

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

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Straight and Narrow

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Photo courtesy of Kay Barlow

The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. (Psalm 72:3)



Saying or Doing

By Allen Stump

Every year on November 11 the United States commemorates Veterans Day. Initially named Armistice Day, it marks the official end of World War I which occurred at eleven o'clock on the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. Veterans Day is a federal holiday dedicated to honoring the military veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

Veterans Day serves as a poignant reminder that our freedom is not free. It comes at a significant cost, with the sacrifice of countless men and women over the past two hundred forty-seven years. My father was a veteran, and perhaps you are a veteran or have a connection to the military through your family. As we commemorate this day, we honor individuals like the renowned Desmond Doss and countless others who selflessly served our country, ensuring the precious freedom we all cherish.

As followers of Christ, we stand on the shoulders of spiritual giants who waged battles to spread the liberating message of the gospel. This represents the church militant, a congregation actively combating sin and evil.

Individuals like Moses played a defining role in leading the most powerful nation on earth to emancipate the people of God. Elijah, whose name signifies “My God is Jehovah,” resolutely stood against apostasy, unwavering in his commitment to truth over worldly pursuits. David, a valiant soldier, faced numerous tough battles and trials.

Notable figures such as Abel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives for the sake of truth. These individuals are akin to recipients of God’s medal of honor for their unwavering commitment to righteousness.

In the New Testament, every apostle of Christ, with the exceptions of Judas and John, faced martyrdom for their unwavering faith. Paul, a fervent proponent of the gospel,

also met his end in the service of his beliefs. These were devoted believers who valiantly fought the good fight of faith.

Throughout history numerous individuals have battled for their faith, with some paying the ultimate price by sacrificing their lives. Notable figures include Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, as well as later individuals, such as John Huss, Martin Luther, and William Miller.

In Adventism we express gratitude and appreciation to God for venerable figures who have shaped our faith. These seasoned giants, including James White, Joseph Bates, J. N. Andrews, J. N. Loughborough, and Uriah Smith, are commemorated through church names and even our seminary’s name. However, the true measure of honoring them lies in whether we diligently follow the truths that God revealed through them.

I think of Ezekiel, the prophet of captivity:

³⁰Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD. ³¹And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. (Ezekiel 33:30–31)

Ezekiel enjoyed widespread popularity among the people in captivity, with many recognizing him as a prophet and treating him like a celebrity. However, God revealed to him that this popularity was superficial. The people listened out of curiosity, but they had no genuine intention

of altering their way of life. While they found Ezekiel's words entertaining, they failed to apply the underlying principles in their lives.

God further told him:

³²And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. (Ezekiel 33:32)

The individuals in captivity regularly assembled to listen to the prophet's messages but failed to heed his words. They did not translate the prophet's teachings into action, merely paying lip service to God while retaining sin in their hearts. Although they verbally expressed devotion, their hearts remained greedy. Ezekiel's words served as mere tantalizing sounds to their ears, akin to beautiful love songs, yet the core of his message never penetrated their hearts.

I think of what Jesus said when addressing the leaders of his day:

²⁷Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. (Matthew 23:27)

Jesus speaks of whited sepulchres where the prophets were buried, and then he says:

²⁹Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, ³⁰And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. ³¹Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. (Matthew 23:29–31)

This brings to mind my meeting in Krasnodar, Russia, in September 2018 with Ted Wilson, the president of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference. At that time he had grown a long beard in anticipation of the 2018 Annual Council in Battle Creek, Michigan, a location steeped in much of the early history of our church. The theme, "Faithfulness to His Prophets," as explained by Elder Wilson, involves reflecting on God's guidance in our past and then moving confidently toward a promising future. During his sermon, Elder Wilson cited a portion of a well-known statement by Ellen White: "We have nothing to fear for the future . . ."; however, he did not complete the quote, which continues:



Elder Wilson responding to a question from Pastor Stump

We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. (Ellen White, Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 196)

Implicit in this statement is a condition for the assurance of having no reason to fear the future. It entails remembering and not overlooking the guidance of the Lord in our past experiences and not forgetting his teachings in our past history.

After the meeting, Wilson stayed in the sanctuary to visit with people and have his picture taken with church members. When traffic was light I asked him if, in light of the surge of anti-trinitarianism, it were wise to have such a theme at the Annual Council. Elder Wilson replied, "Oh yes, we have a rich heritage. James White and Ellen White, they changed. Uriah Smith, maybe not."

I inquired with Elder Wilson for clarification. Was he suggesting that Ellen White had been mistaken at some point?

Instead of giving a direct answer, Elder Wilson said that the Bible was clear that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were all from eternity and that the Spirit of Prophecy also agreed. I replied that this was difficult for me to understand in the light of Ellen White's statements that Christ was "the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God" (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 34) and that "the Father and the Son alone are to be exalted" (Ellen White, *The Youth's Instructor*, July 7, 1898).

Elder Wilson declined further discussion; yet, the testimonies of Ellen White distinctly affirm the truths upheld by our pioneers. While we might whiten their sepulchres and may strive to emulate their appearance by growing

beards and adopting their dress, it is crucial that we heed and follow the truths they imparted. Without listening to and obeying these foundational principles, we fall short of doing the will of God.

We have been told:

God has left His truth and its history in publications which are truth today. He has made known that we must revive the history of the past as given to God's people. Satan will work upon human minds to bring in specious theories that will dishonor God by trying to tear away the pillars of our faith. They cannot do this, but they suppose they can. Take these testimonies and let the dead speak. Let the voice be heard from the old messengers whom God has sent and who stood firmly for the truth. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 21, Ms 130, 1906, par. 38)

If the pioneers held abominable views of vital doctrine, such as the personality of God, why would the prophetess encourage their views to be heard?

In the present, society is undergoing rapid changes in its moral climate. Concepts that were once regarded as truths, like the definition of marriage being between one man and one woman, are now considered outdated. Truth, however, does not change.

When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained. Men will arise with interpretations of Scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth. The truth for this time God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth. One will arise, and still another, with new light, which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 161.1a; 1905)

Observe that this statement was penned in 1905 during the peak of the crisis the church encountered with Dr. Kellogg's pantheistic teachings. The truth advocated by the church during that period is the truth to which Ellen White refers as the truth for the present time, bestowed by God to be the "foundation for our faith."

Is there an unequivocal statement that demonstrates Ellen White's endorsement of the teachings of the pioneers and of her fundamental belief that they possessed the truth? Yes, there is. Please attentively read the following:

It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot

change the truth of God into a lie. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 595.4)

Notice that she does not write, *It is as certain that I have the truth* but, rather, that "we [the whole body of the church] have the truth."

Continuing with the quote from *Selected Messages* from 1905, we read:

A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. God has graciously spared their lives to repeat, and repeat till the close of their lives, the experience through which they passed even as did John the apostle till the very close of his life. And the standard bearers who have fallen in death are to speak through the reprinting of their writings. I am instructed that thus their voices are to be heard. They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time. (White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 161.1b; 1905)

So, these standard bearers who have fallen in death are to speak by the reprinting of their writings. Works such as *Bible Adventism* by James White, *The Cross and its Shadow* by Stephen Haskell, *The Atonement* by J. H. Waggoner, and other such works would bless many today. These and similar works would serve as a defense against the attempts of Satan to destroy our most sacred and holy faith.

When men come in who would move one pin or pillar from the foundation which God has established by His Holy Spirit, let the aged men who were pioneers in our work speak plainly, and let those who are dead speak also by the reprinting of their articles in our periodicals. Gather up the rays of divine light that God has given as in the way of truth. This truth will stand the test of time and trial. (Ellen White, *20LtMs*, Ms 62, 1905, par. 20)

The illuminating truths bestowed upon us by God through these individuals will endure the trials of time because they emanate from God and not merely from these individuals. The pioneers were not the creators of truth, rather they served as conduits through which God could impart truth.

An important parable

An important parable contrasting what we say versus what we do was given by Jesus and recorded by Matthew:

²⁸But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. ²⁹He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. ³⁰And he came to the sec-

ond, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. ³¹Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. ³²For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. (Matthew 21:28–32)

In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ said:

²¹Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 7:21)

The test of sincerity is not in words, but in deeds. Christ does not say to any man, What say ye more than others? but, “What do ye more than others?” Matthew 5:47. Full of meaning are His words, “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” John 13:17. Words are of no value unless they are accompanied with appropriate deeds. This is the lesson taught in the parable of the two sons. (Ellen White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 272.2)

This parable was spoken at Christ’s last visit to Jerusalem before his death. He had driven out the buyers and sellers from the temple. He had challenged the rulers on the baptism of John when he gave the parable.

In this parable the father represents God, the vineyard the church. By the two sons are represented two classes of people. The son who refused to obey the command, saying, “I will not,” represented those who were living in open transgression, who made no profession of piety, who openly refused to come under the yoke of restraint and obedience which the law of God imposes. But many of these afterward repented and obeyed the call of God. When the gospel came to them in the message of John the Baptist, “Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” they repented, and confessed their sins. (Matthew 3:2.) (Ibid., p. 275.2)

In the son who said, “I go, sir,” and went not, the character of the Pharisees was revealed. Like this son, the Jewish leaders were impenitent and self-sufficient. The religious life of the Jewish nation had become a pretense. When the law was proclaimed on Mount Sinai by the voice of God, all the people pledged themselves to obey. They said, “I go, sir,” but they went not. When Christ came in person to set before them the principles of the law, they rejected Him. Christ had given the Jew-

ish leaders of His day abundant evidence of His authority and divine power, but although they were convinced, they would not accept the evidence. Christ had shown them that they continued to disbelieve because they had not the spirit which leads to obedience. He had declared to them, “Ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.... **In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. [The Trinity]**” Matthew 15:6, 9. (Ibid., p. 276.1)

Today, the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church claims to be the remnant and the true church of God, and even some of those who have accepted the truth about God believe in staying with the ship.

Earlier this year two ministers who claim to believe the pioneers’ message about God were defrocked from their positions as long-standing ministers. I know these authors well. One worked as a Bible worker at a conference church I pastored many years ago. They have characters that in many respects are worthy of emulation. I can say I love and appreciate them. I also must say that as they differ from my approach to the corporate church, I also differ from theirs. They have written two books. One designed to give a brief understanding about God and another which also gives a limited understanding of God but strongly argues the need to stay with the main line church. That book is entitled, *ONE GOD ONE CHURCH A New Approach to Fortify Membership Against the Anti-Trinitarian Movement*.

Notice that the title speaks of one God and one church, meaning the Seventh-day Adventist corporate church. By the subtitle, a casual reader might think it is a thesis against anti-trinitarism, but this is not what it is about. It is, rather, something to “Fortify Membership Against the *Anti-Trinitarian Movement* (emphasis supplied)”. It is the movement or work of the anti-trinitarians that concerns the author, and, in the beginning of the first chapter, he explains:

The Seventh-day Adventist church must rise to the challenge of countering the impact of anti-Trinitarians who are influencing our members to leave the denomination. Anti-Trinitarians have recently been organized in the two separate denominations. One church has taken the name “1889 Historic Seventh Day Adventist Church” and the other has taken the name “Seventh-day Church of Revelation.” They have a persuasive teaching on leaving the church to present our membership and are effectively using social media platforms to get their message right into homes of our members.

If we do nothing to fortify church members against embracing their message, we may face divided congre-

gations and the loss of members. (John Witcombe, *One God One Church*, p. 7)

As per Elder Witcombe's perspective, leaving the anti-trinitarian movement unaddressed may lead to "divided congregations and the loss of members," emphasizing the burden of his message. However, it prompts a thoughtful consideration: what holds greater significance, God or the God of the (perceived) church?

If we know the worst kind of error possible is in the church and know that is not going to change and yet stay in the church that has error, what is the shaking about?

When the shaking is discussed, most people have the mindset that the shaking means that people are shaken out of the church. The problem with that idea is that it is not rooted in Inspiration. One of the first statements on the shaking from the pen of Ellen White was written in 1850 in an early edition of *Present Truth*:

The mighty shaking has commenced, and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a hold and unyielding stand for the truth, and sacrifice for God and his cause. The angel said, "Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice. No. no. It must be a free-will offering. It will take all to buy the field."—I cried to God to spare his people, some of whom were fainting and dying. (Ellen White, *The Present Truth*, April 1, 1850, par. 9)

Ellen White speaks about being "shaken out." But *shaken out* of what? There was no corporate denomination in 1850. She could not have been speaking about that. Reading on, she states that those shaken are "not willing to take a hold and unyielding stand for the truth." So the focus of those shaken is truth. This is further emphasized in the next statement we wish to share:

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen. I was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. It will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver of the testimony, and it will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. This straight testimony, some will not bear. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people. (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, December 31, 1857, par. 5)

This statement was published in 1857 again before any denomination was formed. The shaking is caused by the straight testimony, not by error. Those who do not accept the straight testimony will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking. The focus is the straight truth. It never

"It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie." (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 595.4)

says that the shaking is the bad leaving the good behind in the church. Later in 1889, Ellen White wrote:

We are coming to a crisis, and I am in terror for our souls. Why is it that we find men leaving the faith? Are we in a position where we shall know what we believe, and shall not be shaken out? That souls leave the truth should not discourage us in the least, but only make us seek more earnestly for the blessing of God. It is not the education, or the talents, or the position of men, that is to save them. We are to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. (Ellen White, *The Review & Herald*, April 9, 1889, par. 11)

Here she is not writing about men leaving the church but, rather, leaving the faith. It is the faith of which they are shaken out. She speaks about souls leaving the truth. The shaking is about being shaken out of the truth not out of a church denomination. Now it is perfectly evident that one can stay in a church position and yet hold to different doctrines, for virtually all of the Seventh-day Adventists changed their position on doctrine between 1931 and 1955, but most of them stayed with the denominational structure.

To help sustain the position that members should stay within the Adventist Church, Witcombe quotes the following statement in his book:

I tell you, my brethren, the Lord has an organized body through whom he will work. . . . When anyone is drawing apart from the organized body of **God's commandment-keeping people**, when he begins to weigh the church in his human scales and begins to pronounce judgment against them, then you may know that God is not leading him. He is on the wrong track. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, pp. 17, 18)

Here the prophetess speaks of the organized body, and it is evident that this phrase is used in the book to encourage the church members to not to leave the ship. What is not emphasized, however, is that the body spoken of here is the "commandment-keeping people."

Adventism teaches that the churches of Babylon are such because they refuse to obey all the commandments of God, including the fourth commandment, and keeping all the commandments is important, for as James states:

¹⁰For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. (James 2:10)

Yet, would not this same principle apply if we were disobeying the first commandment? The author of *One God One Church* quotes from Ellen White twice about the church militant and explains that if we leave the Seventh-day Adventist denomination then we have left the church militant, which becomes the church triumphant. He fails to quote this:

God has a church upon the earth, who are his chosen people, **who keep his commandments**. He is leading, not stray off-shoots, not one here and one there, but a people. The truth is a sanctifying power; but the church militant is not the church triumphant. There are tares among the wheat. ‘Wilt thou then that we gather them up?’ was the question of the servant; but the master answered, ‘Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.’ The gospel net draws not only good fish, but bad ones as well, and the Lord only knows who are his. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, September 12, 1893, par. 19)

God’s “church upon the earth . . . are his chosen people, who keep his commandments.” This is the church militant that becomes the church triumphant. If the church has not only failed to obey the first commandment but has been in open rebellion and fighting against that commandment, how can that church be God’s true church.

Jerry Moon, a well-known Adventist Trinitarian who is a coauthor of the book *The Trinity*, has accurately written:

That most of the leading SDA pioneers were non-Trinitarian in their theology has become accepted Adventist history . . . (Jerry Moon, *The Trinity*, p. 190)

He then goes on to present a line of reasoning of the implications for the church today as the position of the pioneers is considered:

. . . either the pioneers were wrong and the present church is right, or the pioneers were right and the present Seventh-day Adventist Church has apostatized from biblical truth. (Ibid., p. 190)

Remember this statement:

It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot

change the truth of God into a lie. (White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 595.4)

Based upon what Moon has written, if Ellen White was correct when writing in volume 4 of the *Testimonies*, then the current Adventist corporate church has apostatized. Further, the leadership of the denomination has made it very clear that it will never reject Trinitarianism and return to the God of the pioneers.

The common thought is that the tares will be shaken away from the wheat, but notice this statement from *Early Writings*:

I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, “Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention.” (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 118.1)

Notice that the wheat is selected from the tares in this statement. One can claim that the Jewish church was corrupt in the time of Jesus, yet Jesus did not call the people out of that church at that time. That was before the seventy-week prophecy was fulfilled, but even before it was fulfilled, God had started his New Testament church, and it had to come about because of the Jews’ rejection of the Son of God.

Today, the corporate church has rejected the Son of God and yet the author of *One God One Church* teaches that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has an “unconditional” prophecy (p. 144) concerning its existence. It is taught that the God who changes not (Malachi 3:6) is now a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34) and will do something for Adventism that he would not do for the Jewish church.

But, as Jesus told the woman at Jacob’s well,

²⁴God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

God is calling his people to be more than those who say or give lip service to him. He is calling for a people who will do his commandments:

¹²Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

¹⁴Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. (Revelation 22:14)



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. Following are Chapters 2 and 3. Editor)

Chapter 2: Entry into the Church

Baptism

Baptism is the gateway to the Church

⁴¹Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:41)

Necessity of a preparation before the baptism

¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (Matthew 28:19 ; see Matthew 28:18–20; John 8:30–32; John 15:8 cf. Galatians 5:22; John 13:35 cf. 1 Corinthians 13:4–6; Luke 14:26, 27, 33)

There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, “I believe,” but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts. (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 91.4)

The consumption of (pure) animal flesh should not be a test of fellowship

We have never made meat eating a test of fellowship, never; but when the Lord presents before us the evil of eating the flesh of dead animals that are corrupted with disease—scrofula, cancer, tumors and these pulmonary diseases, it becomes every one who knows these things to speak decidedly against subsisting on such a diet. When, as in the case of Collins, who makes meat his principle article of food, the sure result is presented, and its effect upon the man, who is full of animal passions and lustful practices, then I shall speak. When, in the case of Brother McCullagh, the sure result of a meat eating diet is that it wars against the health and his life, I shall bear testimony. But he is unfortunate, for his wife is constantly leading away from health principles, which are so essential for him and for every member of his family. It is not merely meat eating; but the food that is daily prepared for the table is not of the best quality for his health and life. (Ellen G. White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 12, Lt 14, 1897, para. 14)

Note: More inspirational advice on preparing for baptism can be found in *Evangelism*, pages 306–321.

Re-baptism is necessary when one has not received the Holy Spirit

¹And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, ²He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. ³And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. ⁴Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. ⁵When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. ⁷And all the men were about twelve. ⁸And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. (Acts 19:1–8)

The Holy Spirit is given to those who obey (the law of) God

³²And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. (Acts 5:32)

Baptism is the commitment of a good conscience

²¹ The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (1 Peter 3:21)

Re-baptism is necessary when one has lived in sin

Vision of August 24, 1850

Said the angel, Can ye stand in the battle in the day of the Lord? Ye need to be washed, and live in nearness of life to God.

Then I saw those whose hands are engaged in making up the breach and are standing in the gap, that have formerly since 1844 broken the commandments, and have so far followed the pope as to keep the first day instead of the seventh, and who have since the light shone out of the Most Holy Place, changed their course, given up the institution of the pope, and are keeping God's Sabbath, would have to go down into the water, and be baptized in the faith of the sanctuary, and keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

I saw those who have been baptized as a door into the churches, would have to be baptized again as a door into the faith. Those who have not been baptized since 1844 will have to be before Jesus comes. And some I saw would not make progress till the duty was performed. (Ellen White, *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 3.6-8)

Said the angel, "Jesus has nearly finished His work in the sanctuary. It is no time to be stupid now. A quick work will the Lord do upon the earth. The four angels will soon let go the four winds." Said the angel, "Beware how thou treadest enchanted ground all around the east and west, north and south. If Satan can get thee to slumber now, he is sure of his prey." I saw [that] some in Israel had been half starved for food, and when the present truth was presented to them they ate it with thankfulness and gratitude like half-starved children. Said the angel, "Can ye stand in the battle in the day of the Lord? Ye need to be washed, and live in newness of life." Then I saw [that] those whose hands are now engaged in making up the breach and are standing in the gaps, but that have formally since '44 [sic] broken the commandments of God and have so far followed the pope as to keep the first day instead of the seventh, would have to go down into the water and be baptized in the faith of the shut door and keeping the commandments of God, and in the faith of Jesus [who is] coming to sit on the throne of His father David, and to redeem Israel. I also saw [that] those who have been baptized as

a door into the professed churches will have to be baptized out of that door again, and into the faith mentioned above; and all who have not been baptized since '44 [sic] will have to be baptized before Jesus comes, and some will not gain progress now until that duty is done, and then they must live anew unto God and serve Him faithfully. (Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 11.4)

Ignorance is not an excuse

¹⁷And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. . . . ¹⁹Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; ²⁰And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: ²¹Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:17, 19-21)

³⁰And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: (Acts 17:30)

In our time, many people have unknowingly violated one of the commandments of God's law. When their minds are enlightened and the requirements of all the commandments have been revealed to their conscience, they have seen themselves to be sinners before God. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4) and "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10).

The honest seeker after truth will not plead ignorance of the law as an excuse for transgression. Light was within his reach. God's Word is plain, and Christ has bidden him search the Scriptures. He reveres God's law as holy, just, and good, and he repents of his transgression. By faith he pleads the atoning blood of Christ, and grasps the promise of pardon. His former baptism does not satisfy him now. He has seen himself a sinner, condemned by the law of God. He has experienced anew a death to sin, and he desires again to be buried with Christ by baptism, that he may rise to walk in newness of life. Such a course is in harmony with the example of Paul in baptizing the Jewish converts. That incident was recorded by the Holy Spirit as an instructive lesson for the church. (Ellen White, *Evangelism*, p.372.2)

Note: Baptism is the only external means of joining the church of Christ. We specify external, because the church covenant and transfer are internal means of membership.

The Communion Service

Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Corinthians 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." For "whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." 1 Corinthians 11:28, 27, 29. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 656.1)

We also have this earlier counsel:

Then I was pointed back to the time that Jesus took his disciples away alone, into an upper room, and first washed their feet, and then gave them to eat of the broken bread, to represent his broken body, and juice of the vine to represent his spilled blood. I saw that all should move understandingly, and follow the example of Jesus in these things, and when attending to these ordinances, should be as separate from unbelievers as possible. (Ellen White, *The Present Truth*, November 1, 1850, par. 4)

Sabbath morning, when the church at North Fitzroy celebrated the ordinances, Bro. Anderson was present. He was invited to unite in the ordinance of feet washing, but said he preferred to witness it. He asked if participation in this ordinance was required before one could partake of communion and was assured by our brethren that it was not obligatory, and that he would be welcome to the table of the Lord. This Sabbath was a most precious day to his soul; he said that he had never had a happier day in his life.

He afterward desired an interview with me, and we had a pleasant visit. His conversation was very interesting, and we had a precious season of prayer. I believe that he is a servant of God. I gave him my books, *Great Controversy*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and *Steps to Christ*. He seemed much pleased; said he wanted all the light he could get in order to meet the opponents of our faith. He was baptized before leaving for his home, and will present the truth to his own congregation. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, vol. 8, Lt 23a, 1893, pars. 28–29)

Note: Although primarily intended for baptized members, non-baptized members were allowed to participate in the fellowship services and without partaking of the foot washing. This should be done with great caution, for Jesus told Peter concerning concerning the foot washing, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8).

Chapter 3: Alliance, Registry, and Letter of Recommendation

The souls interested in the message must first be strengthened.

¹⁰Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. ¹¹For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; (Romans 1:10–11)

"Where bodies of believers are brought out on the truth in new places, we would not recommend the immediate formation of a church. In such cases let a leader be appointed (this can perhaps best be done by the evangelist when he raises up the church), and let social meetings be continued till such time as the individuals become thoroughly acquainted with each other, and ascertain with whom they can have fellowship, and who are qualified for the important duties of officers of the church. As to the particular manner of organizing a church, when the proper time comes, we shall be allowed to avail ourselves of the experience of several ministers who have already adopted the following plan, and testify that it works well." (John N. Loughborough, *The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline*, p. 126.3, quoted from the Michigan Conference session of October 6, 1861)

The people of Israel vowed faithfulness before entering the service of God.

⁷And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. ⁸And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. (Exodus 19:7–8)

³And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. ⁴And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵And he sent

young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. ⁶And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. (Exodus 24:3–7)

Note: Just as a candidate takes a vow before being baptized, believers who wish to join together to serve God take a vow before forming a church. This is called the Church Covenant.

Excerpt from the Church Covenant of the Historic Seventh-day Adventists of 1889: Based upon

1. Do you accept the Bible as the rule of your faith and practice?

2. Will you study to learn the truths of the Word, and practice those truths in your lives?

3. Do you understand and believe the fundamental doctrines taught by the Bible and expressed in the 1889 Seventh-day Adventists Fundamental Principles?

4. Have you confessed your sins to God as far as they have been made known to you, and have you on your part, as far as in you lies, tried to make matters right with your fellow men?

5. Do you claim by faith in Christ that God for Christ's sake has forgiven our past sins, and that he is yours, and you are his?

6. Do you recognize the fact that as truly as God claims the seventh part of time as his, so he claims one tenth of all our income as his for the support of his work in advancing the glorious gospel of Christ, and will you faithfully render to him his own—the tithe?

7. Will you submit to the decisions of the body of the church in matters of church discipline? In other words, will you seek the peace, harmony, and unity of the church, rather than press an individual opinion to cause confusion in the church, which is in harmony with *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 5, page 107?

8. Will you besides this contribute of your substance as God may prosper you for the upbuilding of the various branches of his cause?

9. Will you seek to build up the interests of the church by attendance upon its meetings, ordinances, and adding your influence to extend its work, while the church, on their part, exercise their watch-care over you?

10. Do you understand the principles of Christian temperance as taught by the 1889 Historic Seventh-day Adventists, and will you carry out those principles, abstaining from the use of liquors, tobacco in all its forms, coffee, tea, and swine's flesh? In short, will you truly study the subject of Bible temperance and practice it in your life?

11. In the matter of dress will you follow the Bible rule of plainness of dress (1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4), abstaining the wearing of gold as ornaments and “costly array,” as taught in Volume VI, page 97?

12. Do you believe the Bible doctrine of “Spiritual Gifts,” and do you understand the nature of the gift of prophecy which has been manifested in the remnant church as given in Revelation 12:17 and 19:10 and which has been connected with the message from its very commencement? As far as you understand the instructions from that source, are you in harmony with them?

13. You, of course, recognize all ten of the commandments as spoken from the Lord from Mount Sinai as still binding, and by God's grace will you keep those commandments, the fourth with the rest, rendering to the Lord as his sacred time the seventh day, by the world called Saturday?

14. By submission to Christ and his grace, will you seek to grow in grace as well as in the knowledge of his truth?

15. Have you been immersed (baptized) in the likeness of Christ's death and so now walk in the new life, having been raised to the likeness of his resurrection?

16. Are you in Christian fellowship with others being baptized now, and do you accept the current members as brothers and sisters of this church?

Note: This church covenant is based on J. N. Loughborough's *The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline*, pages 175.1–176.6. It also serves as a baptismal vow.

The church has a register on which the names of its members are recorded.

New fields of work must be opened, souls are to be added to the faith, new names will appear on the church records,—names that will appear in the immortal records in heaven. O that we might realize what might be done with the money expended for the gratification of self! (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, January 27, 1891, par. 5)

If the erring one repents and submits to Christ's discipline, he is to be given another trial. And even if he does not repent, even if he stands outside the church, God's

servants still have a work to do for him. They are to seek earnestly to win him to repentance. And, however aggravated may have been his offense, if he yields to the striving of the Holy Spirit and, by confessing and forsaking his sin, gives evidence of repentance, he is to be forgiven and welcomed to the fold again. His brethren are to encourage him in the right way, treating him as they would wish to be treated were they in his place, considering themselves lest they also be tempted. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 263.1)

Note: Once the church is formed, the names of baptized covenant members appear on the church roll. Others will be added to the church roll once they have been baptized after making their vows.

Local churches provide letters of recommendation to members who move.

¹Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? (2 Corinthians 3:1)

Believers moving to a new place often carried with them letters of commendation from the church with which they had formerly been united; but the leading workers, the founders of these churches, had no need of such commendation. (Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 327.1)



“If for some crime that you had committed you were incarcerated within prison walls, with the sentence of death passed upon you, and a friend should come to you and say, “I will take your place, and you may go free,” would not your heart be filled with gratitude for such unselfish love? Christ has done infinitely more than this for us. We were lost; the sentence of death had been passed upon us; and Christ died for us, and thus set us free. He said, “I will take upon Myself the guilt of the sinner, that he may have another trial. I will put within his reach power that will enable him to overcome in the struggle with evil” (Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places*, p. 42.2).

Annual Council 1889

HSDA-USA Church

Annual Council Report

The church’s annual council met on November 12, 2023, to elect officers and a new committee and to establish some goals for the new year.

Those present were: Pastor Allen Stump, Chairperson; Winnie Anderson; Pastor Martin Barlow; Todd Brown; Rob Chisum; Ralph Fisher; Gilbert Hernandez, Jr; Onycha Holt; Em Ropka; Brian Thomas; Allen Uhl; Donovan Ulett; Ana Maria Woodward; and Michael Woodward.

After an opening prayer and a devotional by Pastor Stump, the election of officers began.

Election of Officers

Chairperson: Nominated were Pastor Allen Stump and Pastor Martin Barlow; however, Pastor Barlow declined the nomination. Todd Brown was suggested, but he stated he also would not be able to serve. Em Ropka moved Allen Stump continue as chairperson for the new year; seconded by Todd Brown. Pastor Stump was selected without opposition.

Vice-chairperson: Nominated were Pastor Martin Barlow and Ralph Fisher. Ana Maria Woodward moved a vote be taken for vice-chairperson, choosing either Pastor Martin Barlow or Ralph Fisher; Allen Uhl seconded; all in favor. Brother Ralph Fisher was selected.

Secretary: Brian Thomas moved Onycha Holt continue as secretary; seconded by Todd Brown. There were no other nominations, and Sister Holt was selected.

Treasurer: Ana Maria Woodward moved Catherine Mesa continue as treasurer; Allen Uhl seconded. There were no other nominations, and Sister Woodward was selected.

Auditor: Winnie Anderson moved that Ana Maria Woodward continue as auditor; Michael Woodward seconded. There were no other nominations, and Sister Woodward was selected.

Election of Trustee

The next thing on the agenda was the election of a trustee.

While being a blessing to the work, Pastor Daniel Mesa requested to be relieved from serving as a trustee. Todd Brown nominated Pastor Martin Barlow to serve; Rob Chisum nominated Onycha Holt. Em Ropka moved a vote

be taken for either Martin Barlow or Onycha Holt to serve as trustee; seconded by Brian Thomas; all in favor; none opposed. Pastor Barlow was selected.

Election of Committee

Brian Thomas moved that the current council members in attendance, plus Catherine Mesa, compose the committee for the following year; seconded by Martin Barlow; all in favor; none opposed.

Plans for Next Year

Camp Meeting: A camp area at Fall Creek Falls State Park in Tennessee has been tentatively reserved for 2024. It is at Piney Creek and has better accommodations than the camp site used in 2023, such as a separate dining hall that is larger and a meeting hall that is also larger. The week of August 4 was the only availability.

Em Ropka moved camp meeting be held at the Piney Creek campground at Fall Creek Falls State Park during the week of August 4, 2024; seconded by Ralph Fisher; all in favor; none opposed.

Outreach: Pastor Stump encouraged the committee members to think of ideas for outreach for consideration at the next committee meeting, such as another camp meeting on the west coast and other meetings that could be held, an 1889 HSDA newsletter or journal, and a possible health retreat. Pastor Barlow also mentioned the need for Sabbath school quarterlies.

The first meeting of the committee for the new term will be Sunday, December 24, 2023, at 10 am EST. Please keep the work in prayer, and if you have suggestions and ideas for the work of the church, please let us know.



“We sought the Lord with earnest prayer that we might understand His will, and light was given by His Spirit, that there must be order and thorough discipline in the church,—that organization was essential. System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe. Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God’s people on the earth” (Ellen White, *Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 195.3).

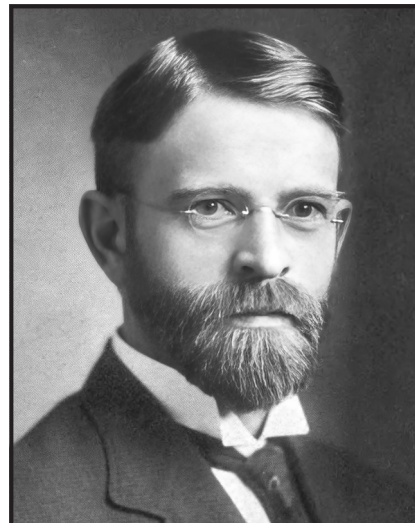
Prayer for a Pony

By Dr. David Paulson

Some of you have prayed for some special thing and your prayer was *apparently* not answered, so you felt discouraged. When I was a mere lad my father hired me out to herd cattle on the Western plains. Other boys had ponies, but my father could not afford to buy me one, so I had to stub my bare feet; and I had a sorry time of it.

I asked the Lord to send me a pony, and every time I saw someone drive down the road with a pony, I thought, “Here is God answering my prayer”; but each time I was grievously disappointed. It was many years later before I found out why the Lord did not send me a pony: I have had to do much hard work in my life which required sound muscle. The muscles in my limbs are almost as hard as wood, and I developed them chasing after the cattle barefooted. If the Lord had answered my prayer, the pony would have gotten the muscle and I would not. The Lord looked ahead and knew it was not best for me to have my prayer answered [as I thought best]. But I did not make the mistake some folks have made; I kept right on praying for other things, which the Lord has given me.

The reason some of you have not had your prayers answered [as you wished] is because you are praying for ponies. Moses must have had a terrible disappointment when he had to herd sheep for years and years. He never would have planned it that way, but finally he saw in it a burning bush, yes, a great mission for his life. It put character into him, it made him the leader of a great nation. So the Lord can take the most grievous disappointment in your life and show you the burning bush in it. (Taken from *Footprints of Faith*, pages 3, 4)



Dr. David Paulson

Founder of the
Hinsdale Sanitarium

Bible Word Search

From 1 Peter 3

P M R F D B A L S O F W C
L O V D O W F I U B E I A
Y S U F F E R F B E A V L
C A C I C L A E J Y R E L
W V H A G L I K E W I S E
S E U W O R D H C N G G D
T C S C H R I S T Y H O C
W I B H E S P I R I T O L
C L A A V A D O R N E D O
C O N V E R S A T I O N V
P R D I N S U N W A U M E
U D S N P R A Y E R S E U
S N N G B E I N G I V E D
F H E A R T V E V I L K G

ADORNED
BEING
CONVERSATION
FEAR
HAVING
LIFE
LOVE
PRAYERS
SPIRIT
WELL

AFRAID
CALLED
EVEN
GIVE
HEART
LIKEWISE
MEEK
RIGHTEOUS
SUBJECT
WIVES

ALSO
CHRIST
EVIL
GOOD
HUSBANDS
LORD
OBEY
SAVE
SUFFER
WORD

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

(On the Trail of the Colporteur Evangelist was compiled by the General Conference Publishing Department of Seventh-day Adventists. We share experiences, with a few edits, from the first part of Chapter 3.)

Miracles of Guidance and Deliverance

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)

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 of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet. (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 481.2)

For the strengthening of faith and endurance in trial a few of the “thousand ways” in which our heavenly Father provides for His children in time of need are set forth in the following experiences.

CONTROLLING THE ELEMENTS

Hailstorms

Two colporteurs were working in a territory where hailstorms were frequent occurrences. One night they were camped, as usual, in their traveling rig, with the horses hitched near by, when one of the storms peculiar to that part of the country arose. The loud peals of thunder and vivid flashes of lightning indicated a severe storm, and it proved to be all that was feared, accompanied by rain, hail, and wind. The colporteurs, camped on the edge of town, prayed that God would protect them from the wrath of the elements, and accepted the divine provision and assurance as stated by the psalmist: “I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord only makest me dwell in safety (Psalm 4:8).

The next morning there were visible evidences of the havoc wrought by the storm all around them. The hail had not only penetrated the roofs of the houses, but the ceilings

also. Yet these servants of the Lord, sleeping in an oilcloth covered rig were untouched by the storm, and no damage had come to horse or vehicle.

The Cyclone

“I had a very good week,” writes a colporteur, and in a special manner realized the protection of the Lord during a cyclone last Thursday evening. The storm killed two person and seriously wounded many others. I was right in the path of the storm. Houses were torn down on each side of me. I was working in the west end of the town when the storm came over the northwest section, which I had just covered, and stretching over a strip fifty yards wide, blew down trees and swept everything in its path. Factories were unroofed and warehouses and lumber yards badly damaged. After the storm, I went back over the block I had worked, and to my surprise not one of the houses in which I had taken an order for books had been damaged. On either side of these houses much damage had been done. The next day I finished canvassing that section of the town, and took many orders for books. The people were eager to know the true significance of such disturbances.

Drouth

While the business of the world flourishes only when outward conditions are favorable, the worker for God finds that man's extremity is God's opportunity. A drouth-stricken locality in which the colporteur was working proved a test of his courage, but when a cyclone swept over the territory, destroying lives and much property, the test became more severe. Forward into this devastated territory, however, the colporteur went, bringing to the attention of the bewildered people the book *Bible Readings*, which called attention to God's warning of impending doom and how to prepare for the world to come.

Facing the Wintry Blast

Neither cold nor heat can block the onward course of the colporteur, and oftentimes the fiercest wintry blast serves to prepare the way for the coming of the messenger of truth.

A colporteur in the Far North refused to be driven from the field on account of cold weather. He provided himself with snowshoes, and made his way from house to house. A blinding snowstorm detained him for two days at the home of a family where he had called to canvass for the book. As a result of the conversation during these two days and of the message of the book, this family accepted the truth.

Another Instance

Having completed the canvass of a certain town, the colporteur decided to go on to the next place. The weather was very cold; it was snowing, and the wind was blowing fiercely. Trains were not running, so the colporteur decided that he would walk the distance of seven miles. He reached his destination about nine o'clock in the morning, with both cheeks frozen, but with spirits high; and as he called at the homes of the people, he received a cordial welcome, and in that one day took \$50 worth of orders. The rich blessing of the Lord compensated for the sting of the cold, and the heart of the colporteur was warm and glowing with the love of Christ.

Epidemics

"It is wonderful how the Lord has protected the colporteurs during the epidemic prevailing in this part of the country," writes a worker, "and how they have gone ahead right in the face of seemingly insurmountable hindrances. Surely the Lord has verified His promises in Psalm 91."

The Raging Storm

The day closed with threatening storm clouds hanging low in the western horizon, and the colporteur, far from home and among strangers who kindly provided a lodging place for the night, lay down to rest. About midnight he was awakened by a heavy clap of thunder and realized that a severe storm was raging. Flash! flash! went the lightning, while the thunder was deafening. The roar of the wind threatened to demolish the house any minute, and the colporteur sprang to his feet and quickly dressed. The call to prayer was very decided, and dropping upon his knees, the colporteur implored divine protection for himself and his kind friends in that hour of danger. As a result, a calmness came into his soul, and the assurance that no harm would befall.

The storm, however, increased in fury. The garden fence went down with a crash, the chimney of the house fell into the room, away went a tree, borne on a gust of wind, followed by a buggy picked up in the yard and quickly demolished. As water began to flood the floors, the occupants of the home became greatly alarmed and were about to open the door and rush out into the darkness, but they were restrained by the colporteur, who saw that such a course would mean peril and probable death. Seeing that their visitor was calm and hopeful, they were inspired with trust in God and confidence that He would care for them.

When the fury of the storm had abated, it was found that all the neighboring houses were either felled to the ground or unroofed and otherwise damaged, while this house in which the colporteur had found a welcome was without serious damage, and its occupants were unharmed. Truly the

Lord hears the cry of His children and protects them in time of danger.

INANIMATE OBJECTS SERVE THE DIVINE PURPOSE

Among the many things "written for our learning" by the pen of inspiration is the narrative of the experience of Baalam, the prophet of the Lord, who was directed in his course of action by the voice which spoke through the tongue of the dumb beast upon which he was riding. Often through strange and most mysterious ways, God's servants are led in an opposite direction to the plan in mind.

The Unmanageable Bicycle

A colporteur arriving in a small town late in the day, began to inquire for a place at which to stay all night. Several people advised him to go to the hotel. But the colporteur remembered his instruction that it is a wise plan to lodge in the homes of the people wherever possible so as to become acquainted with the family and bring the truth to their attention; so he decided he would ride his bicycle on a little farther toward the edge of the town in the hope of finding a place. Suddenly his bicycle turned and stopped in front of a house. He had not thought of stopping at that particular house, but the bicycle unexpectedly landed him at the gate, so he decided to go in and see if he could obtain a night's lodging there.

The people received him cordially, and were glad to arrange for him to spend the night there. In the course of the conversation during the evening it was learned that the stranger was a Seventh-day Adventist, and this led the man of the house to bring out a copy of *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. He said that he and his wife had been studying that book and had become much concerned over the statements they found there. Together the colporteur and this family studied the Bible until a very late hour, and it began to dawn on the mind of the colporteur why he had been so unexpectedly halted at the gate of this home, for he saw that the seed of truth which had been planted in former days had germinated and needed cultivation. As the colporteur went on his way the next morning, he promised that he would return to bring more literature to these eager inquirers after truth and to continue the Bible study.

The Automobile That Backed Down the Hill

The colporteur's automobile stalled while going up a hill. In spite of all he could do, it would not make the grade, so it became necessary to back down the hill. At the foot of the hill the colporteur found a man and his family who had left their automobile by the side of the road and were enjoying a picnic lunch. Here was an unexpected opportunity which the colporteur did not hesitate to improve. After listening to the canvass, the man said, "I have many religious

books and magazines in my home, but nothing like that. That is just the book I want. My home is in Dunkirk, twenty miles away, but we are having a family picnic out here today. Be sure you don't forget me when you deliver the books, for I want a copy without fail." The colporteur recognized the providential leading in thus unexpectedly being put in touch with a man seeking for truth, for in no other way would he have been likely to come in contact with the man from Dunkirk.

How a Ford Car Helped

A Seventh-day Adventist minister, in order to fill an appointment in the country, started to walk a distance of seven miles. Along the way he noticed a house a short distance from the road, and was strongly impressed that he should call there. But he could think of no excuse for doing so, and tried to persuade himself that it was not necessary. The impression would not subside, however, and became so forceful that he turned to go toward the place.

On entering the yard, he found a man trying to crank a Ford car. So absorbed was he in his task that he did not notice the stranger approaching. Giving one final turn to the crank, he gave up all hope, and said, "Nothing doing!" then, as he turned around, he was surprised to find a stranger watching him.

"Don't be alarmed," said the stranger. "I'm a preacher, and I have come to have a little talk with you."

"I am certainly glad to see you," said the man. "If there is any kind of person I have for a long time especially wanted to see, it is a preacher. Come on into the house."

"What kind of a preacher are you?" he asked, after entering the house.

"A Seventh-day Adventist preacher" was the reply.

"Well," said the man, "doesn't that beat everything! While we have for a long time wanted to talk to a preacher, we have especially wanted to see a Seventh-day Adventist preacher." Then, calling to his wife, he said, "Wife, you have often spoken of wanting to have a Seventh-day Adventist preacher talk over these things with us, and I've got one right here!"

So the man and his wife and the minister had a long talk, in which it developed that a year or so previously a colporteur had sold the people a copy of *Bible Readings*. "We bought this book of that young man," the husband said, "and we have studied it together, and have become convinced that it teaches the truth. We are keeping the Lord's Sabbath the best we know how, but we have never seen a Seventh-day Adventist from that day to this."

It was an inspiring occasion to all three, but the minister, remembering his appointment, explained that he must

hurry on for the present, and after a season of prayer, he started on toward the place of his appointment. The man then said that he would take the minister to his destination in the car, if it would work; and going up to the car, he gave the crank one turn, and it started off as nicely as ever.

"If your car had started when you wanted it to," the minister said, "you would have been on your way, and we would have missed this brief but very profitable interview."

It was very evident that God had arranged circumstances to bring His servant to the home where spiritual help was needed and thus establish communication for further instruction in the word of God.

HELP IN TIME OF GREATEST NEED

The promises of God are sometimes compared to checks on the bank of heaven, payable upon demand. The colporteur evangelist finds constant occasion to realize on the full face value of these checks, and one promise which proves of constant value is Isaiah 41:10: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee."

An Unknown Helper

In a mountainous section of the country a colporteur had arranged for the delivery of his books, but after getting started, found himself in grave perplexity because the horse he had secured could not travel. It looked as if it would be impossible to make the delivery according to appointment, and consequently there would follow disappointment and loss of orders. He sought the Lord for wisdom to know how to proceed in the emergency.

When he reached a fork in the road, he met a man on a mule, who asked him what he was doing. On being told of his mission and his perplexing situation, the stranger said, "Let me help you. Give me some of the books to be delivered to your customers." So the colporteur gave the man a load of books, and they separated, the stranger taking the valley road and the colporteur going in another direction.

In a very short time the man on the mule overtook the colporteur, saying he had delivered all the books, and wanted more. The colporteur could not understand how the stranger had found the different homes so quickly, but he gave him another bundle of books and the addresses of purchasers, and the man started off. This continued for a number of trips, until in a surprisingly short time the books were all placed and the money paid over to the colporteur. Then, to the astonishment of the colporteur, the man and the mule disappeared as suddenly as they had appeared. The colporteur had never seen the man before, and has not heard of him since and firmly believes that God sent an angel to help him in making the delivery. The quiet and dignified manner of the stranger, his ready under-

standing and comprehension of the situation, and the fact that he covered the territory more quickly than could have been expected tend to deepen the impression. The promise is, “Yea, I will help thee,” and God sends help in many unexpected ways.

Crossing the Swollen Stream

Two colporteurs were working together in a sparsely settled section of the country. Night overtook them, and they had no place to stay. It was a mile through deep snow to the nearest house, and they were separated from it by a creek that had swollen all day as a result of the melting snow, so it seemed impossible for them to get across. But as they walked near the edge of the stream, there appeared in a certain place what seemed to be a stone. One of the men stepped down upon it, to see if there was any way across the stream, and as he did so, another apparent stone came in sight. One after another the stones appeared, and the colporteur reached the other shore with perfectly dry feet, followed by his companion in the same manner.

When they reached the house and asked to stay all night, the people inquired if they were driving through, and when told that they were traveling on foot, the people asked how they managed to get across the creek, as no one had been able to cross over by foot that day. The account of how they came across dry shod seemed almost incredible to the people, and they considered it miraculous. The colporteurs confidently believe that God provided this stony pathway through the swollen creek, thus enabling them to proceed on their way without hindrance or delay in carrying the printed page of truth to the people.

SAVAGE BEASTS RESTRAINED

To those who believe in a heavenly Father who notes the sparrow's fall and who watches over even minor details in the lives of His children, the following experiences will not be counted commonplace. There is a God in heaven who cares.

Fierce Dogs

“I was engaged in colporteur work in a country district. As I came up through the yard to a house, a dog with a chain dangling from his neck rushed savagely at me. He was just ready to attack and bite me when he seemed seized with fright. He gave one yelp of terror, and ran back under the house to hide away. Just at that instant the lady came to the door, apparently much excited and said,

“Oh! did the dog bite you?”

“No,” I replied, ‘he seemed frightened at me.’

“Frightened!” she answered. ‘No, he was not frightened. He is terribly savage. We cannot leave him when strangers

are about. My husband let him loose this morning because I was to be left alone at home.’

“Well,” I said, ‘then the angel of the Lord must have frightened him because I did not touch him when he rushed at me.’

“That is more like it,” the lady said, ‘for I know you could never have come up to this door unless a miracle from heaven had been wrought.’

“I had a good talk with the woman and left her some tracts, as she felt that she was not able to buy a book.”

The same colporteur refers to an experience as follows:

“I had passed through the farmyard in order to reach the house. I did not see the gate or pathway and so stepped through the fence, passing close to a herd of cattle. A large bull stood by the herd, looking at me as I passed but did not make any sign of resenting my intrusion. I went on to the house, sold a book to the lady, and was about to leave, when she said:

“How did you get to the house? I did not see you when you came.”

“I came through the pasture,” I said.

“Did you see that bull?” she asked.

“Yes,” I replied, ‘I came right by him.’

“Well, that is very strange,” she said. ‘We have to keep him chained all the time. Our men folks can hardly handle him. He always tries to get through the fence to attack any stranger that comes near him.’

“God has power to restrain any kind of wild beast,” I said, ‘and surely He protected me, just as He sent the angel to shut the mouths of the lions in Daniel’s time.’

“I believe that God surely cared for you in coming to this door,” the lady replied. ‘But don’t go back through the pasture. Here is the gate at the side.’

“I thanked her, and went by the safe path, for it surely is unreasonable to expect God to protect us when we walk presumptuously. But in my experience I have found that truly the angels of God do go with the colporteurs to protect them in the lonely and dangerous ways they must often take.”

“Beware! A Savage Dog!” A sign bearing these significant words greeted the colporteur as he neared a house. Scarcely had he reached the steps of the veranda when out sprang the savage beast. Instantly a silent prayer went up to the “Master [who] knows and watches over His workers, in whatever part of His vineyard they are laboring,” for the needed protection. A servant hastily appeared at the door of the house, apparently very apprehensive that the dog

would do damage and seemed amazed to find that the stranger had reached the door unmolested. He asked repeatedly, "How did you get past the dog?" But once inside the house, the colporteur made known the King's business, and the order for a book was secured. Then the servant was ordered to restrain the dog while the colporteur passed outside the gate and went on his way rejoicing in the knowledge that the same God that closed the jaws of the lions in days of old now restrains savage dogs and opens the doors of dwellings in order that the way may be prepared for the entrance of truth.

"I do not so much mind one dog," states a colporteur, "although one is bad enough when angry, but last week I reached a place where ten dogs came after me. They were mad, too, and very hungry. Their owner, a bachelor farmer, was not at home when I called, and I hardly knew how to manage so many fierce animals. But as I prayed to the Lord to protect me, the animals quieted down, and instead of tearing me to pieces, as at first they appeared inclined to do, they came up and licked my hand in a friendly manner, and I went on my way rejoicing."

"I had been warned that a certain man kept a very savage dog, but when I reached the gate of entrance to this man's house, no dog was in sight, and so I entered the yard. As I neared the house, out came the dog, barking and growling savagely. Behind the dog came his owner, with gun in hand, and I could see that he was much concerned for fear he would have to shoot the dog in case he attacked me. I spoke kindly to the dog, and immediately he calmed down and became friendly and showed no inclination to bite. The man was astonished to see the animal change so suddenly, and laying aside his gun, he listened attentively to the canvass for the book, and placed his order."

"What do you want?" roughly inquired a man, as I approached him in his yard. I explained my mission and began to exhibit my book. He then said, 'I won't have one of your old books!' and ordered me out of the yard. But I kept on talking to him and explaining different things mentioned in the book. The man then started around the house, assuring me that he would be back directly. Soon I heard the rattling of chains, and it dawned on me that it was his intention to run me off with the dogs. I prayed to God to protect me, for I realized I was in a very dangerous place. Soon the man appeared with two great bull dogs and three bloodhounds. He shouted at me, 'Why didn't you leave?' and at the same time set the dogs on me. As they plunged toward me, I spoke to them kindly, and they stood still and looked at me but did not even touch me. A look of astonishment and perplexity came over the face of their owner, and he seemed completely changed in his attitude toward me. He said, 'If the book you are selling is as important as you say it is, I want one.' And he ordered a copy in

the best binding and also *Best Stories* for his child and gave me a cordial invitation to come and see him whenever I could do so. Surely the Lord does protect His servants, and nothing can stop the loud cry of the third angel's message which, to a large degree, is to be accomplished through the printed page."

"While making delivery of books, I found at one of the houses a large bulldog lying by the shed, but as the dog seemed to be tied, I thought nothing of it. Receiving no answer at the front door, I started around the house, when from somewhere out bounded another dog equally large, and the dog by the shed, being loose, came at me also. Both dogs jumped at me, knocking the bundle of books out of my hands and making lunges for my face. All I could do was to stand still and pray to God to deliver me from these savage beasts. Suddenly, as though they had been struck, the dogs dropped to the ground, and with heads down and tails between their legs, they slunk away. With amazement and profound gratitude, I could but recognize that the days of miracles are not past."

Canvassing at one of the large apartment houses in the city of Chicago, the lady interviewed refused to admit the colporteur and called attention to a large dog which was snarling viciously and jumping fiercely at the opening of the door in an attempt to get at the visitor. "I do not dare let you in," said the woman, "for this dog is very savage to strangers." But the colporteur replied, "I am on a mission for the King of heaven, and it is my business to fulfill my mission. I have a message for you; and I am not afraid that the dog will harm me."

After again assuring the colporteur that the dog was very vicious, the woman said that if he wished to take the risk, he could come in and explain his mission, promising that she would endeavor to keep the dog in another room. It required but a brief canvass to lead the woman to become intensely interested in the book, and she admitted that she was greatly in need of help in settling some important Bible questions which had long been troubling her. The subject of evolution was especially perplexing to her. She placed her order for the book and expressed a desire to have Bible studies conducted in her home.

During the interview, the dog had continued barking and growling, as could be heard from the adjoining room where he had been placed. All of a sudden the dog came bounding through the door, and made a direct plunge toward the colporteur. The mistress of the dog was greatly alarmed, and tried to call the dog away, but to no avail. He made a spring at the stranger's throat. Instead of biting, however, he merely licked the stranger's chin by way of a friendly greeting and quietly lay down at the feet of his

mistress, calm and subdued in the presence of the servant of the living God.

“I have always had a fear of vicious dogs, and when I entered the colporteur work this was one of my greatest difficulties. But one experience in particular caused me to know that the same God who closed the mouths of the lions in Daniel’s time would still protect His children in time of danger.

“As I walked up to a house one day, I saw the blackest, ugliest cur of a dog that I had ever encountered, and he showed me that he had real teeth. He came at me as if he would tear me in pieces, but he simply pushed his nose against my knee and did not open his mouth. He slunk away a little distance, and again came at me but with the same result. I went on about my work, feeling assured that this dog was as harmless as a kitten, because an unseen Power was in control of my life.”

“I came to a home where there was a dog who considered it his right and duty to keep everybody off the place who was not protected by some member of the family. When the lady of the house opened the door, she seemed almost paralyzed with fear as she beheld the dog with his paws on my chest, expecting to see him kill me. But she soon saw that I was caressing the dog and that he was in a playful mood. The incident became known throughout the neighborhood and was recognized as a providential intervention, resulting in the securing of a large number of orders in the community.”

Power Over Deadly Serpents

Our Saviour said to His disciples, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Luke 10:19. Many times and under varied circumstances has this promise been fulfilled in the experience of the messengers of “peace, good will to men.” One such experience is related as follows:

A colporteur stopped at a spring and stooped down to fill his drinking glass with water when a large copperhead snake laid hold of his wrist. This is one of the most deadly reptiles, and the bite was so severe as to cause the blood to run down the man’s fingers. There was no way of securing immediate attention, and remembering the promise, “They shall tread on serpents,” and “nothing shall by any means hurt you,” he committed himself to God’s care.

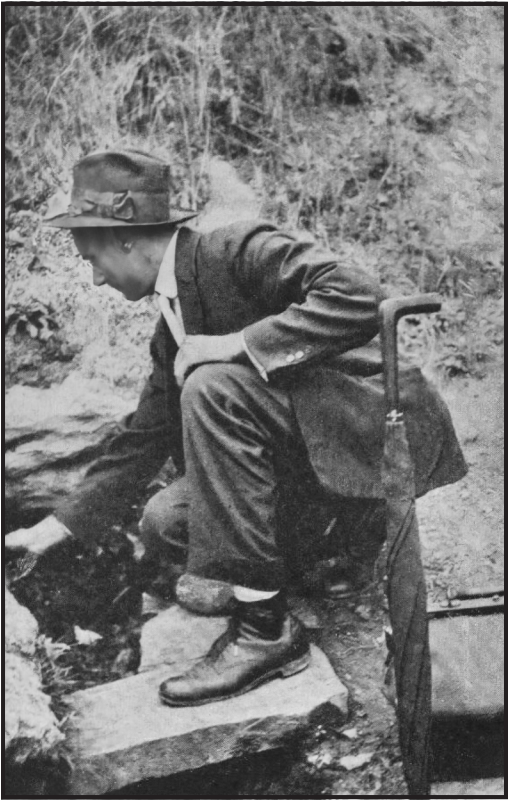
There was a house not far distant, to which the colporteur went, and there some turpentine was secured to apply to the wound. The woman at the house became quite excited when she learned what had happened to the colporteur and was impressed by his firm assurance that nothing serious would come from the bite, as he was confident his

heavenly Father would care for him. She expected to see the stranger drop dead any minute, but no ill effects became apparent, not even a swelling of the wrist. The story spread throughout the community, and very soon the telephone began to get busy with

requests for information, and people came to the house to see the man who had been bitten by the snake. This afforded an excellent opportunity to tell of God’s power and proclaim the message of truth. The people listened with amazement, and many orders for books were secured.

As the colporteur related this experience to a brother, his face fairly shone with the light of a new sense of the divine Presence, and he said, “I never in my life experienced such a reality of God’s presence and watch care as at that time.” All who know the facts can but consider this a modern miracle, similar to the experience of the apostle Paul when he shook off the viper, which had entwined itself about his arm, and felt no harm.

(To Be Continued)



The spring where the colporteur was bitten by the copperhead snake

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