

The Neglected Truth about the Sealing

The Second Abomination:

Images of Heavenly Things

Suppose Christ should abide in every heart and selfishness in all its forms should be banished from the church, what would be the result? Harmony, unity, and brotherly love would be seen as verily as in the church which Christ first established. Christian activity would be seen everywhere. The whole church would be kindled into a sacrificial flame for the glory of God. Every Christian would cast in the fruit of his self-denial to be consumed upon the altar. There would be far greater activity in devising fresh methods of usefulness and in studying how to come close to poor sinners to save them from eternal ruin.

Should we dress in plain, modest apparel, without reference to the fashions; should our tables at all times be set with simple, healthful food, avoiding all luxuries, all extravagance; should our houses be built with becoming plainness and furnished in the same manner, it would show the sanctifying power of the truth and would have a telling influence upon unbelievers. But while we conform to the world in these matters, in some cases apparently seeking to excel worldlings in fanciful arrangement, the preaching of the truth will have but little or no effect. Who will believe the solemn truth for this time when those who already profess to believe it contradict their faith by their works? It is not God who has closed the windows of heaven to us, but it is our own conformity to the customs and practices of the world.

The third angel of Revelation 14 is represented as flying swiftly through the midst of heaven crying: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Here is shown the nature of the work of the people of God. They have a message of so great importance that they are represented as flying in the presentation of it to the world. They are holding in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world. The love of Christ constraineth them. This is the

last message. There are no more to follow, no more invitations of mercy to be given after this message shall have done its work. What a trust! What a responsibility is resting upon all to carry the words of gracious invitation: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Everyone who heareth is to say: Come. Not only the ministers, but the people. All are to join in the invitation. Not only by their profession, but by their character and dress, all are to have a winning influence. They are made trustees for the world, executors of the will of One who has bequeathed sacred truth to men. Would that all could feel the dignity and glory of their God-given trust.

Few → Many
little company → Church

THE SEAL OF GOD

EZE. 9:1, 3-6 NATIONS, OR GENTILES NOT MENTIONED IN THIS CHAPTER!
It is about the church.

"He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand."

"And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house." V. 3-6

Jesus is about to leave the mercy seat of the heavenly sanc-

Time element

the church

Four Abominations:

- The Image of Jealousy



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- Images portrayed or carved upon the walls

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- Images portrayed or carved upon the walls
- Women weeping for Tammuz
- Leaders with their backs to the sanctuary and their faces towards the sun, worshiping the sun

Old Paths

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

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

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Straight and Narrow

February 2010



"And he . . . brought me to . . . the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy." (Ezekiel 8:3)

Prayer Requests

Heavy on our hearts is the on-going tragedy in Haiti. I am sure all of us have prayed for the many victims of Haiti and the great loss they have suffered. Let us continue to remember them in prayer as they try to rebuild their lives following the loss of family, home, income, and basic necessities; and let us seek to answer our prayers with whatever donations we can make to the disaster relief charity of our choice.

Let us also continue to pray for the 59th General Conference Session and the plans that we are making now to be present. One need we have is housing for our workers. Will you please join us in prayer that

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Old Paths

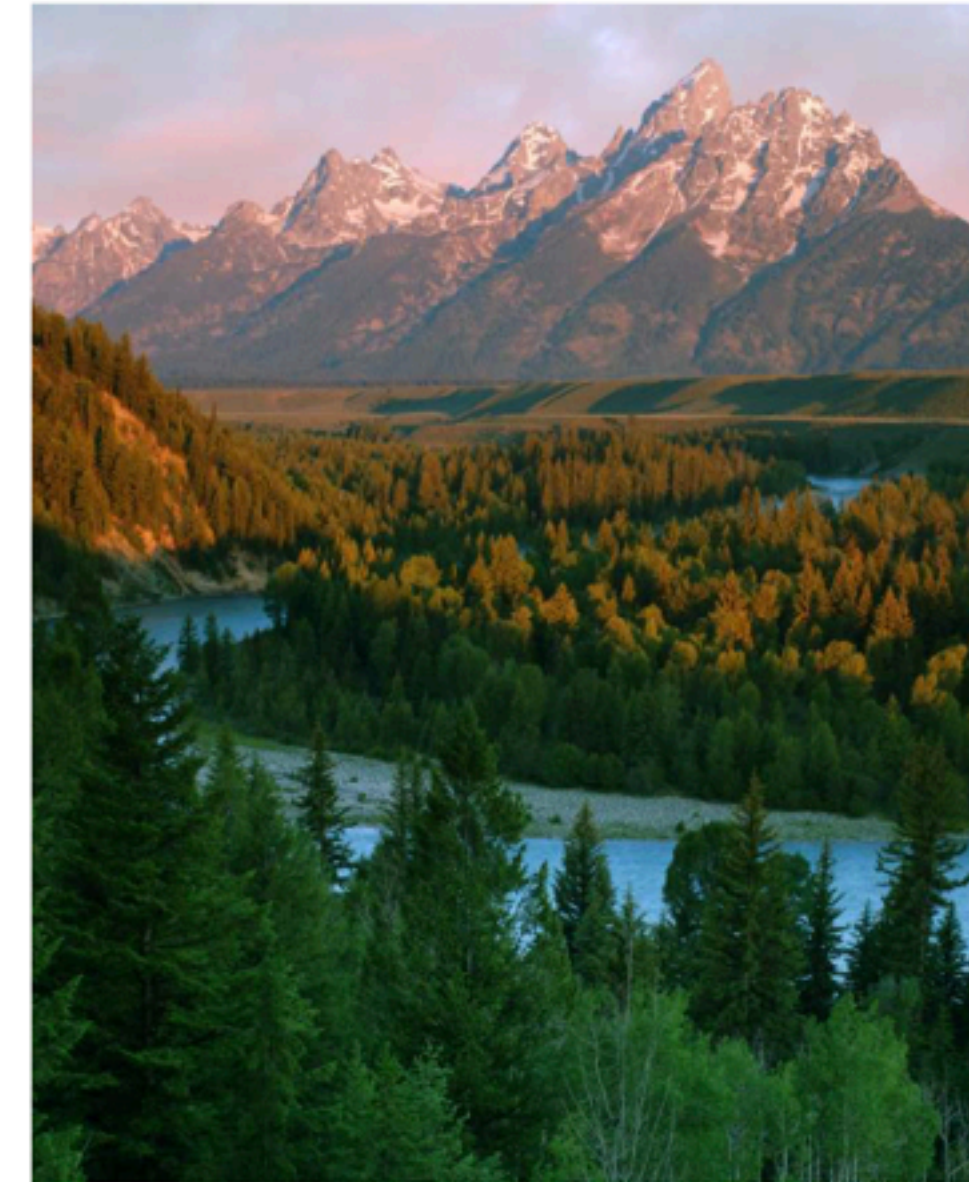
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Straight and Narrow

March 2010



It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22, 23)

Prayer Requests

Pastor Pascual Flores recently ministered in Venezuela, and we ask that you join us in prayer that the fruit of his labors will continue to grow in his absence. Also, please remember to pray for the upcoming 59th General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia, and our outreach plans for it, and for God's blessing on the plans being laid for the West Virginia Camp Meeting.

In addition, recently we have begun to pray for different states of the United States each week. So far, we have prayed for those of you who receive *Old Paths*, as well as for all the residents, in the states of AL, AK, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, and for DC. During the month of March, we will be praying for FL for weeks one and two, GA and HI during week three, and ID and IL during week four. We entreat your combined prayers as we ask for God to pour out his blessing on these states, and may God richly bless you as you work for him this month.

Onycha Holt

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Old Paths

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Vol. 19, No.4

Straight and Narrow

April 2010



Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. (Psalm 85:11)

Prayer Requests

We continue to ask for your intercessory prayers for God to lead out in the upcoming West Virginia Camp Meeting, June 15-19, 2010, and at the General Conference Session to follow in Atlanta, Georgia. There is much extra printing to be done, as well as a special multi-language DVD to be prepared.

During the month of April, we will be including in our prayers the states of Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, and Massachusetts—two states, in order, for each week of April. We ask for your combined prayers, entreating God to work in a mighty way in behalf of each family that receives *Old Paths*, as well as to speak to the hearts of each resident of these states, as only God can, and draw them to himself. If you have concerns you would like to be included in this prayer request column, please submit them to us, and we will gladly include them. ✍

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Old Paths

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Straight and Narrow

May 2010



For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. (Isaiah 30:15)

Prayer Requests

This month we draw ever closer to the West Virginia camp meeting and the General Conference Session. We do ask for prayer as we approach these important events.

Sister Ann Ford has requested prayer for her great-granddaughter, Rene. She is very ill, and we ask for you to pray for her and her family.

We also remember the families of the twenty-nine coal miners who were killed last month in a mine explosion in West Virginia.

Brother Aland Ashton of Peru had surgery again last month and we ask that you will pray for his strength.

Please also continue to pray that we may find housing for the G C Session and have the materials prepared that are needed at that time.

Editor

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Old Paths

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Vol. 19, No. 6

Straight and Narrow

June 2010



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

Prayer Requests — Update on Visiting the General Conference: We are currently preparing materials to share at the General Conference Session, June 23–July 3, and we want to give you an update on some challenges we are currently facing. Due to limited human resources here at Smyrna, we do not yet have all the books and tracts prepared that we would like to take with us. We have finished a run of *What Did the Pioneers Believe?* but still have many printed copies of *The Foundation of Our Faith* that need to be assembled. We are praying that the necessary materials can be readied, but we certainly need the Lord's blessing and your prayers. *Continued on page 6, column 2*

Images of Heavenly Things

Ezekiel 8:6-9 (AV) – 6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations. 7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. 8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. 9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

Ezekiel 8:10-12 (AV) – 10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. 11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. 12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

The masculine noun *ra* often is set in contrast with *tób* (good) as opposite poles of the moral spectrum. Sometimes *shalóm* (peace) is given as its opposite. The noun is further defined as being that condition or action which in his (God's) sight is unacceptable (Jer 52:2; Mal 2:17; cf. Neh 9:28).

.... [The adjective] form of *ra* qualifies the nouns to which it is related, indicating the quality or the injurious activity of the noun.
(*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 2, p. 855)

Psalm 27:5 (AV) – 5 For in the time (yom) of trouble (ra) 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.

Numbers 33:52 (AV) – 52 Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures (maskith), and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places:

Ezekiel 8:12 (RSV) – 12 Then he said to me, “Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, every man **in his room of pictures?** For they say, ‘The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.’ ”

Exodus 20:4, 5 (AV) – 4 Thou shalt not **make** unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not **bow down** thyself to them, nor **serve** them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

Deuteronomy 4:12-15 (AV) – 12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. 13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

14 And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. 15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:

Deuteronomy 4:16-19 (AV) – 16 Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, 18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: 19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

To make an image of God dishonors Him. No one should bring into service the power of imagination to worship that which belittles God in the mind and associates Him with common things. Those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. They must exercise living faith. Their worship will then be controlled not by the imagination, but by genuine faith. (*Sermons and Talks*, bk. 2, pp. 184.5)

The men of that generation were not all, in the fullest acceptation of the term, idolaters. Many professed to be worshipers of God. They claimed that their idols were representations of the Deity, and that through them the people could obtain a clearer conception of the divine Being. This class were foremost in rejecting the preaching of Noah. As they endeavored to represent God by material objects, their minds were blinded to His majesty and power; they ceased to realize the holiness of His character, or the sacred, unchanging nature of His requirements.

(Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 95.3)

“Images and pictures were first introduced into churches, not to be worshiped, but either in the place of books to give instruction to those who could not read, or to excite devotion in the minds of others. How far they ever answered such a purpose is doubtful; but, even granting that this was the case for a time, it soon ceased to be so, and it was found that pictures and images brought into churches darkened rather than enlightened the minds of the ignorant – degraded rather than exalted the devotion of the worshiper. So that, however they might have been intended to direct men’s minds to god, they ended in turning them from him to the worship of created things.” –J. Mendham, *The Seventh General Council, The Second Of nicaea*, introduction, pages iii-vi. (Quoted in the appendix of *The Great Controversy*, p. 680.2)

God can make pictures upon the mind's eye more beautiful and correct than can be made by the greatest artist who has ever presented to the world a representation of heavenly things.

(The Publishing Ministry, p. 219.4)

Galatians 3:1 (AV) – 1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Galatians 3:1 (BBE) – O foolish Galatians. Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?

You express a desire for me to describe things concerning the New Jerusalem. I positively decline to do anything of the kind.

My powers would be inadequate to do this or even make an approach to it, and I advise you not to make any attempt to have a particular representation which will carry the impression that it is the representation of the New Jerusalem. The most eloquent representation of the New Jerusalem is but . . . [an] attempt to present it. (*This Day with God*, p. 103.2)

Anyone who is dealing with the future unseen world may best describe its untold glories by quoting the words of Paul, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). I feel that many approach sacred things as though their finite powers were capable of taking them in. . . .

(This Day with God, p. 103.3)

There is so large a number that tread on holy ground with unsanctified feet that we are very cautious, even in statements that we present to them in regard to sacred and eternal things, because finite and common ideas become mixed with the holy and sacred. Man may try with his entrusted and cultivated powers to represent something of heaven and he will make a blunder of the whole thing. (*This Day with God*, p. 103.4)

Your power as an artist will, when stretched to its utmost capacity fall down faint and weary in seeking to take in the things of the unseen world, and yet there is an eternity beyond. With these statements you will excuse me from attempting to portray before you anything concerning the works of the great Master Artist.

(This Day with God, p. 103.5)

Let the imaginations of the people be on the highest stretch to contemplate the glories of the New Jerusalem and yet they have but just entered upon the borders of the eternal weight of glory that shall be realized by the faithful overcomer. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the ground whereon thou standeth is holy. This is the very best answer I can give to your question.— Letter 54, April 4, 1886, to Sister Stewart. (*This Day with God*, p. 103.6)

The artist may do his best to represent the things his eyes have never seen, but his representations are so far beneath the reality that I am pained as I behold them. Neither God nor heaven nor Christ, who is the image of the Father, can be truly represented by the art of man. If the Lord had thought it advisable to represent Christ in this way, His person would have been described in the writings of the apostle. ... (*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 219.5)

. . . The Holy Spirit takes the most attractive excellencies of the One who is altogether lovely, and presents them in such a way as to engage the attention and receive the best attention of the renewed heart. God designs that the Holy Spirit shall keep before the mind's eye scenes that will attract and absorb all there is of the newborn soul. We need not any external representations of the person of Christ. (*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 220.2)

Would not the mind have clearer, more perfect ideas of angels, of Christ, of all spiritual things, if no pictures were made to represent heavenly things? (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*,. p. 171.2 – Letter 145, 1899)

In arranging this transfer, Jeroboam thought to appeal to the imagination of the Israelites by setting before them some visible representation to symbolize the presence of the invisible God. Accordingly he caused to be made two calves of gold, and these were placed within shrines at the appointed centers of worship. In this effort to represent the Deity, Jeroboam violated the plain command of Jehovah: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” Exodus 20:4, 5. (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 100.1)

Most of the Christians at last consented to lower their standard, and a union was formed between Christianity and paganism. Although the worshipers of idols professed to be converted, and united with the church, they still clung to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints. The foul leaven of idolatry, thus brought into the church, continued its baleful work. Unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies were incorporated into her faith and worship. As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost her purity and power. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 43.1)

A true image of God is not to be found in all the world; and hence that His glory is defiled, and His truth corrupted by the lie, whenever He is set before our eyes in a visible form. ... Therefore, to devise any image of God, is in itself impious; because by this corruption His Majesty is adulterated, and He is figured to be other than He is. (*Calvin's Commentaries*, vol. 4, "Harmony of the Law,"

Part II)