

# 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 shew them his covenant.  
Psalm 25:14

Vol. 32, No. 10

Straight and Narrow

October 2023



**Preaching about the Holy Spirit in Curaçao**





## God's Rest for His People

By Allen Stump

The citizens of the United States are renowned for their strong work ethic and are often regarded as some of the most industrious individuals globally. They dedicate themselves to their jobs with longer workdays and fewer vacations, compared to their counterparts in other developed nations. However, when they do take time off, many seek adventure through activities like hiking and active sports. It might seem that if any group of people needed physical rest, it would be Americans.

Nonetheless, the consequences of inadequate rest can be quite burdensome. Physical well-being can deteriorate for many individuals, but the toll on mental health may be even more significant. Approximately 26% of Americans aged 18 and older—equivalent to one in four adults—experience a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year, and many grapple with multiple mental disorders concurrently. But despite vacations and time off and despite multiple trips to Disneyland and other places designed to drown away our unrest, the people of the United States and, in fact, of most parts of the world fail to find true rest. This is especially true of emotional and spiritual rest.

Even the role of a stay-at-home mother can bring about stress. One day a mother looking after her energetic children found herself at her wit's end and exclaimed, "If only I could find some peace." In response, her toddler son began to sing, "Peace, peace, wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above." This heavenly song of peace touched her heart and allowed her to regain her composure; however, most mothers do not have such comforting moments.

One of the most significant books in the New Testament is the book of Hebrews. Unlike the four Gospels and unlike the general or personal epistles, it stands alone, focusing solely on the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ.

To establish the foundation for Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, the apostle Paul commences by articulating the prerequisites for Christ to serve as our high priest. In the initial chapter, Paul unequivocally affirms Christ's divinity, emphasizing that he possesses a name exalted above all others and that God brought all things into existence through him.

Moving on to the second chapter of Hebrews, Paul compellingly underscores the humanity of Jesus, illustrating how he descended to the lowest depths to uplift humanity from its lowest points.

By uniting the attributes of divinity and humanity, we encounter a Savior who wields divine authority to raise us up and who possesses human nature, allowing him to empathize with and to relate to humanity and all its trials.

Chapters 3 and 4 of Hebrews outline a salvational outcome of having a complete Savior—rest!

The term "rest" appears eleven times in ten verses within Hebrews, all found in Chapters 3 and 4. Let us explore these verses, starting with the first one.

**So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. (Hebrews 3:11)**

It is indicated in verse 7 of chapter 3 that the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ) is speaking, and in verse 11 it is stated that Israel was not destined for just any rest but specifically for the rest of Christ, referred to as "my rest."

The subsequent reference is:

**And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? (Hebrews 3:18)**

Once again, it is crucial to observe that this is the rest that Christ possesses, distinct from the rest of the descendants of Jacob.

Hebrews 4:1 has the next reference:

**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)**

Again, the emphasis is on Christ's rest and not on that of the people. Continuing, we read:

**For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. (Hebrews 4:3–5)**

The theme is still the *rest of Christ*. His rest is to be our rest, but now we come to a translation issue that needs to be understood. In Hebrews 4:8, we read:

**For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. (Hebrews 4:8)**

The English name *Jesus* is a transliteration of the Greek, Ἰησοῦς (*Iēsous*). *Iēsous* is a transliteration of the Hebrew equivalent of Joshua. Thus, the translation should be: *For if Joshua had given them rest*. While Joshua gave Israel literal rest in the land of Canaan by a successful conquest and settlement of considerable portions of the land, he did not lead them into the spiritual rest Christ wanted for them because of unbelief (more on this later). Because of this, Paul could then write:

**There remaineth therefore a rest the people of God. (Hebrews 4:9)**

Since the people had not received the rest during the time of Joshua, it was proper to say that the rest still remained for the people of God.

**For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. (Hebrews 4:10–11)**

The Greek word used for rest in most of the verses is *κατάπαυσις* (*katapausis*). The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* gives some insight into the use of *katapausis* and a variation of it:

**Gr. *katapausis* "[settled] rest," "[place of] rest." The fundamental concept of *katapausis* is cessation from labor or other activity, together with the state of inactivity that follows cessation. *Katapausis* appears altogether**

eight times in chs. 3 and 4 (chs. 3:11, 18; 4:1, 3 [twice], 5, 10, 11), and the related verb *katapauō* three times (ch. 4:4, 8, 10 ["hath ceased"]). In each instance *katapausis* is definite, specifying a particular "rest," God's "rest." Where *katapausis* appears in the LXX it is usually the translation of the Heb. *menuchah*, "resting place," "rest," from *nuach*, "to settle down," "to remain [in a place]," "to rest," that is, after previous activity. In the LXX *katapausis* is used of the permanent abode of the ark in Canaan, after the wilderness wanderings (Num. 10:36), and of the inheritance of Israel in Canaan, after the 430 years of sojourn (Deut. 12:9). The related verb *katapauō* is commonly the translation of the Heb. *nuach* or *shabath*, both of which mean "to rest." In Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 34:21; 31:17, *katapauō* is used five times of the Sabbath "rest." Like *katapausis*, *katapauō* represents cessation from any kind of activity and may also include the "rest" that follows cessation. (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 413)

What was the reason that Israel could not enter into the rest of Christ? What had they failed to do to make Christ's rest a reality? The testimony of Jesus has these insightful thoughts.

**Having a knowledge of Canaan, singing the songs of Canaan, rejoicing in the prospect of entering into Canaan, did not bring the children of Israel into the vineyards and olive-groves of the promised land. They could make it theirs in truth only by occupation, by complying with the conditions, by exercising "living faith in God, by appropriating his promises to themselves." As we draw nigh to Christ, and as he draws nigh to the believing soul, we can say, with all confidence: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (Ellen White, *The Youth Instructor*, February 17, 1898, par. 2)**

While Joshua successfully guided Israel into the land of Canaan, they fell short of demonstrating true faith by embracing God's promises for themselves. Similarly, if you do not attain the rest found in Christ, it will be due to the same lack of faith. Therefore, today you must firmly believe and declare that God's promises are indeed meant for you!

The impending spiritual challenge that the world will face revolves around the seventh-day Sabbath. It will serve as a litmus test to determine whether we genuinely have faith and trust in our God and whether we truly understand him. As God conveyed through the words of Ezekiel:

**I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; (Ezekiel 20:19)**



The Sabbath is not about a day of physical rest, although we do rest physically on it. If humanity were as temperate as we should be throughout the week, we would not need the seventh day for physical rest. A. T. Jones noted:

**The rest with which the Lord rested was spiritual rest, spiritual refreshing, and delight in the accomplished work of the creation. As the Lord's Sabbath rest was spiritual; and as his so resting is the reason for man's Sabbath rest, so man's Sabbath is likewise to be one of spiritual rest, spiritual-refreshing, and delight in the works and ways of God. This is proved by that psalm for the Sabbath day, "Thou Lord hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." Psalm 92:4. And by another Scripture, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isaiah 58:13, 14.**

**A day of weekly rest is in itself an institution of God. Its basis is the rest of God, which was wholly spiritual. Its purpose is to cultivate the spiritual in man. Its authority is the commandment of God which is spiritual and religious, and which must be religiously and spiritually observed to be observed at all. As says the seer of Patmos "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The whole subject, therefore, in all its bearings is entirely beyond the jurisdiction and even the reach of the power of civil government or of man, It rests wholly in the power and jurisdiction of God, and remains solely between the individual and God.**

**Thus, we repeat, it is not man's physical, but his spiritual needs that are to be held in view in the Sabbath commandment. The Sabbath is intended to be a day in which to worship God—a day of holy remembrance of him and of meditation upon his works. The day is to be kept holy, not civilly nor physically. If it is not kept holy it is not kept at all in the purview of the commandment and the Author of the day of weekly rest. (A. T. Jones, *The American Sentinel*, March 6, 1890, p. 76.2–76.4)**

But does not Hebrews 4:11 say to "labour . . . to enter into that rest"? Yes, it does, but the Greek word translated *labour* is from σπουδάζω (*spoudazō*). *Spoudazō* can mean "to do something with intense effort and motivation—to work hard, to do one's best, to endeavor" (Louw–Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1, p. 661). *Spoudazō* can mean to *give diligence* and is translated *diligent* in Titus 3:12. It is even translated *study* in 2 Timothy 2:15, but it also carries the

meaning of *to make haste*. For example, *spoudazō* is used in the LXX in Job 31:5 in the place of the Hebrew word חָשַׁח (*chush*), translated *hasted*. To make haste or to be eager about something is the meaning used in Hebrews.

God wants us to seek his rest without delay. We are to labour to enter into his rest in the sense that we are to not delay. We are "to be eager — to have or show keen interest, intense desire, or [even] impatient expectancy" for Christ's rest (*Logos Bible Software*, exegetical reference for σπουδάζω).

The *work of his rest* that Christ wants his people to enter is a work of his creation, for the work of creation and the work of redemption are one. They are one because redemption is a creation process. As David prayed:

**Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10)**

I have always found it intriguing that David never sought God to mend or restore his old heart. Out of the 954 mentions of the heart in 877 verses in the Bible, not once is the sinful heart described as repairable. The sinful heart is portrayed as so deeply flawed that even the Almighty God refrains from attempting to repair it. Instead, God bestows upon the repentant sinner a brand-new heart. With this new heart, the individual undergoes a profound transformation and becomes a new creation.

**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)**

The only way to become a new creature is to have a new creation. Paul notes that when one is converted, the old man is put off, and a new creation in righteousness is formed.

**That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4:22–24)**

In the book of Hebrews, Paul imparts a vital lesson to Christians, emphasizing the need to cease their own efforts and endeavors to earn salvation through personal merits. Instead, they are encouraged to place their complete trust in the merits of Christ. Jesus extended a personal invitation to partake in his rest:

**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28–30)**

The Pharisees were highly skilled at refraining from labor on the Sabbath, meticulously imposing one restriction after another to ensure their obedience to God. However, despite their diligent efforts, they failed to grasp the genuine work and rest ordained by God.

**Then said they [the Jewish leaders] unto him [Christ], What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? (John 6:28)**

Take note that they desired to perform the works (plural) of God; yet, Jesus affirmed "this is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (John 6:29). Jesus clarified that the singular work of God is to have faith in him. This faith will serve as the authentic path to Christ's rest for his followers.

However, it is essential to recognize that Jesus' true rest extends beyond a mere respite from physical toil. It encompasses a cessation of our endeavors to secure our own salvation.

Let us attentively trace the logical progression that Paul outlines concerning Christ's rest in Chapters 3 and 4 of the book of Hebrews.

Originally, it was God's intent that Moses would guide the Israelites into the spiritual rest he desired for them as they entered Canaan; however, neither Moses nor the generation that departed from Egypt managed to enter Canaan.

Joshua, who succeeded Moses, did lead the subsequent generation into Canaan, but, due to their lack of faith, Christ could not usher them into God's spiritual rest.

Paul asserts that Israel's inability to enter the promised land stemmed from their disbelief. First and foremost, he underscores that the readers of Hebrews are instructed to:

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

The Greek word translated *unbelief* is ἀπιστία (*apistia*). It is the opposite of a Greek word that means *faithful*. *Apistia* is translated *disobedience* in several translations, such as the ESV, NIV, and NASB. In verse 19, we also read that they could not enter because of unbelief:

**So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. (Hebrews 3:19)**

Should the translations in verses 12 and 19 be *unbelief* or *disobedience*? Certainly the children of Israel could not enter into the promised land if they were disobedient, but what is the root causes of disobedience?

We find an answer in the beginning of chapter 4 of Hebrews:

**For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (Hebrews 4:2)**

Faith is what was needed, and the opposite of *faith* is *unbelief*. Paul continues to mention the concept of unbelief in verse 6:

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

Many people today, perhaps most, have not yet experienced this spiritual rest. Just as Israel failed to enter into Christ's rest due to unbelief, we, too, must overcome unbelief, if we are to enter into this rest.

In Hebrews 4:7, Paul alludes to the days of King David and underscores that God has renewed the invitation to partake in his spiritual rest. During Paul's time, it was evident that as a nation Israel had not entered into God's rest. Nevertheless, God, who remains unchanging as stated in Malachi 3:6, continues to extend an unwavering invitation and promise. The rest God calls his people to has not been forfeited by default, for when the sovereign God sets his sights on a particular objective, he will ultimately accomplish it, despite human shortcomings.

At the time of Paul's writing, God's people had not yet entered into his rest, as he affirmed that "there still remains a rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). However, in God's divine plan, that rest will, indeed, be attained. So, how will God's people enter into this rest? Paul explains:

**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)**

At the throne of grace and mercy, Christ ministers as "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" (3:1), and we find one who perfectly understands our weaknesses.

**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)**

What happens when we approach his throne of grace? We discover "grace to assist us in our times of need."

As we draw near to his throne, we encounter that spiritual rest—the tranquility of the soul that awaits every repentant sinner.

The inability of Israel to embrace the experience Christ intended for them centuries ago has now become an opportunity for genuine believers today.

*Continued on page 14, column 2*



# The Altogether Lovely Intercessor

By Onycha Holt

The first winter was bitterly cold, and the only wood stove belched more smoke than heat. There was no electricity, except for a two-socket outlet which should have been scary to use, and no plumbing. Wallpaper fell off century-old walls and hung from broken ceilings, and windows let snow pile inside in neat, little windswept drifts. There was no refrigerator and no kitchen stove, except an old wood cook stove that was a clumsy iceberg in city hands, and no sink. They had moved to an old farmhouse in the middle of hard-to-say-where, where winters lingered and blowing snow stung the cheeks. And now a new winter was approaching, dancing, so to speak, on the wind, ready to pounce, but this time it came with a sense of dread, for now a baby had to be kept warm and fed and her husband was seriously drinking, and she didn't know where to turn, for she had no friends.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps you have faced challenging circumstances and have also felt isolated and helpless. Perhaps you have even wondered if the oft-quoted words, *God cares*, were only a vapor. Does the God who has promised never to leave us understand what we are going through in our dark moments?

Jesus does. When no bottle can contain your tears, remember Jesus also wept, and when your tears and anguish ascend heavenward, remember that Jesus mixes them with his own before he presents them to the Father, for Jesus knows what it is like to experience deep pain.

Though He was the Son of God, yet He had taken human nature upon Him, and He was moved by human sorrow. His tender, pitying heart is ever awakened to sympathy by suffering. **He weeps with those that weep . . .**

But it was not only because of His human sympathy with Mary and Martha that Jesus wept. **In His tears there was a sorrow as high above human sorrow as the heavens are higher than the earth.** Christ did not weep for Lazarus; for He was about to call him from the grave. He wept because many of those now mourning for Lazarus would soon plan the death of Him who was the resurrection and the life. . . .

It was not only because of the scene before Him that Christ wept. The weight of the grief of ages was upon Him. He saw the terrible effects of the transgression of God's law. He saw that in the history of the world, beginning with the death of Abel, the conflict between good

and evil had been unceasing. Looking down the years to come, He saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy upon His soul, and the fountain of His tears was broken up as He longed to relieve all their distress. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 533.3–534.2; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

We know we have a heavenly Intercessor, but we should also know he is not always as we see him in pictures standing erect before the Father with lifted arms. When we are broken with pain no words can express, Jesus is beside us. He takes our inexpressible sorrow and wraps his own sorrow around it. He blends his tears with our own. This is also a picture of our Intercessor, an Intercessor who is bowed because of our pain and who is groaning in spirit because of our groans. He asks his Father to intervene and to give us new hearts for our broken ones and because the Father always hears the prayers of his Son, a miracle happens. Dry bones become filled with life and health, and the grieving heart becomes cheerful and strong. Our Intercessor is mighty and strong to the pulling down of strongholds, but he is also an Intercessor whose heart hurts when yours does. When you sit in the darkness of despair or in the darkness of error, he has promised to be a light:

When I sit in darkness, the LORD *shall be* a light unto me. (Micah 7:8)

And I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. (Isaiah 42:16)

Jesus was the loneliest of men, for who truly understood him? Only his Father in heaven. No angel knew the depth of his anguish; no human heart felt his piercing pain. He longed for human fellowship and sometimes found it in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but it was only his Father who could truly soothe his pain and strengthen him for a new day. Only his Father could whisper peace to his heart and the promise to be with him, but those whispers were enough, and love triumphed as Jesus walked among men, even to the cross of Calvary.

But after his death, his disciples were “well-nigh overcome by discouragement.”<sup>2</sup> The sun of their hope had set,

and night settled upon their hearts. They were “lonely and sick at heart” and were “crushed by despondency, grief, and despair.”<sup>3</sup> They had trusted Jesus to redeem Israel (Luke 24:21) and were sorely disappointed when he died without doing so. Yet,

. . . the death of Christ—the very event which the disciples had looked upon as the final destruction of their hope—was that which made it forever sure. While it had brought them a cruel disappointment, it was the climax of proof that their belief had been correct. The event that had filled them with mourning and despair was that which opened the door of hope to every child of Adam, and in which centered the future life and eternal happiness of all God's faithful ones in all the ages. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 348.1)

And in our recent history, hearts were also crushed when Jesus did not return as expected on October 22, 1844. During a visit with Hiram Edson's daughter, H. M. Kelley learned of these words Edson had penned:

“Our expectations were raised high, and thus we looked for our coming Lord until the clock tolled twelve at midnight. The day had then passed, and our disappointment had become a certainty. Our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted, and such a spirit of weeping came over us as I never experienced before. It seemed that **the loss of all earthly friends could have been no comparison.** We wept and wept, till the day dawn. . . .

“I mused in my heart, saying: ‘My advent experience has been the brightest of all my Christian experience. **Has the Bible proved a failure?** Is there no God, no heaven, no golden city, no Paradise? Is all this but **a cunningly devised fable?** Is there no reality to our fondest hopes and expectations?’ . . . (H. M. Kelley quoting Hiram Edson in “The Spirit of 1844,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 23, 1921, pp. 4, 5)

Weeping may endure for a night or nights, but the promise is joy will come in the morning (Psalm 30:5). Whatever pain we may be experiencing—the loss of a loved one, of a job, or of home and belongings, or perhaps the news of a devastating illness or circumstance—we will be able to see beyond the pain because we have hope in a God who cares for us and who has promised that all things will work together for our good. He has also blessed us with minds that can formulate plans to move through the maze of distress. This is a thoughtful, logical process of replacing items lost or of deciding on best treatments, for example, but formulating a plan to heal emotional pain is much harder because that pain may seem like it never goes away. Parents

of murdered children have told judges at pre-sentencing hearings that the sadness and grief caused by the loss of their child never leaves them. They fall asleep with it and wake up with it. It is constantly with them, and maybe you walk with such a grief also. What can be done with a pain no words can describe? It must be turned over to our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ. He is our burden-bearer. We have to say, humbly, *You carry it for me; it is more than I can bear*, and he will.

After the death of Sister Chapman's husband, Sister White wrote her old friend, saying:

I think of you every day and sympathize with you. What can I say to you in this, the greatest sorrow that has come to you in your life? Words fail me at this time. I can only commend you to God and to a compassionate Saviour. In Him is rest and peace. From Him you may receive your consolation. Jesus loves and pities **as we have no power to do.** Jesus Christ Himself does sustain you; His everlasting arms are beneath, His words can heal. **We cannot possibly penetrate into the secret councils of God.** The disappointments and distress and perplexities, the bereavements we meet, are not to drive us from God but bring us nearer to Him.

. . . When we come to Jesus, feeling unable to bear these loads one instant longer, and lay them upon the Burden-bearer, rest and peace will come. . . .

Just repose in Jesus. Rest in Him as a tired child rests in the arms of its mother. The Lord pities you. He loves you. The Lord's arms are beneath you. You have not reined yourself up to feel and to hear; but wounded and bruised, just repose trust in God. A compassionate hand is stretched out to bind up your wounds. He will be more precious to your soul than the choicest friend, and all that can be desired is not comparable to Him. Only believe Him; only trust Him. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 3, Lt 1e, 1882)

. . . Jesus sees the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.1)

Disappointment, even great and bitter disappointment, is an element of this earthly life, and if you have not experienced it yet, you most likely will. We can't get around it; we can't isolate ourselves from it. It will find us, for Satan is going about as a roaring lion to devour us, but we can have a plan of action for it—

1 Shared anonymously by request

2 Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 25.1

3 Ibid.



**Pray.** *Oh, but you say, I can't pray. I can't pull my thoughts together enough to even form words. I am so overwhelmed all I do is cry.* Such pain is heart-wrenching, but think of your tears as inaudible pleas to the throne of grace. God wants you to look up in faith, even if only slightly. He reads your silent language and will reach down to encircle you with arms of love. You can lean on him in your despair, and he will take care of you and give you rest. This is also why praying *with* those who sorrow is so important. We should be in their physical presence, if possible, so they can not only hear words they cannot yet utter but can also feel the human touch of love. Someone may be in the hospital, for example, faced with the loss of an unborn child, crying with a heart too heavy for words, but we can pray for them. We can shape our words to their unspeakable pain and pray for their grieving heart and for their unborn child.

**Sing.** *Oh, but you say, I cannot sing. I cannot turn this misery into music.* On your own you can't, but try anyway, if only in your mind. Lyrics can remind us that we have much for which to be thankful. They can lift our spirits heavenward. Roy Pendleton has written a simple hymn that has been a comfort to many. It reminds us that our guardian angels care for us and are physically present with us when it seems we are all alone and forgotten:

The road is long and weary,  
And the way I cannot see.  
But my heart is filled with singing,  
For an angel walks with me.

The night is dark and dreary,  
Not a ray of light I see.  
But my heart is filled with singing,  
For an angel walks with me.

He keeps me from the tempter's snare,  
Protector and a guide.  
He joins me in the hour of prayer.  
He's always by my side.

My friends may all forsake me,  
And alone though I may be,  
Still my heart is filled with singing,  
For an angel walks with me.

Though clouds may hide tomorrow,  
And my load may heavy be,  
I find strength and calm endurance,  
For an angel walks with me.

A day may bring its sorrow,  
From my eyes the tears may flow,  
Yet I know a sweet assurance,  
For an angel walks with me.

Offering to sing for those who are in deep pain will prove a blessing even when we sing poorly. Hurting people are often hungering and thirsting for comfort, and God can turn our imperfect music into beauty to the ears of those who are sick in body and spirit, just as he turned the words of the Galilæans into the languages of the hearers at Pentecost (Acts 2:7, 8). Sickness of heart far outweighs our reluctance to sing, and God will use us, if we try. Hurting people can be brought close to heaven with the simple music of faith, for it can reach through the haze of sorrow to the faltering heart. Physical and emotional pain may crowd out many things we say—they won't be remembered—but music can speak to the heart, even when the lyrics cannot be grasped. That is why the pensive music of a Russian composer, for example, played expressively on a stringed instrument has moved many a heart.

**Scripture:** *Oh, but you say, I am in too much turmoil to concentrate. I can't focus on anything,* and that may be true, so choose one Bible verse, and when tears well up and hopelessness creeps in, read it. Hold it close to you. Tell yourself God cannot lie and that you trust him, and your pain will lift, slowly at first, but you will notice a change. God will calm you and give you peace, for he is the God of all comfort and the giver of peace and of all good gifts.

**Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; (2 Corinthians 1:3)**

**Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17)**

**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27)**

**Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength. (Isaiah 26:3-4)**

**. . . for the joy of the LORD is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:10)**

**Give to Others:** *Oh, but you say, I am walking on a tightrope. The slightest nudge causes me to crash. How can I give to others in this state?* And that may be true, so try doing one thing during the strong part of your day—call a shut-in to inquire how they are or drive over to check on them. They may be feeling alone and sad, too. Bake some bread and share it with someone. Go to the store and share a smile with a fellow shopper or two, and while there buy yourself some cut flowers and give half of them away. Help someone with a house or car issue they cannot fix. Send an

encouraging card or a surprise to someone or text an appreciation. By helping others, you will find yourself being helped. You will be just a little more happy at the end of the day, and this happiness will grow.

**Be Healthful:** *Oh, but you say, I just don't care anymore. Life is too hard,* and, again, that may be true, but God wants you to work with him. Before a great sadness overcame you, you had established habits of good care—you chose healthy foods; you exercised. Fresh air and sunshine were important to you. You were clean and neat and sought adequate rest. You drank sufficient water, abstained from unhealthful substances, and most of all trusted in God's care, so fall back on these habits. Let them carry you through. Make your bed even if you don't feel like it because it has always been your habit to do so. Take an early walk when the great horned owls say goodnight and the song birds say good morning and when the red-tailed hawk makes its morning run over the foggy valley. Then eat a healthy breakfast not because you feel like it but because it is the right thing to do and because your habit prods you on. You may walk more slowly and even with tears and you may do things about the house with a heavy heart, but listen to the voice of your good habits. You still need to walk, to eat well, and to do your daily routine, so do them and at the same time look to heaven for strength. God will not disappoint you.

**But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)**

He has also promised to give you the desires of your heart:

**Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: (Psalm 37:3-7a)**

These verses tell us to wait on the LORD. The Hebrew word translated *they that wait upon* means *those waiting for*, and this waiting involves a patient endurance, as revealed in the following verse:

**For evildoers shall be cut off: But those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. (Psalm 37:9)**

Ellen White tells us we cannot possibly know what is devised in the secret councils of God (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, volume 3, Letter 1e, 1882). We do not have understanding on why we have the disappointments,

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When we are broken with pain no words can express, Jesus is beside us. He takes our inexpressible sorrow and wraps his own sorrow around it. He blends his tears with our own.

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the distresses and perplexities, and the bereavements we do. "The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God" (Deuteronomy 29:29), but one day all will be made plain:

**All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying. As we realize the tender care of Him who makes all things work together for our good, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 286.2)**

**The way of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and no trial would have power to move them. They would acknowledge Him as their wisdom and efficiency, and He would bring to pass that which He desires to work out through them. (Ellen White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 576.1)**

By consoling others and by speaking of the goodness of the Lord, you, yourself, will be consoled:

Let the perplexed ones search out others who are in perplexity, and speak to them words of hope and encouragement. When they begin to do this work, the light of heaven will reveal to them the path that they should follow. **By their words of consolation to the afflicted they themselves will be consoled. By helping others, they themselves will be helped out of their difficulties.** Joy takes the place of sadness and gloom. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 17, Ms 116, 1902, par. 13)

Even if we are sick, or if we feel out of sorts, we need not tell others. If we will talk of the goodness of the



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Physical and emotional pain may crowd out many things we say—they won't be remembered—but music can speak to the heart, even when the lyrics cannot be grasped.

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Lord, this will act as a **cure for sadness and grief**. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 23, Ms 39, 1908, par. 26)

Give the gifts of love, courtesy, and self-sacrifice, and praise God for his goodness, and you will feel better as time goes by:

**Love, courtesy, self-sacrifice,—these are never lost. When God's chosen ones are changed from mortality to immortality, their words and deeds of goodness will be made manifest, and will be preserved through the eternal ages. No act of unselfish service, however small or simple, is ever lost. Through the merits of Christ's imputed righteousness, the fragrance of such words and deeds is forever preserved.** (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, March 10, 1904, par. 20)

God did not forsake the one struggling in the clutches of inhospitable country life. The love for her baby propelled her to carry on. She found solace in the beauty of the woods, in the sound of the rushing brook, and in the little creatures that peeked around tree and rock. The beauty of nature surpassed the challenges of the home, and life took on a pleasantness. She suffered hardship, but the suffering was altogether lovely because God walked with her and she with him. The wonderful God of Isaiah 9:6 and of 53:2–11 patiently led her over the mud and under the low-hanging doorframes and wrapped her in sleeping-bag warmth on snowy days and nights because of love—the great pillar of his character—and he will do the same for you with whatever you are going through. He is changing you into a member of his family, and he has supreme patience for you as you stumble along. Just keep your eyes on him, and he will turn your suffering also into something altogether lovely, for we have been promised:

**Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:** (Philippians 1:6)



## Family Spiritual Retreat

October 5–8, 2023

The Maranatha 7th-Day Chapel is teaming up with 1889 HSDA to hold a family spiritual retreat October 5–8 at Fall Creek Falls State Park near Spencer, Tennessee.

There will be different activities, such as hikes, campfire singing, testimonies, and events, as well as studies from the word of God.

The retreat will be held at the Cane Creek camping area of Fall Creek Falls State Park, the same location where the 1889 HSDA camp meeting was held this last spring. The GPS coordinates are 35.64827° N, 85.34806° W. The facilities are older and rustic but are adequate for camping. There are twenty cabins in three loops which are centered around a large meeting building. The cabins hold six to eight people. IMPORTANT: Everyone will need to bring their own bedding, such as sheets, blankets, pillows, and/or sleeping bags.

There are small bath houses in each loop, and two loops have smaller meeting buildings. The main meeting building has a large kitchen with a large room that will be used for dining and for main meetings.

There will be no cost for staying at the camp, but it would be helpful to know how many will be attending so appropriate plans can be made. We have a link to register at <https://smyrna.org/2023-family-spiritual-retreat-survey/>

Meals will not be provided other than a light supper each day and a plant-based Sabbath lunch. Please plan accordingly. Any volunteers who would like to help with the kitchen duties and/or with cleanup afterwards for the food provided would be greatly appreciated.

Fall Creek Falls State Park is a beautiful place with several waterfalls, a large lake for boating, and many hiking trails. There is also a golf course which is very near the Cane Creek camp ground and is a helpful landmark to be able to locate the camp. The temperatures in early October will be moderate throughout the day and cool to cold at night.



## Youth's Corner—On the Trail of the Colporteur Evangelist—A Story of Miracles and Providences

(This book was published by the General Conference Publishing Department of Seventh-day Adventists, and Chapter 1 follows. Editor)

### The Lord's Hunters and Fishers

**Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.** (Jeremiah 16:16)

**Canvasser evangelists are needed, to hunt and fish for souls.** (Ellen White, *The Colporteur Evangelist*, p. 31.1)

The unseen situation in the world, as pertains to the hunger of the soul for the bread of life, is portrayed through the pen of inspiration in the following forceful language:

**There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.** (Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 109.1)

**I was shown men and women studying with intense interest papers and a few pages of tracts upon present truth. They would read the evidences so wonderful and new to them, and would open their Bibles with a deep and new interest, as subjects of truth that had been dark to them were made plain, especially the light in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. As they searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so, a new light shone upon their understanding, for angels were hovering over them, and impressing their minds with the truths contained in the publications they had been reading.**

**I saw them holding papers and tracts in one hand, and the Bible in the other, while their cheeks were wet with tears; and bowing before God in earnest, humble prayer, to be guided into all truth,—the very thing He was doing for them before they called upon Him. And when the truth was received in their hearts, and they saw the harmonious chain of truth, the Bible was to them a new book; they hugged it to their hearts with grateful joy, while their countenances were all aglow**

**with happiness and holy joy.** (Ellen White, *Life Sketches*, pp. 214.3–215.1)

As the colporteur evangelist goes forth over mountain and hill to hunt for souls, and to the holes of the rocks,—most obscure places,—he finds conditions just as set forth through the testimony of the spirit of prophecy. Everywhere men and women are anxiously waiting and praying for light. The situation as described by the colporteurs themselves is revealed through a few experiences as follows:

“I called at a humble home away up in the mountains, and gave a canvass for *The Great Controversy*. As I neared the close of the canvass, the man to whom I was talking turned to his mother, near by, and said, ‘Mother, here is the book we have been looking for for fifteen years!’ He then explained that fifteen years before, while living in a Southern State, they had read a few pages of this book, *The Great Controversy*, which had casually come to their attention, and that they had tried in vain to secure the book through the book stores. I was permitted to spend the Sabbath in this home, and a large portion of the day was devoted to Bible study with these good people. The mother said, ‘Surely the Lord sent you here.’”

“As I finished the canvass, the lady said to me, ‘The Lord has answered my prayer. This very morning I prayed that the Lord would help me to understand the Bible, and I had the feeling that some one would come and bring me help.’”

“In response to my knock, a sweet-faced old lady, with white hair, opened the door, and cordially invited me to come in. When she understood that my business was the sale of religious books, she told me that she had a book, purchased from a Christian colporteur two years before, which she would not part with for any price. She said that her son often arose at daybreak to study it, and that many a night they studied the book together. She brought the book to show me, and I recognized that old familiar friend, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. The old lady said that she and her son had been praying that God would send some one to them with more Bible literature, and she considered my coming the answer to her prayer.”

“I was just praying for light on that subject,” said a lady to the colporteur, “and I am so glad you have a book that will give me the desired information.”



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“As soon as I took out my prospectus, the lady to whom I was to give the canvass, took the prospectus out of my hands and began looking it over carefully. Then she said, ‘I am a Catholic, but I have been praying to God for a knowledge of truth concerning His word, and here you are with just the book I want. I believe God sent you here in direct answer to my prayer. I want the book at once.’ No canvass had been made, no description of the book given, but the angel of the Lord had prepared the way for my coming, and God’s Spirit impressed the heart that here was the message of truth to satisfy the hungry soul.”

“Does your book say anything about Spiritualism?” asked a lady, who explained that she was about to become a Spiritualist, as her friends were urging her to do so. But she was not quite sure that this was the thing to do, and wanted reliable information. After the colporteur had explained the error of this modern delusion, and the instruction in God’s word, the woman stated that she had been praying that if she was following a wrong course in going into Spiritualism, the Lord would intervene, and she felt that the coming of the colporteur was in answer to her prayer. She heeded the warning message, purchased the book, and turned from the delusion of the devil to the truth of God.

A similar experience is reported by another colporteur.

“A man about to be entrapped in the net of Spiritualism met me at the door. He did not seem inclined to let me in, but asked what I was doing. I told him that I was talking to the people about Christ and His love. A change came over his countenance, and he invited me to come in. I began the canvass, but he interrupted by saying, ‘I believe God sent you here to help me,’ and then went on to explain that when in his room he had for several nights heard distinct rappings, and asked if I could explain what it meant. I inquired if he had been attending any Spiritualist meetings, and he said that he had not, but that he had been reading and investigating Spiritualism. We had a brief Bible study, and I advised him, in case the rappings came again, to pray to God, mentioning aloud the name of Christ.

“At a later date I called again to see this man, and he told me of his experience. He said that the next night after I was there, the rappings came again; but he got down on his knees and prayed to God, and when the name of Jesus was mentioned, the rappings ceased. This occurred for a few nights, but each time prayer was availing, and finally there was no more demonstration of the presence of evil spirits. This man said he felt sure that the Lord had sent me to his home. He ordered a copy of the book, and urged that I visit

his home as often as possible and study the Scriptures with him.”

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“On entering the home of a lady, she informed me that as I knocked on the door she was bowed in prayer, asking God to give her light in regard to His word. She said she considered my coming an answer to her prayer, and gladly subscribed for the book. Since reading the book, she is diligently speaking to her neighbors concerning the light which has flooded her pathway, and telling them that the Lord is soon coming.”

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“I was just this morning praying that the Lord would send some one along with a book to teach me how to understand the Bible; and now here you are in answer to my prayer. Of course I want that book, which is just what I need.” Thus once again the colporteur filled the divine appointment at the right moment of time.

“I am very busy cleaning house,” said the lady at one house at which I called; but when I told her I was selling a book to help in the study of the Bible, she said, ‘If that is what you have, come right in! I always have time to talk about the Bible. Perhaps you have the book I want.’ I showed her the title, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, and she said, ‘Yes, that is the book. I am so glad you have called. Last year, while living in the West, I ordered a book like this from a colporteur, but I moved away before the delivery was made, and I have been trying ever since to find out how I could get a copy of that book, and praying that the Lord would show me. Just this morning I said to my husband that I hoped some day somebody would call with one of those books. And now here you are, this very day. Surely the Lord must have sent you.’”

#### “THE STRANGER” FROM FOREIGN SHORES

In the days of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit caused the gospel to be proclaimed through the lips of the apostles in such a manner that every man heard the message in his own tongue wherein he was born. Marvelous as that miracle appears, it has a parallel in the trumpet-tongued press of modern times, whereby the gospel message is furnished in printed form in the languages of all nations of earth; and the apostle of today is commissioned and equipped to proclaim the “glad tidings” to the inhabitants of all nations in their native dialect.

As at Jerusalem, there were dwellers from every nation under heaven, so:

**In our own country there are thousands of all nations, and tongues, and peoples who are ignorant and superstitious, having no knowledge of the Bible or its sacred**

**teachings. God’s hand was in their coming to America, that they might be brought under the enlightening influence of the truth revealed in His word, and become partakers of His saving faith. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, March 1, 1887, par. 8)**

**God in His providence has brought men to our very doors, and thrust them, as it were, into our arms, that they might learn the truth, and be qualified to do a work we could not do in getting the light before men of other tongues. (Ellen White, *Ibid.*, July 23, 1918, Art. A, par. 17)**

The colporteur gains access to many such homes, and we are furnished a glimpse of the eagerness with which these foreigners on our shores buy the literature containing the third angel’s message:

“I sold a book to a Turkish Mohammedan,” states a colporteur. *The story of Jesus* was new and wonderful to him. I also sold a copy of *The Great Controversy* to a Russian.”

At a fishing and lumber camp, a colporteur sold books in Finnish, Swedish, Italian, Chinese, English, German, and Russian. The Russian book was sold to an old lady living in the camp, and this is how she managed to procure it:

“This woman could not talk English, but seeing that the book was printed in the Russian language, she became very anxious to get it. As she did not have the money, she indicated that I was to go with her to find her son. She started out, and I followed. On and on she went, every little while looking back at me and smiling, and giving me assurance by saying, ‘My son! My son!’ I shall not soon forget the sight of that very old lady as she trudged along over the rough road, with the one thought in mind to find her son and get the money for the book. At last we came to a low hut, a fisherman’s cabin. She knocked at the door, and a gruff voice called out, ‘Come in!’ I shrank back, but the old lady clutched my arm, smiling and nodding assuringly. She got the money she wanted. The son himself became interested in the book, and in others which I told him about, and ordered several books in the English language, and also a book for his wife in the Finnish language. So everybody was happy, and again came the forcible reminder that God is searching out His jewels from every nation, kindred, and tongue, and that it is largely through the printed page that the loud cry of the third angel’s message is to be given.”

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A colporteur with literature in Portuguese inquired of a policeman as to the location of the Portuguese settlement. The policeman seemed a little bewildered, but after thinking a moment, he said, “Yes, there are a few Portuguese:

the house we raided last week was occupied by a Portuguese family!” and he gave the directions desired. On reaching the home, the colporteur found the people surprised that he had been able to locate them, as the three houses standing there in a row were occupied by the only Portuguese people in the city, and they had not been living there long. When told that the policeman had directed him to their house, they appeared terrified, doubtless remembering the raid of a few days previous. Calming their fears, the colporteur proceeded to explain his mission, and within a very short time had taken orders for over forty dollars’ worth of books in the three houses. If these Portuguese people had not come to the attention of the authorities in such a forceful, even though unhappy manner, the truth-filled literature might not have found its way to them. As the Scriptures say, “There is a time for all things,” and the faithful colporteur meets the divine plan on schedule time.

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While selling *The Great Controversy* in the Russian district of Chicago, a colporteur found an interesting situation, which he describes as follows:

“I made the first attempt one Monday evening, after the men had returned from their work. After climbing two, three, or four flights of stairs, often at the rear of some tenement or store building, and knocking at the rickety door, I always received a welcoming, ‘Come in!’ from a voice inside. As I entered the various places, I usually found a group of men gathered around a table. Surprised at seeing a stranger enter, especially a person not of their nationality, every eye turned toward me. There was no trouble here about the colporteur’s getting attention. Holding up the book in my hand, I would announce that I had something very nice that I wanted to show them. In almost every instance they left their meal and gathered around me, as I pointed out the chapters, and gave the canvass in English. It was a pleasure to note the keen interest of these people who are far from their native home, strangers in a strange land, with no books in their own language. So eager are they to get the book when it is presented to them, that before the canvass is half finished they will ask what the price is and indicate their pleasure in securing a copy.

“At one home of these foreign-language people I had canvassed a number of men, and had taken one order. On asking another one of the men if he did not want to buy the book, he replied that he could not read even his own language; but suddenly it seemed to dawn upon him that he might get somebody to read to him, and he turned to one of the men and borrowed \$3 and as he handed it to me, he said he wanted the book which I had. Having only one



copy with me, and not wishing to stop work just then, I told him that I could not part with my copy, but that I would write down his order and bring him another book. But that did not suit him, and he insisted, saying, 'No, I want that one.' I reluctantly handed the book to him, and put the \$3 in my pocket. But by this time I was so interested in my work that I did not want to stop, so I again asked him if he would not be willing to let me have the book back, so I could tell other people about it, and I would bring him a book in a few days. So eager was he to keep the book that he folded his arms over it, and in a manner that touched my heart indicated in his own way that he could not part with the book. I could but say to myself, 'O what a field for service, and how blind we have been to the needs of these hungry souls right here among us!'"

(To be continued)



*"Fundamental Principles . . ." continued from page 17*

God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted. Still valid today. (Ibid., p. 95.5)

God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Corinthians 14:33. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God. (Ibid., p. 96.1)



*"God's Rest for His People" continued from page 5*

The essential pathway to accessing that rest in the present is through faith, and we should be cautious not to harbor "an evil heart of unbelief" within us.

During the era of the Levitical priesthood, believers were instructed to observe a ritualistic practice designed to aid them in comprehending and appreciating the plan of salvation. However, under the high priesthood of Christ, believers are called to approach Christ directly, bypassing the need for a human priest as intermediary. They are encouraged to discover rest in Christ, free from the obligations imposed by the ceremonial system.

In Paul's time, the book of Hebrews served as an appeal to his fellow Jewish Christians to abandon futile works and, instead, embrace the rest that faith offers—faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, their esteemed high priest. Today, the book of Hebrews continues to convey the same message but now to believers who, having been liberated from the Levitical laws, may still be striving to find their way to heaven through fruitless works rather than by placing trust in the mercies of our great high priest who ministers at the throne of grace.

This rest was offered to ancient Israel fleeing Egypt and also is to all who wish to escape Egyptian bondage today. Isaiah writes:

For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. (Isaiah 30:15)

Beloved, let us find rest for our souls by returning to Jesus. Jeremiah's appeal went basically unheeded in his day:

Thus saith the LORD, 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. But they said, We will not walk therein. (Jeremiah 6:16)

Israel was unable to attain rest during the times of Joshua, Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and we must adopt a different approach in our present day. Our path can and will diverge from theirs, if we place our faith in the promises and apply them to our own lives, taking our needs to the throne of grace and mercy. At this magnificent throne, we will discover the mercy and grace necessary to become the people of God, finding our repose in his rest.



## Fundamental Principles of the Church Organization

By Jean-Christophe Bolotte

(Pastor Jean-Christophe Bolotte has prepared a book on gospel order and church organization comprised of quotations from the Bible and from the writings of Ellen White. In August we published part of the first chapter. Below is a partial continuation of Chapter 1. Editor)

### A people chastised when they defied the divinely established order

<sup>1</sup>And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.<sup>2</sup> And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.<sup>3</sup> (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)<sup>4</sup> And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.<sup>5</sup> And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.<sup>6</sup> And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.<sup>7</sup> My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.<sup>8</sup> With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?<sup>9</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.<sup>10</sup> And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.<sup>11</sup> And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. (Numbers 12:1–11)

### A people chastised when they defied the divine order

<sup>1</sup>Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men:<sup>2</sup> And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children

of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown:<sup>3</sup> And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?<sup>4</sup> And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:<sup>5</sup> And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.<sup>6</sup> This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;<sup>7</sup> And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.<sup>8</sup> And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:<sup>9</sup> Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?<sup>10</sup> And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?<sup>11</sup> For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?<sup>12</sup> And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up:<sup>13</sup> Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?<sup>14</sup> Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.<sup>15</sup> And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.<sup>16</sup> And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron, to morrow:<sup>17</sup> And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer.<sup>18</sup> And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.<sup>19</sup> And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the



glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.<sup>20</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,<sup>21</sup> Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.<sup>22</sup> And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?<sup>23</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,<sup>24</sup> Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.<sup>25</sup> And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.<sup>26</sup> And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.<sup>27</sup> So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.<sup>28</sup> And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind.<sup>29</sup> If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me.<sup>30</sup> But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.<sup>31</sup> And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:<sup>32</sup> And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.<sup>33</sup> They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.<sup>34</sup> And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.<sup>35</sup> And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.<sup>36</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,<sup>37</sup> Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed.<sup>38</sup> The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.<sup>39</sup> And Eleazar the priest took the brasen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar:<sup>40</sup> To

be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses. (Numbers 16:1–40)

Note: The command given to the Israelites in the face of Dathan, Korah and Abiram is identical to the one in Revelation 18 verse 4: separate yourselves. Thus, sincere believers must not sympathize with those who oppose the divinely established order.

#### **A people chastised when they defied the divine order**

<sup>41</sup> But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD.<sup>42</sup> And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.<sup>43</sup> And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation.<sup>44</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,<sup>45</sup> Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.<sup>46</sup> And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun.<sup>47</sup> And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.<sup>48</sup> And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.<sup>49</sup> Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.<sup>50</sup> And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed. (Numbers 16:41–50)

#### **A people chastised when they defied the divine order**

<sup>1</sup> Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.<sup>2</sup> And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.<sup>3</sup> And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.<sup>4</sup> And they

brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.<sup>5</sup> And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.<sup>6</sup> And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.<sup>7</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.<sup>8</sup> And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day. (2 Samuel 6:1–8)

## **The Organization of the Christian Church**

### **Its beginning**

It was at the ordination of the Twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to carry on His work on the earth. Of this ordination the record says, "He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach." Mark 3:13, 14. (Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 18.1)

### **Its improvement**

Summoning a meeting of the believers, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to outline a plan for the better organization of all the working forces of the church. The time had come, the apostles stated, when the spiritual leaders having the oversight of the church should be relieved from the task of distributing to the poor and from similar burdens, so that they might be free to carry forward the work of preaching the gospel. "Wherefore, brethren," they said, "look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." This advice was followed, and by prayer and the laying on of hands, seven chosen men were solemnly set apart for their duties as deacons.

The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to

their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole. (Ibid., p. 89.1–89.2)

### **A model**

The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God's heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to "feed the flock of God, ... being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2, 3); and the deacons were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock. (Ibid, p. 91.1)

### **Its perfection**

Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained. Every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him. Some were endowed by the Holy Spirit with special gifts—"first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28. But all these classes of workers were to labor in harmony. (Ibid p. 91.2)

### **Its results**

That this step was in the order of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. "The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success. (Ibid., p. 89.3)

The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of

*Continued on page 14, column 1*



# Western USA 1889 HSDA Camp Meeting October 11–14, 2023

Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). This key verse will be the theme for a mini camp meeting hosted by 1889 HSDA, to be held at Marina, California, October 11–14. Marina is just a mile from Monterey. The location of the meetings will be the Hampton Inn & Suites Marina, 120 Reservation Road, Marina, CA.

The speakers will be Martin Barlow, Rob Chisum, Daniel Mesa, Bobby Shelton, and Allen Stump.

The first meeting will be Wednesday evening at 7:00 PDT. Thursday through Sabbath the schedule has meetings at 8:30–10 a.m. PDT and 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. PDT, then more meetings 4:30–6:00 p.m. PDT and 7:00–8:30 p.m. PDT.

The meetings will also be broadcast through the 1889 HSDA Zoom room, which may be reached at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6132127443?pwd=VGNhRTViOFpEYUs0QmY0R2JzNWlNQ09> or scan the QR code.



You may also access the audio of the meetings by dialing: • +1-689-278-1000 and using the following information: Meeting ID: 613 212 7443; passcode: 916919.

We have a reduced and subsidized rate for those who wish to stay at the Hampton Inn. The cost for a double-bed room is \$100 nightly. This is less than 50% of the normal rate. The hotel is very new and should provide a nice stay for those wishing to attend. The hotel is only 1/2 mile from the beach and has a gym.



**Hampton Inn at Marina**

For more information, you may contact us at: [allen@smyrna.org](mailto:allen@smyrna.org) / 304-732-9204 or contact Pastor Daniel Mesa at: [DanielRMesa3@gmail.com](mailto:DanielRMesa3@gmail.com).



# Report on Meetings in Curaçao

By Allen Stump

The beautiful island of Curaçao was the scene of meetings held September 19–24 for the purpose of sharing more on the truth about God to those of whom Brother Brian Thomas had been recently instructing.

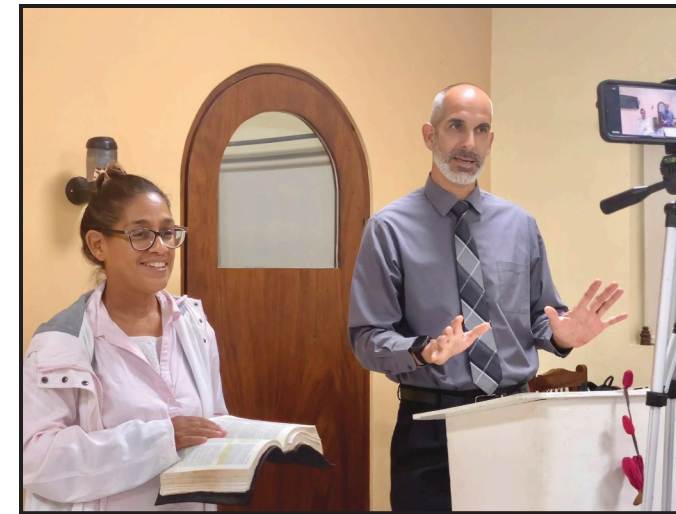
Pastor Daniel and I shared the preaching duties with Brother Thomas to share the good news about the love of God in giving his only-begotten Son for our salvation.

Brother Thomas and his wife, Thyzhaina, had been meeting with several believers who were interested in learning more about God, and he requested that the 1889 HSDA Church send some help to encourage these believers and to further instruct them.

Curaçao is a small island in the Caribbean near the coast of Venezuela. It has a total area of 171 square miles. It has a dry, semi-arid climate. Most of the native people have to work very hard to make a decent living. They are generally very friendly and helpful. Tourism is a big part of the island’s economy. Curaçao is part of what is known as the ABC islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, or the Netherland Antilles. Spanish and some English is spoken, but the main language is Papiamentu, a Portuguese-based Creole language. The population of the island is about 148,000, with about two-thirds of the people of the island being Roman Catholic. Seventh-day Adventism comprises three percent of the population.

Curaçao has some very nice beaches and recreational areas. The water surrounding the island is a beautiful aquamarine color. The temperatures were in the high 80s while we were there, but it felt much hotter. The UV index was in the *extreme* range each day. Thankfully, the rented meeting hall was air-conditioned.

Pastor Mesa began the meetings on Tuesday evening and spoke about God the Father. Sister Melise Martina-Rondón served as a very helpful interpreter. There were many questions during and after the meeting. Wednesday and Thursday evenings Pastor Mesa spoke on the Holy Spirit. This subject usually attracts a lot of questions, and the believers in Curaçao did not run out of the normal questions on this. Thursday evening was the last meeting that Pastor Mesa could share with us, for he had prior obligations in the United States he had to attend.



**Sister Melise translating for Pastor Mesa as he makes a point on the Holy Spirit**



**Sister Thyzhaina translating for her husband, Brian**

On Friday evening, Sister Martina-Rondón and her husband Rudy shared principles on good health that were well received.

The schedule for Sabbath and Sunday had four meetings each day, with two meetings in the morning, followed by a long break and then two meetings in the evening. Brother Thomas preached the first meeting each day, and I followed for the next two meetings, and the last meeting each day was a question-and-answer session.

On Tuesday evening, we started with a small crowd of about six, but by Sabbath morning we had about thirty-two attending, not counting those helping with the meetings.

On Sabbath morning, Brother Thomas spoke on being sanctified by the truth. His key text was John 17:17: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”



**Pastor Stump preaching on the Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and responding to someone in the congregation**



**Beach area at the Westpunt (English: West Point), Curaçao, area, where we stayed during our time at Curaçao**





**Sabbath morning meeting**

The main study on Sabbath was on Jesus Christ and his identity and ability to save humanity. Slides for many of the biblical references were prepared in Papiamentu, as the Bible has been translated into the language. However, I had no access to the Spirit of Prophecy in Papiamentu, but I was able to share the references in Spanish, which is known



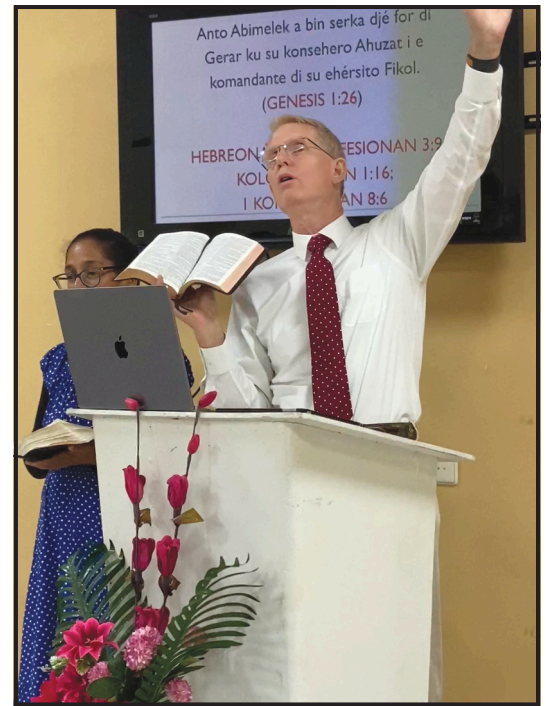
**Sabbath fellowship lunch**



**One of many crabs seen near the shore and on the roads**

by most people.

On Sunday morning Brother Thomas shared a study from Nehemiah, and I spoke more on the Holy Spirit. That evening we studied the biblical



**Pastor Stump making a point about the need to believe and trust the Bible**

concept of the church and looked at the prophecy of the omega of deadly heresies, which Ellen White wrote about.

Longtime, faithful worker, Brother Elvis Alberto, and his wife, Juliann, attended the last two meetings, and he helped by offering prayer, sharing insightful comments, and even with some of the translation.

It was with cheerful and thankful countenances that we closed the meetings, with requests asking for us to return and have more. Please pray that the interests can be properly followed up and a church can be started in Curaçao.

Recordings of the meetings, as well as four short morning devotions, are being posted at: <https://www.youtube.com/@Revelashon-DiShelu> or scan the QR code.



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*Old Paths* is a free monthly newsletter/study-paper published by Smyrna Gospel Ministries, 750 Smyrna Road, Welch, WV 24801-9606 USA. The paper is dedicated to the propagation and restoration of the principles of truth that God gave to the early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. Duplication is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged. This issue, with other gospel literature we publish, can be found at our website. The url is: <http://www.smyrna.org>. Phone: 1-304-732-9204. Fax: 1-304-732-7322.

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