurred, a miracle which convinced them that the wine was no longer to be allowed. What was that great miracle? Here is what they reported to the Council:

Some monks wished to take the Communion in the two kinds [bread and wine]. The priest having broken the bread, it came to pass that the communion plate became filled with blood; and when the priest afterwards put together the two pieces of the sacramental wafer, the blood immediately returned to it [the wafer], so that not a drop remained in the plate. A celebrated doctor of the thirteenth century, Alexander Hale, had guaranteed the truth of this miracle; and the question of the holding back the cup was thus decided. (Émile de Bonnechose, *The Reformers before the Reformation*, vol. 2, p. 5)



John Huss

The committee concluded that denying the wine to the laity was the correct thing to do, based partly on this miracle, but based also on the fact that ancient church fathers had denied the cup to the laity and the church as a whole had been denying it for several centuries. The committee advised that no person should speak against the denial of the cup “without the authority of the Church; and its opponents ought to be looked on as *heretics*, and punished accordingly” (*Ibid.*, p. 6; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted).

The committee had made its recommendation; now it was up to the Council to decide, but not before Jacobel addressed them:

“If, by a miracle,” said he, “Jesus Christ should suddenly appear in the midst of the Council of Constance, with the members of the primitive Church, and should address the assembly in the words pronounced by him at Capernaum, *If you eat not of the body of the Son of Man, and drink of his blood*, etc.; and if he desired to administer the sacrament in that place, such as he had instituted it, do you suppose that the persons present would allow him to speak, would permit him to proceed? They would withdraw, like those whom his words offended at Capernaum,—they would accuse him of heresy. (*Ibid.*, p. 8)

Gerson, a noted papal theologian, also spoke and “enumerated the *inconveniences* that would arise from allowing all believers to participate in the cup. ‘There are various dangers, of different kinds,’ said he, ‘likely to arise from this practice, which ought to be guarded against;—the danger of the wine being spilt in taking it from place to place;—the danger of its being frozen, or being insufficient in quantity;—the danger of its turning sour, in which case, the pure blood of Jesus Christ would no longer be there;—the danger of its being spoiled, or of flies being engendered in it, by heat;—and the danger of some of it adhering to the long beards of the laity’” (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

Jean Charlier de Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, one of the most prominent theologians at the Council, author of a harmony of the gospels, of a massive collection of the poems of the Bible, and of a commentary on the Song of Solomon, argued against a biblically-based communion service with such childish reasoning? Unbelievable; but he did, and on June 15, 1415, in its thirteenth session, the Council of Constance proclaimed it heresy to believe other than as the Council had decreed.

Just hearing the word *heresy* in those days made one shudder in disgust, for it connoted the worst sort of wickedness and perversion. A heretic was worse than a pedophile, worse than an abuser of any sort, worse than a Stalin, Hitler, and Pol Pot combined. Heresy, according to the Catholic Church, was total and bottomless *depravity*, with no redemptive value. It must be cut away:

Heretical depravity it was called, for heresy was not an intellectual opinion only: it was depravity. . . . heresy—that is, dissent from the dogmatic teachings issued by the church and disobedience to the rule of the hierarchy—was a crime. . . . A heretic, having no rights in the church, has also no rights whatever on earth—not even the right to live.

The church acquired rights over the individual *by baptism* and these rights extended to the deprivation of life. Innocent likened heretics to Joel’s locusts and to the foxes which spoil the vines. Like clippers of coin, they are to be burned, affirmed Thomas Aquinas. To quote this theologian: “They are not only to be separated from the church by excommunication but also excluded from the world by

death.” (David Schley Schaff, *John Huss, His Life and Teachings after 500 Years*, p. 5)

And heresy is the reason John Huss left Prague for Constance under the the following guarantee of safe conduct from Sigismund:

Sigismund, by God’s grace, Augustus, King of the Romans and King of Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., to all and every prince, both ecclesiastical and secular—dukes, marquises, counts, barons ... to all magistrates and officials of cities and villages and to all the rest of our people, subjects of the Holy Empire, peace and all good. The honorable master, John Huss, bachelor of sacred theology and master of arts, the bearer of these presents, journeying from the realm of Bohemia to the general council about to convene in Constance, whom we have received under our protection and the protection of the Holy Empire—we, with full affection, recommend to you all, desiring that you receive him kindly and treat him with favor and that you will help him in all matters to speedily prosecute his journey, giving him security by the way, whether by land or sea, and also safety to his servants, horses and baggage and that all tributes and other restrictions whatsoever may be removed from his free passage over all roads, through all gates and cities, and that ye permit him freely, as he chooses, to pass along, to stop, to abide and to return—transire, stare, morari, redire—and so provide for him and his safe and secure passage. (*Ibid.*, p. 139)

Historical Events Leading Up to Constance

Huss, who was born about 1372, lived during the time of the great schism in the Church of Rome, a time during which three men concurrently claimed to be pope, and Emperor Charles IV (father of Sigismund), because of the high esteem in which he was held, was expected to heal this new-born schism, and he might have accomplished it, had he not died unexpectedly in 1378.

Sigismund

Then the cloak of diplomacy fell to the shoulders of his eldest son, Wenceslaus, who became the new king of Bohemia and the emperor-elect of the Holy Roman Empire, but he was not up to the task, for he was lazy and “never so happy as when, casting the cares of royalty on the shoulder of a brother or a cousin, he devoted himself to the pleasures of the chase in the vast woods and forests” (*Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13). His half-brother, Sigismund, however, ever the go-getter, soon stepped up to the challenge and began to arrange affairs to suit himself. He induced John XXIII to convene the church council and promised safe conduct to John Huss, but it is hard to believe that Huss would have trusted in the promise of a man who had ordered the right hands of one hundred eighty Venetians chopped off and flung into the sea; who, after inviting thirty Hungarian nobles to his tent, had called them in one-by-one

only to have them beheaded, the evil of which finally ended when the nobles outside refused to enter because of the blood flowing from beneath the tent flaps; and who had been implicated in the death of his mother-in-law and in the attempt on the life of his wife at the same time, who later died by suspicious means.

Sigismund was a big, burly man, with a broad brow, ruddy cheeks, and smiling eyes. He had a long, full yellow beard and an easy way about him that deceived the hearts of many, including women, unknown to his evil ways. Wherever he went, he was always borrowing money and was always ready for a drink. Full of promises and slow to pay, he was notoriously shrewd. Yet, he had his good qualities. He loved learning and was known to help poor scholars. He, himself, spoke German, Latin, Czech, Hungarian, and French, and like his father who had established the University of Prague (where Huss and Jerome both studied) and who had a relish for new and up-to-date information, Sigismund was ever squeezing reading into the time he devoted to expanding his kingdom through war and subterfuge. By 1414, Sigismund, not Wenceslaus, had been proclaimed the holy Roman emperor and the king of Hungary and Bohemia, for by this time Wenceslaus had lost the support of his country. Civil war loomed on the horizon, but Sigismund's energy and faithlessness were equal to the occasion, and instead of escorting Wenceslaus to Rome to receive the imperial crown from the hands of the pope, as he had promised, he placed him in the custody of the dukes of Austria.

This brief synopsis of history helps us to understand, first of all, the instability of government during the time of Huss, both in the church and in the state, and, secondly, a probable reason for Sigismund's treacherous betrayal of Huss. Sigismund was faced with a toppling church and unstable politics; his future depended on strengthening both, and to this end he was willing to sacrifice Huss. "Never was a period in which, in both Church and state, iniquity, faithlessness, and wickedness were more rampant, or in which the destinies of mankind were entrusted to more incompetent and unworthy hands" (*Ibid.*, p. 48).

The Gathering

Antipope John XXIII set out for Constance with an escort of cardinals, nobles, and attendants, all gorgeously attired with gold, silver, and precious stones, and King Sigismund arrived with a large retinue of his own. He was welcomed to the city as a savior who was expected to bring peace to the nations and unity to the church, and people flooded the city just to gain a glimpse of him. In spite of his outward display, however, Sigismund lacked a moral beauty. ". . . he was above all things unstable, the creature of impulse and passion" (James Hamilton Wylie, *The Council of Constance to the Death of John Huss*, p. 20), and we see this deformity of character displayed in his treatment of John Huss, the man to whom he had promised a safe conduct both to and from the most prestigious gathering of the century.

All told, thousands of people converged on Constance in 1414:

An old manuscript in the library of Vienna, written at this time, speaks of thirty cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty archbishops, one hundred and twenty bishops, one hundred abbots, one hundred and fifty priors and heads of orders, more than two hundred doctors of divinity, upwards of twenty-three thousand secular and regular clergy; four electors, ninety dukes, eighty-three counts, two thousand knights and noblemen, nearly one hundred thousand foreign laymen, besides a numerous multitude of musicians, buffoons, and jugglers, and nearly fifteen hundred wandering disreputable females, who were to serve as *witnesses* to the *chastity* of the Lord Cardinal and others. Many brought their concubines with them (G. Lommel, *John Huss, A Memoir*, p. 13; emphasis in original).



Statue of Huss in Prague

Delegations from Italy, France, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, England and Scotland, Denmark, and Sweden were sent to Constance, arriving in varying degrees of pomp. The English and Scottish delegation, for example, numbered less than twelve, but was accompanied by seven to eight hundred mounted men, splendidly attired and preceded by fifers and other musicians. As they entered the city, they were met by the Bishop of Lausanne, the Duke of Saxony, and the Count of Cilli, who escorted them with great ceremony to their quarters in town.

The streets of the city presented the spectacle of a merry affair and offered, in addition to the splendor of important people, tournaments, dances, acrobatic shows, processions, music, and food and drink, and into this mirth that held no thought for the morrow, came John Huss. King Wenceslaus had provided him two knights, Lords Chlum and Lestna, as protective traveling companions to ensure his safe conduct. Other persons of rank, including Lord Duba, and various attendants joined his escort, and on October 11, 1414, Huss, in his early forties, left Prague for Constance, Germany.

John Huss was a nobleman for God during a low and dark hour of earth's history. Sigismund had the opportunity to reveal true nobility of character also, but, I am sorry to say, he was flimsy in nature and easily tossed about on the ever-changing shores of the nations. Even John XXIII, himself a former pirate, called him a drunken fool.

Sigismund, accompanied by eighteen thousand mounted men, had been crowned Emperor of the Romans just a few weeks before his arrival at Constance, in a coronation viewed by all the notables of Christendom who were also on their way to the Council. His first tasks as Emperor were to heal the papal schism, to tend to the shaky affairs of state, and to oversee the trial of John Huss. Much was at stake for this new emperor, and he knew it. The Council had to be held together at all costs because if it disintegrated, his career was sure to crumble.

The Formalities of the Council

To gain an understanding of the pomp and ceremony of this council, as well as an insight into its hypocrisy, let us consider the opening days, wherein were held formal pre-sessions, with Masses said at each. Sermons also were preached by various canons, and formal announcements made. A Mass for the souls of the dead was presented, and into all of these affairs, came the religious attendees of the Council, along with the pope, who walked under a canopy of gold cloth and accompanied by fifteen cardinals, thirty-three bishops and abbots, and a crowd of priests and other religious officials. On the Council's opening day, a Mass was said in the cathedral, litanies were sung, the pope discoursed "about loving Truth, and Cardinal Zabarella announced there must be no noise or jibes or laughter in their meetings, on pain of three days' excommunication" (Wylie, p. 61).

Each meeting was preceded by a Mass of the Holy Spirit, after which the Pope or other president took his seat on a throne in the middle of the choir with his back to the high altar facing the assembled throng. The bishops were seated in due order of precedence, vested in long copes with plain white mitres on their heads. An antiphon was sung and the whole assemblage kneeled for a while in silent meditation. Then at the word all rose, while the celebrant stood and offered a noble prayer, that God would cleanse their hearts and teach them what they ought to do, that no ignorance might draw them off into devious tracks, no fear or favour sway them and no bribe corrupt them, but that they might not swerve from Truth because they were one with Him. Then as the sitting closed the resolutions of the day were read aloud, the proctors of the different na-

tions signified assent, copes and mitres were laid aside and all dispersed their several ways. (*Ibid.*, pp. 62, 63)

Some delegates arrived for the council, fully expecting it to be over in three months, but the first six weeks resulted in nothing, except to reveal marked lines of division. "In this *impasse* all thoughts were turned to Sigismund as the head and foundation of the whole thing, without whose protection and presence nothing of weight could be decided, and all their labour would be in vain. Accompanied by an escort of 1,100 mounted men he started from Aix-la-Chapelle," (*Ibid.*, p. 75), where he had just been crowned Emperor, and arrived



Sigismund

on the north shore of "Lake of Constance an hour before midnight on Christmas Eve. Word was at once dispatched to the Pope requesting him to postpone the morrow's Mass till after the King's arrival, and at 2 o'clock on Christmas morning King Sigismund and his wife Barbara landed at St. Conrad's Bridge in Constance" (*Ibid.*), but left "at cockcrow in the darkness to the minster, the burghesses holding canopies of cloth of gold over their heads as they passed with flaring torches and other royal racket along the wintry streets. The Pope was waiting for them with a splendid mitre on his head, and they spent eight, or according to another account eleven, cold hours in the church, hearing three Masses at intervals without changing their place" (*Ibid.*, p. 76).

The royal party then retired, first to St. Stephen's Church and then, for a few weeks, to the Benedictine Monastery on the other side of the river. They did not return to the city until New Year's Day, when the Pope visited Sigismund and drank with him, in a symbol of goodwill, from a large loving-cup belonging to the cathedral.

Now the town began to fill up rapidly: Bishops and archbishops arrived with retinues ranging from two or three to many hundreds; representatives of Cologne arrived after a long and fatiguing journey; and the Archbishop of Mayence [Mainz] arrived, riding in scarlet and fully armed with helmet, corslet, braces and greaves of mail and attended by seven hundred mounted followers. On January 17, King Sigismund and his brilliantly-dressed cavalcade met Duke Louis of Bavaria, who travelled with a retinue of four hundred horsemen and eight or nine baggage carts.

And in the midst of this pride and pageantry, a simply-clad man of God brought the richest of treasure to Constance, but it was trampled under foot and was thrown with him into a dreadful dungeon.

Huss as a Preacher

Prior to his arrival at Constance, Huss had been the pastor of the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, where he “turned away from an infallible pope and an infallible visible church to the living Christ, who rules personally in the hearts of believers and in the Scriptures,” (Schaff, p. 8) preaching the gospel with a directness and simplicity that all men could understand. Doctrine was not missing, but the chief stress was upon moral conduct and edification. “The needs and rights of the lay-folk are always in Huss’s mind” (*Ibid.*, p. 17). Sin-sick people flocked to the Bethlehem Chapel each Sunday to hear his words of plain and simple instruction for a godly life, as can be seen in the following portion of one of his sermons. Students came to take notes, and his enemies were also present, ever alert for any taint of heresy, which also can be found in this selection:

Preaching on Christ’s words, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Huss said: “This means that, first of all and chiefly, I be engaged in that which concerns my Father and not in the service of any creature whatsoever. And why did Christ give this answer? Because he came into the world for the purpose of bearing witness to the truth. And let this be an admonition to fathers and mothers that they put no stumbling-block in the way of their children serving God. . . . And children should take their lessons from the conduct of Jesus, not to withstand their parents and be angry against them. For Jesus spoke in humble tone when he asked his father and mother, ‘Why do ye seek me?’

So every man, and especially prelates, should take Jesus’ treatment of his parents as an example that they may first of all seek the profit of the church and have respect to God more than to any mortal man. For Jesus, setting aside the will of his earthly father and mother and doing the will of God, has taught us that every man should do the will of God, when he perceives that what God requires is something else than what our parents wish. Mary and Joseph did not want Jesus to remain in the temple but God wanted him to remain. Therefore, Jesus said to his father and mother that it behooved him to remain in the temple to instruct the doctors as the Father had commanded.

Against this instruction priests very frequently offend who esteem men’s precepts more highly than God’s commands and obey man rather than God. And priests lead men to a false and sinful obedience, for many of them preach that the people should hearken to all the pope commands and obey him, inasmuch as the pope cannot err. They do not seem to know that many popes have been heretics. Other priests preach that laymen should yield obedience even when a bishop or a pope commands something that is evil, for in obeying they commit no sin and only he commits sin who issues the evil command. That is the devil’s yoke, for the devil seeks to lead men into evil and does not concern himself upon whom the guilt of sin

rests. Neither the one who commands nor the one who obeys is without sin, as said the Saviour, Matt. 15: 14: ‘When a blind man leads the blind both fall into the ditch.’ Here the Saviour was speaking of those prelates who, like the scribes and Pharisees, lead the people by their precepts to transgress the commands of God. . . .

It is no wonder that Bethlehem chapel was thronged. Its pulpit dealt in no theological abstractions. The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, was in the preacher’s hand a sharp weapon, wielded dexterously to lay open the sins and subtrefuges of the conscience. It was the Word of Life offering the comforts of saving grace. Huss was a preacher to the age in which he lived, to the congregations which pressed to hear him. His messages burn with zeal for pure religion and with sympathy for men. With his whole heart he was a preacher.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 18, 20; paragraphs reformatted)

The city of Prague was placed under interdict because of his heresy, but was later lifted. He was summoned to Rome to answer for his heretical ideas, but he refused to go. The archbishop of Prague was ordered to arrest him, but God intervened. Papal bulls were issued against him. He was excommunicated. He was the cause of much dissension and unrest in the city, and the holy Roman emperor, Sigismund, desiring peace and unity in his realm, pressured John XXIII into calling a church council to address not only the papal schism, but also the controversy over the witness of John Huss.

Huss’s Theology

What witness was John Huss giving?

The Individual’s Right to Conscience

This was the true greatness of Huss—that, with all his humility and childlike simplicity, he could not be blinded or imposed upon by the unanimous voice of a great council as to his own personal responsibility; that he preferred to bear the reputation of an obstinate heretic, and to die by fire, rather than to suffer on his conscience a single stain by an abjuration involving a falsehood on his part. (John W. Mears, *Heroes of Bohemia: Huss, Jerome and Zisca*, p. 199)

Huss chose to bear the responsibility of his own decisions and to not accept the argument that he could be untrue to his conscience because God held his superiors, not him, responsible for any falsehood he might utter. As Gerson explained, the Catholic Church taught:

The individual is bound to submit to the church, putting his conscience aside so far as he holds views disapproved by the organization. It is no excuse, he [Gerson] argues, for disobedience before God or man that his conscience justifies him. Heretics have a conscience, but an unenlightened conscience. They have deliberately set themselves against God and arrogate to themselves a knowledge of God which is false. *Conscience is no excuse for error and heresy.* (Schaff, p. 145)

But Huss esteemed his right to obey his conscience, and he went to his death adhering to this right, placing it above any control of man. He refused to be intimidated by the most worldly-wise council of his generation to “consent to a form of recantation which he believed to be a falsehood” (*Ibid.*, p. 145). According to some historians, this exalting of an individual’s right to conscience is one of Huss’s chief contributions to us today, for the Catholic Church has ever been bent on controlling this precious, inalienable right. We know that the highest church tribunals can err, as demonstrated, for one, by the condemnations of Galileo and of Huss, and the right to conscience over and above the rule of any man is a sacred treasure passed down to us by the godly hands of Huss.

In reality, Huss ignored the church authorities. “He refused to obey the citation to Rome. He went on preaching in spite of excommunication and interdict. He welcomed a general council, and yet refused to obey the mandate of the council to recant when it met. The priestly vow made him subject to the discipline of the higher court. That was the theory of the mediaeval church, and the higher church authority sat upon his case and sentenced him. . . . The fault was not with the judges but with the system and the sentiment of the age. Bishop Creighton has well said: ‘. . . his opinions were judged by the council to be subversive of the ecclesiastical system, and when he refused to submit to that decision, he was necessarily regarded as an obstinate heretic.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 130).

In other words, the decision of the Council was, according to their rules, legal and just. Most of the leaders were not seeking to destroy Huss out of a passion or on a technicality, but were simply upholding their ecclesiastical law; however, they were wrong and Huss was right.

The ecclesiastical government, which had been perfected in the mediaeval age, left no place for individual opinion or [for] the discussion as to what was right and to be believed between a council and an individual accused of heresy. It is not surprising that the council acted unanimously, but . . . it is to be regretted that not a single voice was raised to show sympathy with the condemned man’s fundamental position. (*Ibid.*, p. 131)

The Bible the Sole Authority

And what was Huss’s fundamental position, the most important of all his positions?

Huss . . . was insisting upon the individual’s right to interpret the Scriptures for himself. . . . The Bible was his guide, the Bible as interpreted according to its plain meaning. This idea of subjectivity . . . the council could not tolerate, as it did not [tolerate] the principle of the sole authority of the Bible . . . All the members of the council recognized the wall of partition between him and themselves on this subject. . . . The Scriptures alone are infallible, the supreme authority for human opinion and

conduct. . . . If Tyndale was strangled at Vilvorde for having translated the Bible into English, then it is also true that Huss, a hundred years earlier, was burned at Constance for his devotion to that sacred book. (*Ibid.*, pp. 138, 139)

The Concept of the Church

In addition to the Bible being the sole authority and to the individual’s right of conscience, Huss also taught that the church, in its fullest, “is the number of all the elect” and in the more narrow sense is “where two or three are gathered together in Christ’s name . . . That is the church” (*Ibid.*, p. 134). This definition of the church contradicted the widely-held belief that the pope and the cardinals constituted the church. Huss’s view of the church was revolutionary thinking, and the ecclesiastics at the Council saw the grave danger in it which threatened to topple their empire.

The Tribunal of Christ

Also, Huss taught that a tribunal higher than the church exists—the tribunal of Christ—and the thought of such a judgment seat sent chills down the spines of the ecclesiastics who considered themselves to be the top tribunal of all things on earth, for didn’t they hold the keys of the kingdom, and didn’t they have the authority to forgive and to condemn? Huss endeavored to turn the eyes of his listeners away from all human tribunals and from the commandments of men to the law of Christ and to Christ himself.

Huss Still Maintained Doctrinal Error

Even though Huss found much truth in scripture, many of the errors of his beloved Catholic Church he did not seem to discern:

However, in the matter of certain practices and teachings, Huss was far behind Luther and Wyclif. He held on to the doctrine of transubstantiation [although at one time he seemed to lean away from it] . . . He opposed the sale of indulgences announced by John XXIII and rested his case wholly with Christ, and yet . . . he did not abandon the doctrine of the intercession of saints or, so far as we know, deny the value of genuine relics. (*Ibid.*, p. 132)

Through it all, Huss remained a son of the Catholic Church. He loved his church and wanted to be in harmony with it, but he would not sacrifice truth for harmony. His new-found ideas came from his study of scripture, and he pleaded with his captors in Constance to show him the error of his thinking by the scriptures he loved so much. This they refused to do, for they had already read his works and knew that his areas of so-called error were those in which he contradicted the church fathers, tradition, or the established dogma, and they were not open to accepting the Bible over these cherished idols.

Huss Dies

And because of this, on July 6, 1415, Huss sang, chained to the stake, until his voice slowly became as silent as the

whispers of smoke encircling him. Then he bowed his head and died.

Registered in the history of nations, John Huss lives. His godly works and steadfast faith, his pure life, and conscientious following of the truth that was unfolded to him, these he would not yield even to be saved a cruel death. That triumphant death was witnessed by all heaven, by the whole universe. Satan bruised the heel of the seed of the woman, but in the act of Huss his head was bruised. (Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 276)

God Seeks Again That Which Is Past

John Huss was a great man, a precursor of many great men to follow. Maybe you will walk in his footsteps; maybe his constancy at Constance will be your example. Studying his life will help you to be ready for such a day: “For the student of such history [Huss’s], the experience of others *can become his experience* through faith” (*Ibid.*, p. 277). This is a powerful statement—by beholding and studying the life of this nobleman of God, we will become changed, through faith, into his type of character.

And for this very reason, God “seeks again” Huss’s experiences. In fact, he recalls *all* the doings of the past and repeats them for our benefit—history is made alive by our heavenly Father!

God has spoken by Solomon that He “requireth that which is past” (Ecclesiastes 3:15). He “seeks again” that which is past (marginal reading). The body of Huss was consumed. The council had done all that they could do with the man whose only crime was that he could not accept as infallible the council of Constance and he could not let their voice stand above the voice of God in His Word. *But God “seeks again that which is past”* recalling all the proceedings whether of judgment or of mercy. *He recalls all the doings of different ages and repeats them in the present generation.* It is for this reason that there is such value in the registered experience of the believers of other days. *The biography of the righteous is among the best*



Huss at the stake

treasures that the church can possess. We have the benefit of the accounts of the workings of the power of evil in contrast to the deeds of those who through many centuries were living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This rich experience is bequeathed to us as a legacy of great value. (*Ibid.*, p. 275)

And heaven is watching to see if we will become noble men and women of God:

The battlements of heaven are thronged with a great crowd of angels watching the conflict of man with the prince of darkness. *They bend from the eminence and with intense interest watch to see if the child of God, harassed, perplexed, persecuted, denounced, defamed, and condemned as was the Master, will look to heaven for strength.* Heaven waits our demand upon its resources. Will we cast away our false props and false theories? Will we reject the words and sayings of men and look to God through the one Mediator for grace, for strength and power? We will never look in vain. Angels are waiting as messengers to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. They are close by everyone who needs their help while fighting the good fight of faith. (*Ibid.*, p. 277)

Abraham Lincoln and Slavery

In 1414, the Papacy exercised a slavery over the souls of men. Huss fought against it like the one-man army he was and conquered, but conquered only as one man, for the battle still rages for the souls of men. Four hundred fifty years later, the United States fought a war against slavery. It lasted 4 years, 3 weeks, and 6 days, according to one reckoning, but it is over. When Lee surrendered to Grant on April 9, 1865, a new day dawned for those enslaved in this nation with lamb-like horns. President Lincoln, however, soon joined the men fallen in battle, but not before he had consistently held his foot to the serpent’s head and gained the victory. In his second inaugural address, March 4, 1865, just weeks before his death on April 15, he spoke these poignant and solemn words about the great contest in which the nation was engaged:

Fellow-countrymen:

At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. . . .

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it; all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war, seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came. . . .



Memorial in Constance to Huss and Jerome

Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

His inaugural speech over, Lincoln slowly pivoted and returned to his place. His had not been an easy task.

Our Task Today

Brothers and sisters, we also are in a war—the greatest of contests. As angels watch from heaven’s battlements, let us strive to finish the work we are in; let us bind up the wounds of our brothers and sisters and care for him who has borne long in the battle. In this controversy, each battle is fought individually, fought by you and fought by me, against a most determined foe, and for this reason God has preserved a history for us of noblemen, men and women who have stood for truth and who have squarely planted their feet on the head of the serpent, many of whom, like noble Abel, have been bruised in the process, but it is only a bruising! Huss lives through the pages of history in God’s great hall of heroes for us to study, yes, but it is so that we may, in turn, truly live through endless ages with our Creator and our God.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
God’s truth is marching on!

Onycha Holt

and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. (Hebrews 12:12)

It’s evidently not of eyewitnesses as of those looking upon us that this scripture speaks, in the figure used, but of witnesses bearing testimony to what they have seen and known. Those who have trusted God and found him faithful through all the ages, bear witness to us that it is good to trust and serve the living God.

We came into a precious heritage in accepting Christ and his service. These men and women of faith and endurance in ages past constitute a spiritual ancestry of ours in this household of faith. Their portraits were drawn by the pencil of inspiration to inspire the children of faith in later times with the same constancy and devotion.

As we accept the name of Christ and become in him children of Abraham and heirs of the glorious name and tradition of the household of faith of all the ages, we may well dwell upon the lives of these spiritual ancestors of ours, whose portraits are drawn for us by the pen of inspiration.

By Christ’s grace let us determine that we will be worthy of the name we bear as Christians and witnesses for God. In every age divine grace has helped youth, as well as age, to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. All the centuries of godly endeavor speak to the youth of today. A great cloud of youthful witnesses bid the young people of this generation to lay aside every weight, and to finish with patience the race whose end now lies just before us in the glorious second coming of Christ our Saviour.

A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Shall round the Saviour’s throne rejoice
In robes of light arrayed.
They climbed the steep ascent toward heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain.
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train.

Reginald Heber, adapted



Old Paths is a free monthly newsletter/study-paper published by Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64 Box 128-B, Welch, WV 24801-9606 U. S. A. The paper is dedicated to the propagation and restoration of the principles of truth that God gave to the early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. *Duplication is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged.* This issue, with other gospel literature we publish, can be found at our website. The url is: <http://www.smyrna.org>. Phone: (304) 732-9204. Fax: (304) 732-7322.

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