

# 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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**Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. (Matthew 9:38)**





## The Midnight of the World

By Onycha Holt

In 1938 Dr. Roy Plunkett was working on developing a new refrigerant for DuPont when he discovered a white powder in a canister of tetrafluoroethylene gas which he had frozen to the temperatures of dry ice (approximately  $-109^{\circ}$  F). He applied for a patent for the substance in 1939, and it was granted in 1941. This new man-made substance was then used in the Manhattan Project and in the military, and today it is found in the bloodstream of virtually every human being on earth. I can be sure it is in mine, and you can be sure it is in yours. Scientists will not say it is in 100% of the world's population, but they do venture a guess that 96–99% of the population is carrying it in their bodies. It has no known half-life. It cannot be eliminated. It is indestructible.

Earlier, in 1932, Plunkett attended Manchester College in Indiana and became close friends with his roommate, Paul Flory, who later was awarded the Nobel prize in chemistry for his contribution to the theory of polymers. Did Plunkett ever receive the Nobel Prize? No, and for good reason. Even though his discovery has brought and continues to bring billions of dollars to DuPont, it has resulted in death, diseases, and birth defects, and its invasion into the hitherto untainted blood supply of both man and beast can never be reversed and only intensifies after each exposure.

How can it be that in less than one hundred years this product has reached around the world and into the innermost part of people? It is because of its versatility of application. Here is a short list of how it has been or is being used: Dental floss, windshields for vehicles; electrical wires; artillery shell fuses; stain and water repellents in carpet, upholstery, and clothing; fast food and deli wrappers; pastry bags; bags for French fries; pizza boxes; microwave popcorn bags; cosmetics and hair supplies; firefighting foam; clam shells for takeout food; paper plates and paper straws; lubricants in machinery; parchment paper; wind-

shield wipers; lightbulbs; medical catheters and skin graft material; weather-resistant paints; and non-stick coatings on cookware, originally known as Teflon.

Particular chemicals in Teflon achieve its sought-after properties, some of which are known as PFOA, PTFE, and PFAS. PFAS (per/polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a class of at least seven thousand compounds. When one compound is banned by the government, DuPont can plug one of the remaining seven thousand compounds into the formula and modify it to achieve similar results and be legal.

It is true that the vast majority of people are not overtly sick from their exposure to these chemicals, but some are, and the risk is present, and repeated exposure increases the amount stored in the body. They have been called *forever compounds*, and the risk is greatly heightened by working with the chemicals, by drinking contaminated water, and by breathing contaminated air, as was seen in and around the DuPont plant in Parkersburg, West Virginia, during the 1980s.

### No one can say

None of us can say when Lucifer first voiced a doubting thought to a trusted companion, but we can say that his first cherished doubt led to him being cast out of heaven and to sin becoming a forever substance in his mind. It is indestructible in him, with no half-life and no hope of elimination, for he was and is determined to stand on his own, apart from God.

None of us can say when Satan appeared in the Garden of Eden and enticed Eve to sin, but we can say that thus began the awful snowball of sin, culminating into the huge monster it is today, but praise God *we* have hope. It does not have to stay forever in our minds and be indestructible. Sin's strong bonds can be broken, and that is the sweet story of salvation.

## What we can say

In this great story, stained with blood and tears, Jesus Christ has spoken and is speaking to all people. He led ancient Israel with the cloud by day and by the pillar of fire by night, and he later walked in person among men, teaching them his kingdom on earth is of the heart and is not in the hallways of pageantry and government. His purpose was and is to unfurl goodness and mercy in the heart held tightly by the enemy of all goodness and mercy, and he left his new kingdom on earth, unsullied and untarnished, in the care of the apostles. But soon in this church the first thought of human rule in the realm of the spirit arose, and the union of church and state, a masterpiece of Satan, was born. This concord tarried in its infancy for years because the Roman Empire already had its own form of this union. Their emperors were worshipped as divine, thus uniting the people's religious aspirations with the emperor's lust for power and control, and here is where trouble brewed for the early Christians.

## Ancient Rome

Ancient Romans worshipped many gods, the emperor being only one of them, but their gods were all visible gods. Romans could see them and could bow down to them. They brought their offerings to them. This was how their religion took form, but Christians were different. They worshipped an invisible God and their form of spirituality was submission of the mind, actions, and desires to their God and to his way of doing things. Because of this, they were scoffed at, ridiculed, and rejected. They were even called atheists because they did not believe in the true religion of the Romans, and this caused rumblings and mob reactions in the streets. Destructive rumors circulated, one being that Christians ate human babies, so that when a Christian woman picked up an exposed infant<sup>1</sup> in order to help it, it was really in order to serve that baby, baked in a loaf of bread, at the next Christian communion service.

Thus, Christianity caused great divisions in the Roman Empire, especially in Rome itself, through the widespread misconceptions of the public and by the Christian's refusal to compromise in matters of the spirit, so that in the time of Nero, it was easy for many people to believe that the Christians had burned Rome.

What helped sustain the empire was its ability to unify the territory it conquered with itself. Rome built roads, encouraged commerce, and created a monetary system. It also established prefects, kings, and governors throughout its empire and taxed and demanded tribute. These latter

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1. Exposing infants was the practice of abandoning infants along roadsides, leaving them to either die of exposure or to be rescued by someone usually to be raised as a slave or as a prostitute.

measures were disliked by the nation of Israel, but they had to submit, for they had been conquered, but they were able to develop a working relationship with Rome that allowed them to adhere to their religious precepts. Later, however, Roman emperors demanded the people of its empire unify in religious belief as well. Showing their allegiance to Rome by burning incense to the emperor was all that was necessary. Then the Christian could worship as he or she pleased, but true Christians could not, of course, do this, and years of persecution resulted.

The fires of persecution were kindled. Christians were stripped of their possessions and driven from their homes. They "endured a great fight of afflictions." Hebrews 10:32. They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment." Hebrews 11:36. Great numbers sealed their testimony with their blood. Noble and slave, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, were alike slain without mercy. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 39.2)

. . . Christians were falsely accused of the most dreadful crimes and declared to be the cause of great calamities—famine, pestilence, and earthquake. As they became the objects of popular hatred and suspicion, informers stood ready, for the sake of gain, to betray the innocent. They were condemned as rebels against the empire, as foes of religion, and pests to society. Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in the amphitheaters. Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs. Their punishment was often made the chief entertainment at public fetes. Vast multitudes assembled to enjoy the sight and greeted their dying agonies with laughter and applause. (Ibid., p. 40.1)

Wherever they sought refuge, the followers of Christ were hunted like beasts of prey. They were forced to seek concealment in desolate and solitary places. "Destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Verses 37, 38. The catacombs afforded shelter for thousands. Beneath the hills outside the city of Rome, long galleries had been tunneled through earth and rock; the dark and intricate network of passages extended for miles beyond the city walls. In these underground retreats the followers of Christ buried their dead; and here also, when suspected and proscribed, they found a home. When the Life-giver shall awaken those who have fought the good fight, many a martyr for Christ's sake will come forth from those gloomy caverns. (Ibid., p. 40.2)

This persecution continued until Constantine joined hands with the man of sin in the fourth century.

## Establishment of the man of sin

Who is the man of sin who exalts himself above all that is called God?

Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that *man of sin* be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4)

The man of sin is the papacy:

The “man of sin,” which is also styled “the mystery of iniquity,” “the son of perdition,” and “that wicked,” *represents the papacy* . . . (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 356.1; all emphasis in this article supplied unless otherwise noted)

The man of sin is antichrist:

The fourth commandment has been trampled upon, therefore we are called upon to repair the breach in the law and plead for the broken down Sabbath. The *man of sin* who exalted himself above God, and thought to change times and laws, *brought about the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week*. In doing this he made a breach in the law of God. Just prior to the great day of God, a message is sent forth to warn the people to come back to their allegiance to *the law of God which antichrist has broken down*. (Ellen White, *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White*, 1880 ed., p. 236.3)

The man of sin is also the little horn of Daniel 7:8 and of Daniel 8:9:

Says Daniel, of *the little horn, the papacy*: “He shall think to change times and the law.” Daniel 7:25, R.V. And Paul styled the same power the “man of sin,” who was to exalt himself above God. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 446.1)

And Satan stands in control behind the papacy—it is his masterpiece of power:

This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of “the man of sin” foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a **masterpiece of Satan’s power**—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will. (Ibid., p. 50.1)

He has been putting together a master plan since before the Garden of Eden. Think of it like the visual 3D manifestations that represent the molecular geometry of atoms and electrons, only his equation is huge, spreading in many directions, and these spiritual compounds have invaded our

minds and are indestructible unless God intervenes. They are like *forever compounds* capable of controlling the heart and soul of man, and the **final** form of his master plan is just around the corner.

Adventists hear little of the papacy in Adventist sermons, books, Sabbath school lesson quarterlies, church periodicals, and theological articles and papers. The papacy has become neutralized. It is no longer considered an enemy to church or to society, and it promotes itself as a sponsor of goodness and a supporter of life, health, and peace. Who could be against that? Certainly the Adventist Church isn’t.

We will come face to face with Satan’s master plan and through the power of God, we will not be overcome, but the complacent world and church will be. Why should this be important to us now, who have been forewarned and who know better?

## Mount Etna

Mount Etna is the second most active volcano in the world, maybe the most active. Geologists differ in their assessments, but it is in a near constant state of activity. In just six months in 2021, for example, Etna’s elevation increased by one hundred feet, and the second largest city of Sicily lies at its base, bustling with people, vehicles, and activities. You can find quaint, narrow streets, outdoor tables filled with people enjoying a meal, and fountains and markets. It is filled with old and young people and with old and new buildings. Life can be fast-paced but pervaded with a sense of security and satisfaction, yet the people are sitting on a time bomb. Certainly they know this, but they continue on as if all is normal. Each looks at the other and since no one seems to be concerned, neither are they. The most sophisticated monitoring equipment is focused on Mt. Etna, and residents expect to be warned of any major activity, but Mt. Etna is on an island, and one million people seeking to leave the city of Catania all at once in an emergency is a recipe for disaster. Now would be the prudent time to leave Catania for the safer regions of north Italy, for tomorrow’s safety cannot be promised.

The people of Catania are like many of the people in your area. They go through their daily routine day after day and are mainly concerned with themselves and their possessions, with their power and prestige, and with their quality of life. Our focus, however, should be on watching and praying, lest the day of the Lord come upon us unawares, and on presenting our bodies “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,” (Romans 12:1), which is our reasonable service. We are not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we “may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).



Most likely you are familiar with the book *The Great Controversy* and with the closing scenes of earth's existence it portrays, and maybe you have thought that when you see those things begin to happen you will make serious changes in your life to prepare for Christ's return. I can assure you it will be too late then. It takes time to develop a character fit for heaven, all by the grace of God, and now is the acceptable time to do so. "Behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

So, to answer the question of why Satan's master plan should be important to us in spite of our foreknowledge—it is because knowing is not enough. We must act on our knowledge and act on it now, for tomorrow may be too late.

### The man of sin

Let us now return to the man of sin—how did the pure church at Rome become the papal church of Rome?

The powers of earth and hell arrayed themselves against Christ in the person of His followers. Paganism foresaw that should the gospel triumph, her temples and altars would be swept away; therefore she summoned her forces to destroy Christianity. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 39.2)

And this persecution began "under Nero about the time of the martyrdom of Paul" (Ibid., para. 3) and continued under the succeeding emperors until Constantine, but "Satan's efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence" (p. 41.3) were in vain. "The gospel continued to spread and the numbers of its adherents to increase" (Ibid.).



Constantine

Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God by planting his banner in the Christian church. (Ibid., p. 42.2)

And he did this by creating his masterpiece of power—the man of sin—but we do not know who the first leader of the Christian church in Rome was. Roman Catholicism claims Peter. Clement is acknowledged by historians as a bishop of Rome in the first century, but when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans it was to the church in general, and no head elder or leader is mentioned. Historians also tell us that in the first century there were seven synagogues in Rome and three cemeteries, but these were not Christian Jewish synagogues or cemeteries, and no leader is mentioned for them, either, but little by little the mys-

tery of iniquity grew and as it grew, persecution against Christians also grew:

Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, "the mystery of iniquity" carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly **the customs of heathenism** found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of **compromise and conformity** was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the **pomp and pride** of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted **human theories and traditions**. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. (Ibid., p. 49.2)

Constantine, the emperor of the western Roman Empire, and Licinius, the emperor of the eastern Roman Empire, met in Milan, Italy, probably in February 313, for the marriage of Constantine's half-sister, Constantia, about nineteen years old, to Licinius, who was at least thirty-eight. At this time, Constantine and Licinius also agreed on a religious policy that was expressed several months later in what is commonly called the Edict of Milan. This edict was actually a letter written by Licinius to the the governors of the provinces of the East, instructing them that all persecution of Christians was to cease, that confiscated Christian property, individual and corporate, was to be promptly restored to the rightful owners, and that all citizens, Christians included, were to be allowed freedom to practice religion as they chose. In addition, these directives were to be publicly announced throughout the land, so that all citizens would be aware of them.

A. T. Jones described Constantine this way:

The man who can see in the life of Constantine any evidences of conversion, possesses a degree of penetration truly wonderful; equal, indeed to that which can discern "transient elements" where it demonstrates that there are none. The one act of Constantine which is most nearly consistent with the idea of conversion, was performed in March, A. D. 313, eight years before the earliest date we have ever heard claimed for his conversion. That act was the edict of Milan, "the great act of toleration," which "confirmed to each individual of the Roman world the privilege of choosing and professing his own religion," and stopped the persecution of Christians. (A. T. Jones, *The "Abiding Sabbath" and the "Lord's Day,"* p. 99.1)

Jones noted that soon “the edict of Milan was revoked” (Ibid.). Edward Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* explains that this revoking involved the persecution by the state against those who dissented from the Catholic church.

Constantine gave them [the clergy] security, wealth, honours, and revenge; and **the support of the orthodox faith was considered as the most sacred and important duty of the civil magistrate.** The edict of Milan, the great charter of toleration, had confirmed to each individual of the Roman world the privilege of choosing and professing his own religion. But this inestimable privilege was soon violated; **with the knowledge of truth, the emperor imbibed the maxims of persecution; and the sects which dissented from the Catholic church were afflicted and oppressed** by the triumph of Christianity. Constantine easily believed that the Heretics, who presumed to dispute *his* opinions or to oppose *his* commands, were guilty of the most absurd and criminal obstinacy; and that a seasonable application of moderate severities might save those unhappy men from the danger of an everlasting condemnation. Not a moment was lost in excluding the ministers and teachers of the **separated congregations** from any share of the rewards and immunities which the emperor had so liberally bestowed on the orthodox clergy. But as the sectaries might still exist under the cloud of royal disgrace, the conquest of the East was immediately followed by an edict which announced their total destruction. After a preamble filled with passion and reproach, Constantine absolutely prohibits the assemblies of the Heretics, and confiscates their public property to the use either of the revenue or of the Catholic church. (Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 2, p. 602; emphasis on the words “his” in original)

In February 313, both Constantine and Licinius agreed to end the persecution of Christians and to allow all citizens of the Roman Empire freedom of religion, but soon the Edict of Milan was “revoked,” according to Jones. In 320 Licinius did renege on his agreement and began persecuting Christians again by confiscating their belongings and by taking away the positions they held. Jones also further described the character of Constantine, stating that

... soon after his “conversion” the edict of Milan was revoked. We shall name here some of his principal acts after his “conversion:” March 7, A. D. 321, he issued an edict in honor of the venerable day of the sun. The very next day, March 8, 321, he issued an edict commanding the consultation of the soothsayers. In 323 Licinius was murdered by his orders, in violation of a solemn oath given to his own sister, Constantia. In 325 he convoked, and presided at, the Council of Nice. In 326 he was guilty

of the murder of his own son, Crispus, his nephew, Licinius, and his wife, Fausta, to say nothing of others. In 328 he laid the foundation of Constantinople according to “the ancient ritual of Roman Paganism,” and in 330 the city was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Afterward he set up in the same city the images of the deities of Paganism—Minerva, Cybele, Amphitrite, Pan, and the Delphic Tripod of the oracle of Apollo—“and of all the statues which were introduced from different quarters none were received with greater honor than those of Apollo.” But above all, as though he would give to the whole world the most abiding proof of his Paganism, he erected a pillar, over a hundred and twenty feet high, and on the top of it he placed an image in which he “dared to mingle together the attributes of the Sun of Christ,<sup>3</sup> and of himself.”—Milman, *History of Christianity*, book 3, chap. 3, par. 7 (Jones, *The “Abiding Sabbath” and the “Lord’s Day,”* p. 99.1)

2. The phrase “the ancient ritual of Roman Paganism” is from Milman, but the chapter it is taken from opens with statements about the “decaying cause of Paganism,” about Constantinople being “favourable to the consolidation and energy of the Christian power in the West,” and that “the absence of a secular competitor allowed the papal authority to grow up” (H. H. Milman, *The History of Christianity*, vol. II, p. 400). We also read that Constantinople was “favourable to the progress of Christianity. It removed the seat of government from the presence of those awful temples, to which ages of glory had attached an inalienable sanctity . . .” (p. 401). That Milman is saying the foundation of Constantinople was laid according to the ancient ritual of Roman Paganism is questionable but possible because statues of pagan gods were erected in the city, but no new pagan temples were built (p. 403), and the context of the chapter is pro-Christian: “Heaven inspired, commanded, sanctified the foundation of the second Rome. The ancient ritual of Roman Paganism contained a solemn ceremony, which dedicated a new city to the protection of the Deity” (p. 404). In the dedication of Constantinople, Constantine held hands with paganism and with Christianity.
3. Here we have a typographical error of significance. The original states: “But on a still loftier, the famous pillar of porphyry, stood an image in which (if we are to credit modern authority, and the more modern our authority, the less likely is it to have invented so singular a statement) Constantine dared to mingle together the attributes of the Sun, of Christ, and of himself” (Ibid., pp. 407, 408). The comma after Sun was left out. What Milman is describing is a triad of attributes, not two.

Ellen White also explains this mingling:

Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions **were incorporated into the faith** and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

**This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of “the man of sin”** foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 49.2–50.1)

What was the paganism that was incorporated into the church? A search of *Ministry* magazine since the 1950s, though not exhaustive, comes up empty-handed for any explanation, as does also a search of other articles by Adventist authors, but Ellen White tells us quite thoroughly. The third chapter in any version of *The Great Controversy* lists many things that were incorporated into the early Christian church from paganism or because of paganish thinking, and “paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror” (Ibid., p. 49.2). Remember, paganism can be any non-Christian religion. Here are the points she makes:

**Point #1:** “The pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ” (p. 50.3).

Catholic doctrine is that “Christ established **his Church** on the Apostles and their episcopal successors, whose visible head and principle of unity became Peter and his successor the Bishop of Rome . . .” (John A. Hardon, S. J., *Pocket Catholic Dictionary, Abridged edition of Modern Catholic Dictionary*, p. 125).

This statement excludes anyone who is not part of the Catholic Church from being part of the church of Christ, and secondly, Peter’s confession upon which the church was to be built is that Jesus is the Son of the living God.

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:16–18; see *The Desire of Ages*, pages 411.4–414.3.)

Instead of appointing one to be their head, Christ said to the disciples, “Be not ye called Rabbi;” “neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.”

Matthew 23:8, 10. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 414.2)

**Point #2:** The pope is “invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world” (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 50.3).

**The Pope, Bishop of Rome** and Peter’s successor, “is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful.” “For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #882, at [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P2A.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P2A.HTM))

The expression “power of the keys” is derived from Christ’s words to St. Peter (in Matthew 16:19). . . . Christ by employing this expression clearly designed to signify his intention to confer on St. Peter the supreme authority over His Church. (*Catholic Encyclopedia* at <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08631b.htm>)

This statement [Matthew 16:18–19] is seen as a biblical basis for the power of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, the successor of Saint Peter, in the Church. Papal coats of arms are traditionally adorned with the keys of the kingdom of heaven. ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Keys\\_of\\_Heaven](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Keys_of_Heaven))

The keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:19), however, are representative of the words of Christ. “‘The keys of the kingdom of heaven’ are the words of Christ. All the words of Holy Scripture are His, and are here included. These words have power to open and to shut heaven. They declare the conditions upon which men are received or rejected. Thus the work of those who preach God’s word is a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. Theirs is a mission weighted with eternal results” (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 413.6).

**Point #3:** “. . . the pope has arrogated the very titles of Deity” (Ellen White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 53.1; *The Great Controversy* 1888 ed., p. 50.3).

Today this is downplayed by the Roman Catholic Church; however, we read that:

As the Pagan Cæsars were styled “Our Lord and God” (*Dominus et deus imperator*), so the Pope for centuries accepted that title. Innocent III. and Leo X. did so, and the Jesuit “Father” Sydney Smith, in his C.T.S. Tract, “Does the Pope claim to be God?” admits that the “Bishop of the Apostolic See” was “occasionally styled *terrenus Deus*, an earthly God, or *alter Deus in terris*, another God on earth.” In the Gloss on the Extravaganza of



Pope John XXII., A.D. 1316–34, the Canon Law styles him “our Lord God the Pope.” This was continued in all editions of the Canon Law up to A.D. 1612, when Protestant exposure caused subsequent editions to suppress the word “God.” But no Pope has ever refused that impious title. On the contrary. (Baron Porcelli, *The Antichrist: His Portrait and History*, p. 28)

**Point #4:** The pope “has been declared infallible. He demands the homage of all men” (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 50.3).

Again from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “The Roman Pontiff, head of the college of bishops, enjoys this infallibility in virtue of his office, when, as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful - who confirms his brethren in the faith he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #891, at [https://web.archive.org/web/20110429072610/https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P2A.HTM](https://web.archive.org/web/20110429072610/https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P2A.HTM)).

**Point #5:** The sacred truths of the Bible were concealed and suppressed, the circulation of the Bible prohibited, and the people were forbidden to read it or have it in their houses. (White, *The Great Controversy*, page 51.3.)

**Point #6:** The adoration of images and relics (Ibid., page 51.4)

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. (Ibid., p. 43.1).

**Point #7:** “. . . Rome presumed to expunge from the law of God the second commandment, forbidding image worship . . .” (Ibid.).

**Point #8:** The institution of Sunday sacredness (Ibid., page 54.1)

**Point #9:** “Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome” (Ibid., p. 55.1).

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. (Mark 11:22)

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26)

**Point #10:** The people “were taught not only to look to the pope as their mediator, but to trust to works of their own to atone for sin” (Ibid., p. 55.3).

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. (Romans 3:28)

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

**Point #11:** “Ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of the pope from the earliest times” (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 56.1).

**Point #12:** “The theory of the immortality of the soul was one of those false doctrines that Rome, borrowing from paganism, incorporated into the religion of Christendom” (Ibid., p. 549.2). “Serious errors were thus introduced into the Christian faith. Prominent among these was the belief in man’s natural immortality and his consciousness in death” (Ibid., p. 58.2).

**Point #13:** The doctrine of the immortality of the soul led to the doctrines of purgatory, of eternal torment, of the invocation of saints, and of the veneration of Mary. (Ibid., page 58.2.)

**Point #14:** The doctrine of indulgences taught the people “that by the payment of money to the church they might free themselves from sin, and also release the souls of their deceased friends who were confined to the tormenting flames” (Ibid., p. 59.1).

**Point #15:** Through “the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass,” papal priests “openly claimed the power of creating God, the Creator of all things” (Ibid., p. 59.2). The idolatrous sacrifice of the mass is a “horrible, Heaven-insulting heresy” (Ibid.).

**Point #16:** And the “most terrible of all the engines of the papacy—the Inquisition” (Ibid., p. 59.3).

The prince of darkness wrought with the leaders of the papal hierarchy. In their secret councils Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men, while unseen in the midst stood an angel of God, taking the fearful record of their iniquitous decrees and writing the history of deeds too horrible to appear to human eyes. “Babylon the great” was “drunken with the blood of the saints.” The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried to God for vengeance upon that apostate power. (Ibid.)

The man of sin has truly brought *midnight to the world*.

With these pagan philosophies and doctrines still present in the world, why do we not hear more about them in our circles to help fortify us against them? Maybe because there is no need. Maybe we have studied diligently



and are well informed, but not everyone is well informed. The Adventist publishing field is tame concerning them right now perhaps because the papacy itself appears quite tame also and Adventist leadership wants to maintain the calm, but this is our time of danger and peril. The things we hear and see have a stickiness about them. They become embedded in our minds, even if we do not agree with them, and the more we hear them the more normal they seem. Think about the **first** time you saw a man dressed and made up as a woman and how sick it probably made you feel. Today we still abhor it, but the shock effect is gone because we have seen it over and over.

Do you remember the advice to “train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6)? The truths taught our children and grandchildren are embedded in their minds with a stickiness that will continue to influence them in old age, and the same is true for us. What we have been taught and what we have exposed ourselves to, good and bad, stays with us. We can overcome the evil through the grace of God, and righteousness will be strengthened as we study and grow in grace, but we need to be aware of the subtle and not so subtle deceptions promoted by paganism and how they influence our thinking.

One of these deceptions is a one-person head to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, although an administrative committee and a group of vice-presidents help that person. Ellen White tried to rectify this in 1901, but in 1903 an acting president was again in place, and the problem is people love to have it so. It is much easier to relate to and to look up to a person than to a committee. The world may have loved the Queen of England, but not necessarily the monarchy. The Israelites wanted a visible king as leader, not an invisible God, and many Adventists have a church president they cheer on, follow, and embrace. They cannot do that as well with a committee. In addition, the president of the Adventist denomination rules hierarchically and with authority over the worldwide church.

Next, have sacred truths of the Bible been concealed or suppressed, and changing any of the pillars of our faith also applies. The servant of the Lord tells us:

**In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?** (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, May 25, 1905, par. 28)

**Let none seek to tear away the foundations of our faith,—the foundations that were laid at the beginning of our work, by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation. Upon these foundations we have been building for the last fifty years. Men may suppose that they have found a new way, and that they can lay a stronger foundation than that which has been laid. But this is a great deception. Other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid.** (Ellen White, *Australasian Union Conference Record*, March 15, 1904, par. 12; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 297.1)

**But just as surely as we fail to heed the messages that for the last fifty years the Lord has been giving, just as surely as we turn from these messages to human impulses and human science, framing laws that are directly opposed to God’s Word, so surely will we reap the consequence.** (Ellen White, *General Conference Bulletin*, March 30, 1903, Art. A, par. 19)

So, have sacred truths been concealed or suppressed, contrary to this advice? Absolutely, and we acknowledge this with heaviness of spirit, for we all love the truths of the Bible. We take our stand upon them and would rather die than compromise them, but things were beginning to wane in 1904, causing Sister White to write:

**The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past.** (White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 297.5; published 1904)

We know the Sabbath truth has been changed, but not by Adventists. We know the doctrine that death is a sleep has been changed, but not by Adventists. We know the Ten Commandments have been changed, but, again, not by us. We do not buy into the credibility of indulgences or of purgatory, nor do we venerate Mary, but the investigative judgment and the final work of atonement occurring now in the heavenly sanctuary have been altered, but not by the little flock of Adventists who adhere to the pillars of the faith established during the early years of Adventism. The topic of perfection of character by the grace of God is gone from the lips of most theologians of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Overcoming sin most of the time is expected by them, but it is never to be realized all of the time until we are glorified at the coming of Christ. Even though Ellen White is clear that there will be no mediator for sinners after the close of probation, some in the Adventist Church comfort themselves over this distressing fact by believing they will still have the presence of the Holy Spirit and, thus, all will be well. Those who are sealed will have the comfort of the Holy Spirit at this time, but no one will be sealed with an imperfect character:

**Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to**

yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 623.1)

We <may> escape from all sin, all defects of character. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 14, Manuscript 11, 1899, par. 9; angle brackets in original)

We know the truth about God has also been changed. In the time of Christ, trinitarian thought was unknown. It was not part of Christ’s teaching about God. Instead, he taught God was the Father, even *Abba*, and he was the Son, but when Constantine became emperor, he focused on uniting the subjects of his realm in civil and spiritual matters. In the process, the Sabbath was increasingly compromised. He convened church councils to resolve differences, the first of which was held at Nicæa in 325. One purpose of this council was to resolve disagreements concerning the nature of Christ, and it resulted in the Nicene Creed. Ellen White illuminates this history:

In the early part of the fourth century the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. (See Appendix.) The day of the sun was revered by his pagan subjects and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor’s policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans and thus advance the power and glory of the church. But while many God-fearing Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness, they still held the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord and observed it in obedience to the fourth commandment.

The archdeceiver had not completed his work. He was resolved to gather the Christian world under his banner and to exercise his power through his vicegerent, the proud pontiff who claimed to be the representative of Christ. Through half-converted pagans, ambitious prelates, and world-loving churchmen he accomplished his purpose. Vast councils were held from time to time, in which the dignitaries of the church were convened from all the world. In nearly every council the Sabbath

which God had instituted was pressed down a little lower, while the Sunday was correspondingly exalted. Thus the pagan festival came finally to be honored as a divine institution, while the Bible Sabbath was pronounced a relic of Judaism, and its observers were declared to be accursed. (White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 49.2–53.2)

H. G. Heggtveit, Danish historian, adds to this history:

Constantine labored at this time untiringly to unite the worshipers of the old and the new faith in one religion. All his laws and contrivances are aimed at promoting this amalgamation of religions. He would by all lawful and peaceable means melt together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity. (H. G. Heggtveit, *Illustreret Kirkehistorie*, p. 202, as quoted by Orley M. Berg, “Pergamos—the popular church,” *Ministry* July 1978, p. 13, and by Christian Edwardson, *Facts of Faith*, p. 109)

And other historians have said:

In dealing with the Church his [Constantine’s] object was gradually to transfer to Christianity from heathenism all that had hitherto made it attractive in the eyes of the people. (F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *The History of the Christian Church*, p. 286)

It is noteworthy that Constantine did not relate his [Sunday] legislation to Christian practice or to the Fourth Commandment. He designated Sunday by its traditional pagan name, the Day of the Sun, not the Sabbath or the Day of the Lord. Pagans could therefore accept it. Christians gave the natural sun a new meaning by thinking of Christ the Sun of Righteousness. (Harry R. Boer, *A Short History of the Early Church*, p. 143)

Today pagan theories and doctrines are still with us, but many have become more refined and more acceptable for numerous Adventists. Adventists may think they are wiser than the generation when a spiritualist board game first hit the market, for example, but today young and old are captivated with digital entertainment games and with fantasy novels, both of which very likely contain pagan philosophy. They are well-written, they are exciting, and they often have a plot of good versus evil, but please read the devotional entitled “Be Careful What You Read,” September 27 in *Our High Calling*, for a holy perspective, and please apply it to what you may read and to the games you may play. Here is an excerpt:

To the youth I would say, Be careful what you read. So long as the mind is directed into wrong channels by an improper course of reading, it is impossible for you to make the truth of God the constant subject of meditation. If there was ever a time when a knowledge of the Scriptures was more important than at any other, that



time is the present. I appeal to old and young, Make the Bible your textbook. Here you will find the true standard of character. (Ellen White, *Our High Calling*, p. 276.5)

In addition, teachers have serious responsibilities:

Shall the sentiments of unbelievers, the expressions of dissolute men, be advocated as worthy of the student's attention, because they are the productions of men whom the world admires as great thinkers?

*The Lord bestowed upon these men whom the world admires, priceless intellectual gifts; he endowed them with master minds; but they did not use them to the glory of God. They separated themselves from him as did Satan; but while they separated themselves from him, they still retained many of the precious gems of thought which he had given them, and these they placed in a framework of error to give luster to their own human sentiments, to make attractive the utterances inspired by the prince of evil. It is true that in the writings of pagans and infidels there are found thoughts of an elevated character, which are attractive to the mind. But there is a reason for this. Was not Satan the light-bearer, the sharer of God's glory in heaven, and next to Jesus in power and majesty? (Ellen White, *Christian Education*, pp. 71.1–71.2)*

In the study of language and literature, from what fountains are the youth taught to drink?—**From the wells of paganism**; from springs fed by the corruptions of ancient heathendom. They are bidden to study **authors**, of whom, without dispute, it is declared that they **have no regard for the principles of morality**. (Ellen White, *Education*, p. 226.3)

An example of language from the wells of paganism is the Athanasian Creed, accepted and promoted as truth by the Roman Catholic Church and widely accepted in Western Christianity, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It starts out by stating:

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. (“Athanasian Creed,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, as posted at <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02033b.htm>)

The creed contains a few more paragraphs, mostly about the Trinity and also about Jesus Christ, and closes with this statement:

This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved. (Ibid.)

Space prevents me from presenting the whole text of the Athanasian Creed, but you can read it at the above link.

What is important is the fact that the Adventist Church agrees with it:

The member churches of the World Council of Churches and Seventh-Day Adventists [*sic*] are in agreement on the fundamental articles of the Christian faith as set forth in the three ancient church symbols (*Apostolicum* [Apostles' Creed], *Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum* [Nicene Creed], *Athanasium* [Athanasian Creed]). This agreement finds expression in unqualified acceptance of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Two-Natures. (Dr. Paul Schwarzenau, “The World Council of Churches/Seventh-day Adventist Conversations: Meetings in 1970 and 1971,” *So Much in Common*, B. B. Beach, Lukas Vischer, eds., p. 107)

We should be dismayed by this. We do not need to hold the Catholic Faith to be saved. Or the trinitarian doctrine. Our salvation is in Christ Jesus: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

But we should not be surprised, for it is the dragon who is speaking, and, sadly, the Adventist Church is listening and walking in step.

Let us next consider this vital quotation:

The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 588.1)

We know who the Protestants of the United States are. We have a pretty good idea of what spiritualism is, but what is the Roman power? We have probably all understood it to be a designation for the papacy, and it is, but the concept of **power** is part of this designation.

In the several paragraphs following the above quotation from *The Great Controversy*, Ellen White discusses spiritualism and discusses the union of church and state, but she does not say anything about the Roman power. So, let us try to understand it. First of all, a reference to the Roman power in her writings can be a reference to either pagan or papal Rome. In this article we will limit ourselves to papal Rome:

The voice of Luther, that echoed in mountains and valleys, that shook Europe as with an earthquake, summoned forth an army of noble apostles of Jesus, and the truth they advocated could not be silenced by fagots, by tortures, by dungeons, by death; and still the voices of the noble army of martyrs are telling us that the **Roman power** is the predicted apostasy of the last days, the mys-

tery of iniquity which Paul saw beginning to work even in his day. **Roman Catholicism** is rapidly gaining ground. Popery is on the increase, and those who have turned their ears away from hearing the truth are listening to her delusive fables. Papal chapels, papal colleges, nunneries, and monasteries are on the increase, and the Protestant world seems to be asleep. Protestants are losing the mark of distinction that distinguished them from the world, and **they are lessening the distance** between themselves and the Roman power. . . . **They speak with contempt of the idea that there will be a revival of the past cruel persecution on the part of Romanists and those who affiliate with them.** They do not recognize the fact that the word of God fully predicts such a revival, and will not concede that the people of God in the last days shall suffer persecution, although the Bible says, “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894, par. 6)

Is Protestantism lessening the distance between itself and Catholicism? Definitely:

The participation of the Roman Catholic Church in national councils of churches is a phenomenon that has grown consistently since the Second Vatican Council. At the time of the Council, the Roman Catholic Church did not take part in any national council of churches, but at the present time, of approximately 120 national councils of churches, **the Roman Catholic Church is a full member in 70.** (“Appendix E,” *Joint Working Group Between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, Eighth Report 1999–2005*, pp. 91, 92; <https://archived.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/jwg-rcc-wcc/eight-report-of-the-joint-working-group/%40%40download/file/8thjointworkinggroup.pdf>)

Also:

In November 2004, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) organized an international meeting near Rome to mark the 40th anniversary of the promulgation, on 21 November 1964, of the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*.

Over 250 people took part in the meeting, including the presidents or secretaries of the ecumenical commissions of most of the world’s Bishops’ Conferences and Synods of Eastern Catholic Churches, the Catholic moderators of bilateral theological dialogues with the principal Christian Communions, the members and consultors of the Pontifical Council. Also present were over 30 fraternal delegates from other Churches and Ec-

clesial Communities, representatives from the World Council of Churches and the Council of European Churches, as well as guests from the Roman Curia and from the Pontifical Roman Universities and Theological Faculties. . . .

Forty years ago, the Catholic Church did not belong to any such Council of Churches. Today, she is a member of 70 of the existing 120 **national councils** of churches, and takes part in three out of seven **regional councils** of churches, and in seven regional councils associated with the **World Council of Churches**. (Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, “Ecumenism today: The situation in the Catholic Church”; <https://www.scd.org/ecumenical-and-interreligious-affairs/ecumenism-today-situation-catholic-church>)

Adventist ecumenical relations with the Roman power, such as inviting the Roman power to speak in an Adventist church, to share a church fellowship meal, and to address a General Conference session, as well as to jointly share communion, to jointly work to spread the gospel, and to jointly draft documents of common beliefs is fellowship with the Roman power and is reaching across the abyss to join hands. It will lead to the formation of the image to the beast:

. . . Protestantism shall give the hand of fellowship to the Roman power. **Then** there will be a law against the Sabbath of God’s creation, and then it is that God “will do a strange work in the earth.” (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, March 9, 1886, par. 22)

So, is actual power referred to in the phrase *Roman power*? Unquestionably. From its inception, the papacy, through its head, the pope, has exercised power over the lives of men—over their possessions, their homes, and their means of livelihood. They have exercised power over access to the Bible, over what doctrines were orthodox, and over how worship was conducted. Where one lived and was buried was within their power. Heretics were banished and were denied the right to burial in the church cemetery. The priests even had the authority to remove children from the arms of loving parents if the children were not being taught the Catholic faith. Determining who ruled a realm was part of the power the papacy wielded, as well as the control over physical life itself. Torture, exile, excommunication, and the supposed control over eternity, whether it be heaven or hell, for each person was and still is part of the power in the hands of the man of sin, and the problem is the papacy presents such a benevolent front today that most people think and “speak with contempt of the idea that there will be a revival of the past cruel persecution on the part of Romanists and those who affiliate with them”



(White, *The Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894, par. 6), but the Bible is clear:

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12:17)

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. (Revelation 13:11–15)

Don't let kind-speaking, smiling proponents of pagan philosophy fool you. This philosophy can be secular or religious. This philosophy can be superficial or scholarly. This philosophy can involve politics or personal beliefs. It can be the supernatural visit of a deceased loved one or the supernatural impressions on the innermost working of the mind to excuse sin. It is everywhere you look. It is in the very air we breathe. It is like a forever chemical in the environment that cannot be extinguished. We are all exposed to it, but we can keep ourselves pure and untainted, if we diligently guard the avenues of our soul.

### The avenues of the soul

All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory over them; for **these are the avenues to the soul**. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 507.1)

All who name the name of Christ need to **watch and pray and guard the avenues of the soul**; for Satan is at work to corrupt and destroy if the least advantage is given him. (Ibid., p. 476.1)

You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul. **The power of grace alone** can accomplish this most desirable work. (Ellen White, *Counsels for the Church*, p. 166.2)

One of the sub-avenues to the soul is music. It is a powerful means and also seems part of the very air we breathe. People have it playing in the home, in the car, in work environments, in stores and restaurants, and outdoors as they

work, exercise, and play. It is enjoyable because it does something for them—it affects the heart rate and sets up a chemical response in the brain, which creates a mood. In fact, it can be more powerful than what we read or see, for music is often combined with lyrics. This is what gives hymn-singing its power—beautiful music combined with truth-filled words make an impression. It touches the soul, but words of error combined with beautiful music also reach the soul, and words of truth combined with bombastic music can be lost in the intense response to the music. We realize that music is culturally shaped and appreciated and that what speaks to one person may not speak to another, and we can relate to this, but we must always be aware of the effect music has on us physically and emotionally and be aware of the words we are listening to and choose wisely. We want to be wise gate-keepers of our souls. Remember, music was present at the worship of the golden calf.

And he said, *It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.* (Exodus 32:18)

The worship of Apis was accompanied with the grossest licentiousness, and the Scripture record indicates that the calf worship by the Israelites was attended with all the license usual in heathen worship. We read: “They rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.” Exodus 32:6. **The Hebrew word rendered “to play” signifies playing with leaping, singing, and dancing.** This dancing, especially among the Egyptians, was sensual and indecent. The word rendered “corrupted” in the next verse, where it is said, “thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves,” is the same that is used in Genesis 6:11, 12, where we read that the earth was corrupt, “for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” This explains the terrible anger of the Lord, and why He desired to consume the people at once. (Appendix, Note 4, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 760.2)

In closing, let us remember that even though sin pervades our world today, it will not always be so. Satan and his followers will one day be destroyed. Sin is not indestructible in our hearts now, through the power of God, nor will it be then, and this is the great story of salvation!

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)



# The Danger and Results of Unbelief

By Allen Stump

The word *unbelief* is used sixteen times in the Bible, all in the New Testament. This term is, perhaps, best known for being the cause of Israel not being able to enter the Promised Land after the exodus from Egypt.

And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of *unbelief*. (Hebrews 3:18–19)

What is unbelief? How dangerous is it? What does it lead to, and how can it be overcome? The answers to these questions are vital, if we, living at the end of earth's history, wish to enter into the heavenly Promised Land.

The first place we find the word *unbelief* is in Matthew 13, concerning the work of Jesus in his home town of Nazareth. There we read:

And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? . . . And he did not many mighty works there because of their *unbelief*. (Matthew 13:54, 58)

The Greek work translated *unbelief* here and in Hebrews 3:19 is ἀπιστία (*apistia*). This word goes back to the Greek word *pistis* with an α (*alpha*) before it, indicating a negative, or reverse, of the word that follows it. Since *pistis* is the word for faith, *apistia* means the opposite of having faith. It means to lack faith, to not have faith, to not believe, or as it is translated, *unbelief*.

Another place *apistia* is used is in Romans 11:

Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of *unbelief* (*apistia*) they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: (Romans 11:18–20)

Paul specifically states that Israel was, as a nation, cut off because of unbelief. Not only did Israel fail, at first, to enter the Promised Land, but their seventy prophetic weeks ended with them weighed in the balances and found wanting because of unbelief.

Interestingly there is another Greek word translated *unbelief*, and it is ἀπειθεια (*apeitheia*). Though *apeitheia* looks something like *apistia*, they are different words. *Apeitheia* is defined as disobedience and specifically as a disobedi-

ence towards God! In Romans 11:20, Paul stated that Israel was broken off for a lack of faith (*apistia*). But in verse 30 of the same chapter, he states:

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief (*apeitheia*): (Romans 11:30)

He says that the reason that the Gentiles can be grafted in is because of the *disobedience* of Israel. Remember that in Hebrews 3:19 we read that Israel could not enter the Promised Land because of a lack of faith. But in Hebrews 4:6, we read:

Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of *unbelief* (*apeitheia*): (Hebrews 4:6)

One chapter later in Hebrews Paul says that Israel did not enter because of *apeitheia*, disobedience. This distinction is not possible to see reading just the King James Version of the Bible, since both *apeitheia* and *apistia* are translated *unbelief* in these verses, but when we check the original language, we see the differences.

So, was it a *lack of faith* or was it *disobedience* that kept Israel out of the Promised Land? It was both. Their unbelief led to their rebellion and disobedience. Notice this comment from *The Great Controversy*:

It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But “they could not enter in *because of unbelief*.” Hebrews 3:19. *Because of their backsliding and apostasy* they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the Promised Land. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 458.1a; all emphasis in this article supplied unless otherwise noted)

Here two main reasons are given for Israel not entering the Promised Land. Firstly, *because of unbelief* and secondly, *because of their backsliding and apostasy*. It is clear that their unbelief led to the apostasy.

As unbelief leads to disobedience, *true faith* will lead to obedience. James declares that we will see his faith by his works:

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James 2:18)

But a simply *outward* obedience is not evidence of true faith.



Many who, like ancient Israel, profess to keep God's commandments have hearts of unbelief while *outwardly* observing the statutes of God. Although favored with great light and precious privileges, they will nevertheless lose the heavenly Canaan, even as the rebellious Israelites failed to enter the earthly Canaan that God had promised them as the reward of their obedience. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 162.3)

Remember the twelve spies sent to check out Canaan? What kind of report did they first give? It was a land that "floweth with milk and honey" (Numbers 13:27), but then they went on to say:

Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. (Numbers 13:28–29)

But Caleb boldly "stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30).

Instead of gaining courage and faith from this servant of God and his fearless words, the other spies declared:

But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. (Numbers 13:31–32)

In their lying report, the spies contradicted themselves. They declared it to be a land of "milk and honey" and a place of men of "great stature" but also said that it was a land that "eateth up the inhabitants!"

We are told that the lessons of old were given for those living at the end of the world:

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (Hebrews 4:1)

Continuing in the paragraph earlier quoted from *The Great Controversy*, we read:

In like manner, it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed and His peo-

ple should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. But *unbelief* separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which He had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 458.1b)

Beloved, this is a serious matter, a very dangerous matter, to neglect. If we do not have the faith necessary for the last days, we will end up in rebellion and apostasy. The first will surely lead to the second. God calls it sin!

As we noted earlier in Hebrews 3:19, Israel did not go into the Promised Land, and it was because of a lack of faith which led to rebellion. God is described as being grieved with the people because they had *sinned!*

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with *them that had sinned*, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? (Hebrews 3:17)

This principle of unbelief leading to disobedience is illustrated also in the sin of Moses:

The Lord had followed Israel in their journeyings in the desert. When they had thirsted, He had commanded Moses to smite the rock, and waters had gushed out. When they changed their place of abode, He still supplied them. At Meribah, when Israel cried for water, the Lord said to Moses, "Speak unto the rock, and it shall give forth water." [Numbers 20:8.] But Moses was provoked with Israel's unbelief and rebellion, and he lost sight of the glory of God. He forgot the words of God, "Speak to the rock," and he smote it twice with his rod.

The Lord showed Moses that *by this act of disobedience, he had given evidence to Israel of his lack of faith in Him*. Therefore God said, "Ye shall not enter into the promised land. You have not obeyed My words; you have dishonored Me. Had you spoken to the rock as I commanded, the waters would have gushed forth." This was Moses' first recorded failure as leader of Israel, yet God refused him the privilege of entering the promised land that all Israel might be convinced that there must be no departure from His commandments in spirit or in word. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 23, Ms 93, 1908, par. 45–46)

Unbelief leads to the sins of rebellion and disobedience. So today, God warns us:

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of *unbelief (apistia)*, in departing from the living God. (Hebrews 3:12)

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. (Hebrews 10:38)

The just, or justified ones, will live by faith. In contrast to this, God speaks of those who draw back and of his soul having no pleasure in them. They represent those who have no faith.

The Christian is to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). The ten spies tried to operate upon what they *saw*, and what they *saw* scared them into disobedience. Caleb and Joshua operated upon *the word of God they heard* and of all the millions of adults who left Egypt, they alone entered into Canaan.

But how is faith obtained? If this is so necessary, we must know something about how it is obtained. Praise the Lord he has not made it hard. Faith comes by the word of God: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

Receiving the word of God helps to build up faith, but it is more than simply hearing or taking knowledge of the word. We must obey, or hear, that word. In Acts we read:

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient (*ὕπακούω hupakouō*) the faith. (Acts 6:7)

*Hupakouō*, the word for *obedient* here, is built upon two words, *ὑπό (hupo)*, which means *under*, and *ἀκούω (akouō)*, meaning to hear. The concept is to come under or to come into submission or obedience to what one hears.

When we hear the word of God, we are to come under or into obedience to that word. As we do this, our faith is built up. A simple illustration of this is seen in the system of tithes and offerings God has given in his word. One might only read the word concerning this, but this alone does not build his faith. It is built when one perceives the command and in faith returns to God that which is his, even when one may be of a poorer class and not know how one can fulfill the command and have all that is needed, yet believes that God will pour out a blessing. The one obedient to the command sees the promise fulfilled in his or her life and their faith is increased.

Faith is so important in the life of the believer, for without faith and the life that faith brings, we cannot please God:

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)

God has promised to reward those who diligently seek him, but only those who believe God will have faith in him and his word and will earnestly seek him.

Faith is the means by which a sinner can be made just or brought into harmony with God:

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (Romans 5:1)

Not only is a person justified by faith but it is through faith that the Christian life is lived and maintained or sanctified. Paul quotes from Habakkuk:

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.* (Romans 1:17)

This is so important that the Spirit inspired Paul to quote this twice more in Hebrews 10:38 and in Galatians 3:11.

Paul also declares that we *live* the Christian life just like we received Christ.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: (Colossians 2:6)

Since we receive Christ by faith, we are also to walk with him by faith.

Israel’s ultimate failure was that they sought righteousness by the law and not by faith:

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (Romans 9:31–32)

Yet Israel did not need to fail. They had the example of the faith of faithful Abraham. Abraham received by faith a promise that seemed utterly impossible. He had been promised a son by Sarah, but Sarah was beyond child-bearing years. Yet Abraham “staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;” (Romans 4:20).

Notice how God viewed Abraham’s faith:

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Romans 4:3)

Paul is quoting from Genesis 15:6, and he uses the Greek word *λογίζομαι (logizomai)* when he writes that Abraham’s faith was *counted* for righteousness. *Logizomai* means to *account, count as, or impute*. God counted Abraham’s faith as righteousness, and he could do this because he had received righteousness from Christ, the very source of righteousness.

Perhaps you feel weak in faith or that it is hard to receive the promises of God. You may pray as the father did who

desperately wanted his son healed, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine *unbelief*” (Mark 9:24).

This is a prayer that Jesus longs to answer, beloved, and when we pray in faith, in accordance with the word of God from which faith comes, we can claim the promise:

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (Mark 11:24)



## 1889 HSDA News

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

The first regular annual council meeting of the 1889 HSDA USA will be held October 16. All churches should have delegates elected and prepared for this meeting. At this meeting officers will be elected, and a new committee will be formed. In addition, an outline of the work we desire to accomplish in the coming year will be discussed.

We are hoping to have a type of general conference meeting with groups from other countries perhaps in November. Please keep this work in prayer, for we have been told:

... As we near the close of time, Satan comes down with great power, knowing that his time is short. Especially will his power be exercised upon the remnant. He will war against them, and seek to divide and scatter them, that they may grow weak and be overthrown. The people of God should move understandingly, and should be united in their efforts. They should be of the same mind, of the same judgment; then their efforts will not be scattered, but will tell forcibly in the upbuilding of the cause of present truth. Order must be observed, and there must be union in maintaining order, or Satan will take the advantage. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 210.2)

Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence. Satan well understands this. Never was he more determined than now to make of none effect the truth of God by causing bitterness and dissension among the Lord's people. (Ibid., vol. 5, p. 236.2)



## The Bridegroom Tarryes

Written for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October 22, 1844

Through fivescore years our great High Priest has waited  
With earnest longing for the final day—  
The day when sprinkled on the Seat of Mercy  
His blood shall wash His people's sins away.

“This generation” wanes and nears its passing.  
The thickening signs fill earth and sea and sky.  
Yet still the Bridegroom tarryes, while His message  
A century re-echoes, “He is nigh.”

With earnest expectation of redemption  
The whole creation groaneth, filled with pain.  
A universe awaits the final cleansing,  
The blotting out of every guilty stain.

What means this long delay? This lengthened night watch  
With moon and stars arrested in their course?  
The very God of ages forced to tarry!  
This awful disappointment—whence its source?

O shame, my heart! 'tis *thou* hast kept Him waiting,  
'Tis thine own hand that stayed the clock of God!  
Thy feet in selfish paths have learned to wander  
As thou hast spurned the teaching of His rod.

In mercy He has sought to turn thee homeward;  
The thorns that pressed His head have pierced thy feet.  
O shame, my heart, that thou dost weep and question  
The providence that calls from doom complete!

Wilt thou not raise thine eyes and see Him standing  
With hands uplifted at the Mercy Seat?  
Wilt thou not yield thyself for final cleansing,  
And let Him make His work in thee complete?

A universe has marked thy sinful lingerings;  
A universe is waiting for thy word:  
“With sorrow and with joy I choose completely  
The finished work of Christ, my blessed Lord.”

(W. D. Frazee, *Ransom and Reunion*, pp. 9, 10)

Seventy-eight years have passed since Elder Frazee wrote this poem. How much longer must heaven wait?





# The Trinity v. The Bible

By Allen Stump

(The following is an excerpt from the book *The Foundation of Our Faith*, available from the publishers of *Old Paths*.)

The doctrine of the Trinity, as proclaimed by the Adventist Church, states: “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons” (Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #2). This belief parallels the Basis of the Constitution of the World Council of Churches, which states that the World Council of Churches is “a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (<https://www.oikoumene.org/node/6243>). Yet, neither Moses nor Jesus ever spoke of a three-person God. Christ himself made that clear the night before the crucifixion when he prayed: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Here Jesus ascribes to his Father the title of “the only true God.” He did not say the only true Gods, nor did he say the only true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity doctrine is called a “mystery” (*Handbook for Today’s Catholic*, p. 16) because it is a doctrine of human invention. It is the wisdom of the world, and, in fact, it is the *masterpiece of Satan!* The truth about God, his Son, and the Spirit, however, is spoken of so clearly in the Scriptures that it need not be a mystery. Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said: “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but *one God, the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in him; and *one Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge” (1 Corinthians 8:5–7a). The creeds of men say “one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The Scripture says “one God, the Father.” Period! Paul also says that we have “one Lord Jesus Christ.” The Trinity doctrine states that “the Father is Lord: the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord” (“Creed, the Athanasian,” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Students’ Source Book*, p. 299). The Scripture states that there is “one Lord,” Jesus Christ. “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, *One God and Father of all*, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:5–6). Here, again, the “*One God*” is declared to be *the Father*.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, stated: “For there is *one God*, and *one mediator* between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). Here are seen two separate and distinct beings. There is “one God” who is the Father. There is also “one mediator” between the “one God” and men. That “one mediator” is “the man Christ Jesus.”

The apostle James declares that even Satan and the evil angels know that there is one true God. “Thou believest that there is *one God*; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). James says we do well to believe “that there is one God.”

If we support the Trinity doctrine or tritheism, we will be out of harmony with these texts. One of the most basic truths of the Bible is the truth that there is one supreme being. Jesus taught us to address this being as our Father. Because this truth is so basic to the Scriptures and to the plan of salvation (John 17:3), Satan has sought to counterfeit it with the Trinitarian doctrine that produces a position for himself in “the counsel of peace” (Zechariah 6:13).

While the Bible teaches that there is one supreme God, it also teaches that God had “an associate—a co-worker who could appreciate his purposes, and could share his joy in giving happiness to created beings” (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 34.1). Perhaps the most famous of all biblical texts is John 3:16, and this verse tells us that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This text reveals that this associate was his only begotten Son. This Son was with the Father in the counsel of peace spoken of by Zechariah:

**And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. (Zechariah 6:12–13)**

The “man whose name is The BRANCH” is acknowledged by all Trinitarians as the Son of God. Of interest is the word “both” in verse 13. It is the Hebrew plural for exactly two! Thus, the picture portrayed in Zechariah is that of two workers—God and his Son. This concept is taught by Paul and the other writers of the New Testament epistles. It is at the beginning of nearly every book of the New Testament. Notice some examples:

**Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 1:2)**

**Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Colossians 1:1–2)**

**Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 1:1)**

# Youth's Corner – Bee-Keeping Tools

By Allen Stump

The May and June issues of *Old Paths* this year introduced you to the author's bee adventure, and we wanted to update you a little on how things have progressed this summer. The small, one-stand apiary has progressed well, and the bees have remained gentle and loyal to their queen. I have to admit that I have been stung once this summer, but I am sure that was my fault in being too sudden with the movement of a frame. I was sorry for this worker who gave her life for the hive.

The bees have been working hard to produce honey for the winter and the hive, with a brood box and a small super above, are almost full of honey. This honey is needed for the bees' survival this coming winter, so there will be no honey for the table yet. To rob them now would ensure that many would not be able to survive the winter. If next year I can add another super above the bottom two boxes and if the lower two boxes are full of honey, I can take the honey from the top box.

Besides the boxes, or supers, with frames and foundations for the bees to start building upon, not a lot of tools are needed to keep up an apiary. Three, however, are really important. The first is protective clothing, consisting of a bee jacket with a protective hood, or veil, and special gloves. Even gentle bees can have misunderstandings and though I have visited my bees many times without my protective gear, I do not suggest others should. The one time I was stung I did not have it on.

Another important item is a smoker. This is a small can with a conical shape top opening and a small hand blower attached to a side which allows air to be pumped into a hole in the bottom of the can. Dried leaves, twigs, pine needles, or other items that can burn easily can be used for fuel to create smoke. Puffing a small amount of smoke near the bees has a stupefying effect upon them. There are two theories about this, and perhaps both have some validity.



Smoker used to calm bees

Firstly, it is said that the smoke masks the bee's sense of smell and prevents the transfer of intruder alarm signals. You see, the hive has sentry bees who watch for trouble and when the hive is threatened, they secrete two alarm

pheromones, isopentyl acetate and 2-heptanone. Those are big names, but they tell other bees to get ready for battle. If the other bees smell this, they will also secrete the same pheromones, and the process is repeated until the hive is swarming at the unfortunate intruder.

Secondly, it is theorized that the smoke makes the bees think the forest is on fire and that they will have to flee and create another hive. Before leaving they will gorge on honey to have energy to fly away and start over. This overeating is said to do to the bee what overeating does to humans: make them sleepy and unable to function well!

Personally, while the second may be true, just a small amount of smoke has given me immediate results when the bees have been agitated. They certainly would not have had time to eat honey before becoming calm.

The last important item necessary for beekeeping is simply called a *hive tool*. This is a small, flat lever tool with a special hook and a flat chiseled edge or two on it. This tool is used to help separate the frames from each other and even the supers apart from each other. The hook is used to help pull frames up out of the supers. Bees like a tight hive and will seal the edges around the supers and the frames to the boxes with wax.



**Hive tool** his kingdom. You might say he wants to sting you. You need a tool to protect you. You need the shield of faith!

**Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. (Ephesians 6:16)**

Faith is so important, and it is like the beekeeper's protective clothing. It will keep the darts of the devil away from you. The Bible says faith cometh by hearing the word of God.

**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)**

It is vital to take time with the word of God and to become familiar with the promises, warnings, and instructions it gives.

Take time each day to read and meditate upon God's



**The author with his tools at his hive**

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. (Psalm 119:9)

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. (Psalm 119:11)

In the tabernacle incense was burned, and the ascending smoke represented the prayers of the saints which would ascend upward:

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. (Revelation 8:3-4)

Seeing the ministry of Christ in heaven, Ellen White wrote:

... Between the cherubim was a golden censer, and as the prayers of the saints, offered in faith, came up to Jesus, and He presented them to His father, a cloud of fragrance arose from the incense, *looking like smoke of most beautiful colors*. Above the place where Jesus stood, before the ark, was exceedingly bright glory that I could not look upon; it appeared like the throne of God. As the incense ascended to the Father, the excellent glory came from the throne to Jesus, and from Him it was shed upon those whose prayers had come up like sweet incense. Light poured upon Jesus in rich abundance and overshadowed the mercy seat, and the train of glory filled the temple. I could not long look upon the surpassing brightness. No language can describe it. I was overwhelmed and turned from the majesty and glory of the scene. (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 252.1)

Prayer is a powerful tool to help us focus on God and on important spiritual things. Sometimes we allow sin to bind us fast with its chains, but when we cry out to God, he will free us and save us.

I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. (Psalm 3:4)

Pray helps to bring us up to God.

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. (Ellen White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 93.2)

Just as the hive tool is used to separate portions of the hive, prayer helps to drive a wedge between the believer and the things of the world that try to bind him or her fast. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit we can “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

There is a lot more to bees than just honey, and even in the tools used in keeping bees are lessons that encourage us in biblical study and prayer.

Please pray for my bees and all bees. The honey bee is considered the most valuable creature on earth because most life would soon stop if it were not for the bees which pollinate flowers and plants that produce food.

### Some interesting facts about honeybees

- 🐝 Bees have 5 eyes.
- 🐝 Male bees in the hive are called drones.
- 🐝 Bees fly about 20 mph.
- 🐝 Female bees in the hive (except the queen) are called worker bees.
- 🐝 Number of eggs laid by queen: 2,000 per day is the high.
- 🐝 Losing its stinger will cause a bee to die.
- 🐝 To produce a kilogram of honey, bees fly the equivalent of three times around the world in air miles.




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