

Old Paths

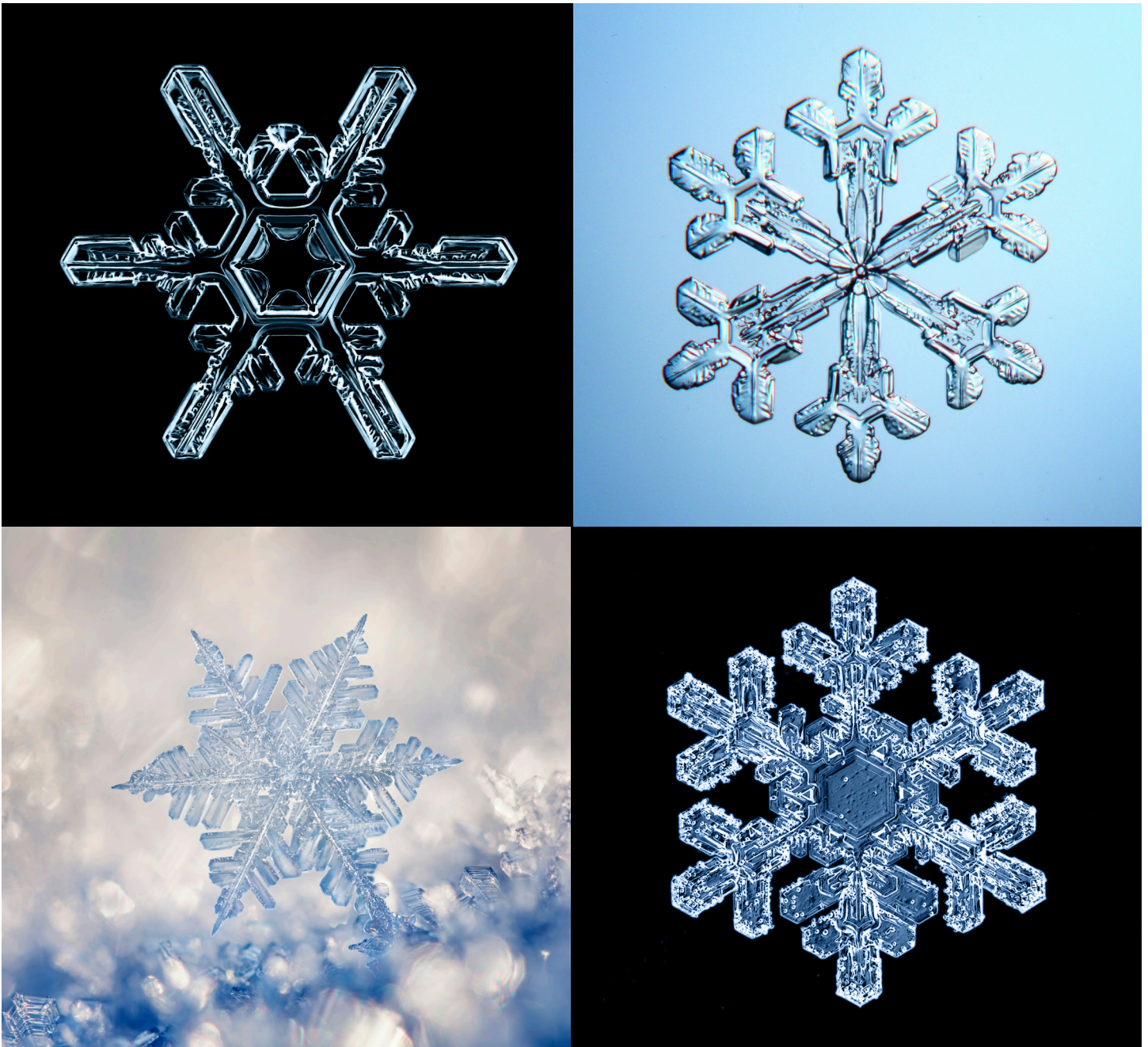
Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

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

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Just as there are no two snowflakes alike, every person is unique and valuable to God. There is nobody that can take your place in his sight!



Divinity

By Allen Stump

Divinity, what does it mean? The English word *divinity* is never used in the King James translation of the Bible. The Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines it as

1. The state of being divine; Deity; Godhead; the nature or essence of God. Christians ascribe divinity to one Supreme Being only.

In relationship to the true God, *divine* is defined by Webster as:

1. Pertaining to the true God; as the divine nature; divine perfections.

This may seem like some circular reasoning and defining. While the Bible does not use the word *divinity*, it does use the word *divine* eleven times. There are eight usages in the Old Testament. Seven of these usages use the word *divine* in the sense of having supernatural knowledge or being able to commune with spirits or similar ideas (Genesis 44:15; 1 Samuel 28:8; Ezekiel 13:9, 23; 21:29; Micah 3:6, 11). Once *divine* is used to be an adjective for a godly judgment (Proverbs 16:10).

There are three usages of the word *divine* in the New Testament. The first usage is in Hebrews:

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of *divine service*, and a worldly sanctuary. (Hebrews 9:1)

The Greek word for *service*, λατρεία (*latreia*), is here used, and the English word *divine* is added to it, but there is no special word used here for *divine*.

The second and third places we find the word *divine* is in Second Peter:

According as his *divine power* hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers

of the *divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:3-4)

Here in verses 3 and 4 we have the Greek word θεῖος (*theios*) used which is from θεος (*theos*), and it means *divine* or *divine nature* or *the nature of God* (*theos*). God's power or the power of the divine has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." In verse 4 we are told we might be partakers of the divine or godly *nature*. The Greek word for *nature* is φύσις (*phusis*). *Phusis* is from a word which means to spring forth or to grow. *Phusis* is defined as:

. . . the nature of something as the result of its natural development or condition . . . in 2 Pe 1:4 one may translate [φύσις] 'to share in what God is like' or 'to be like God in certain ways.' (Johannes Louw, Eugene Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1, p. 585)

We will see later that the Bible never teaches that humans, angels, or any of the creation can be divine, yet we can be like God in certain ways, and Peter is expressing that we can be like God in character, and in doing so we escape "the corruption that is in the world."

The laborers in Christ's cause are far from being what the Lord would have them be. The *attributes* of the enemy of God and man too often find expression in their spirit and attitude toward one another. They hurt one another, because they are not partakers of the divine nature; and thus they work against the *perfection of their own character*. They bring trouble to themselves, and make the work hard and toilsome, because they regard their spirit and *defects of character* as precious virtues, to be clung to and fostered. (Ellen White, *General Conference Bulletin*, February 25, 1895, par. 11; all emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted)

Another biblical word that should be considered when we discuss divinity is *Godhead*. This word is used three times in the King James translation and has been the cause of much confusion. Many modern dictionaries define it simply as *the Trinity*. Noah Webster gives this:

1. Godship; deity; divinity; divine nature or essence; applied to the true God, and to heathen deities

Webster does not use the word trinity, nor does he imply that the term teaches a trinity.

The most sure thing we can do to understand what the word *Godhead* means when used in the Bible is to examine the Greek word it is translated from and see how it is used in the Bible. The first usage is found in Acts 17:29:

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the *Godhead* is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (Acts 17:29)

The Greek word for *Godhead* here is *θεῖον* (*theion*) (Acts 17:29 KJV) which is the adjective, accusative, singular neuter form of *theios* which we saw is based on *theos* and means that which is godly or godlike in nature.

Some other translations of *Godhead* in Acts 17:29 are "divine being" (ESV Lexham), "deity" (NRSV), "that which is divine" (Darby), "divine nature" (NASB), and "divine being" (NIV). In none of these cases does it state or imply a trinity.

Very interestingly, *theion* is also the Greek word for sulfur and is used in the New Testament for *brimstone* (sulfur). For example:

But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and *brimstone* from heaven, and destroyed them all. (Luke 17:29)

This word association is perhaps because God was viewed as a fire-wielding god. (See <https://academic.oup.com/book/40278/chapter-abstract/346765207?redirected-From=fulltext>.)

The second text that used the word *Godhead* is Romans 1:20:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (Romans 1:20)

The Greek word translated *Godhead* is *θειότης* (*theiotes*). In reference to Romans 1:20, we read:

... the term in such description is not tautologous but usually refers to performance that one might properly associate w. a divinity. (Walter Bauer, Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., p. 446)

This is the only usage of *theiotes* in the New Testament. It carries the sense of *divinity*, *deity*, or *divine nature*.

The third usage of *Godhead* is found in Colossians 2:9.

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (Colossians 2:9)

The Greek word translated *Godhead* is *θεότητος* (*theotētos*) and it means *deity*. It is from *θεότης* (*theotēs*) whose root word is *theos*. This is its only usage in New Testament.

The word *deity* is never used in the King James translation. There are some versions that translate *theotētos* as deity, such as the ESV, NASB, and the NIV. Also *deity* is found the translation of Acts 17:18 in the NASB.

The basis of worship

The scriptural basis of worship is found in the creatorship of the true God. We see this principle in the following texts:

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:11)

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. (Jeremiah 10:10–12)

The Father's divinity

Within the Christian sphere, there is virtually no question in relationship to the deity or divinity of the person the Bible calls "God the Father." This exact phrase is used thirteen times in the New Testament as well as many other references to the Father being God (Malachi 2:10; John 1:18; 5:18; 6:27; etc.).

Christ's divinity

While the deity of the Father has little question, the deity of Jesus Christ is approached differently by some. Former United States President William Howard Taft, who was a Unitarian, stated:

I am a Unitarian. I believe in God. I do not believe in the Divinity of Christ, and there are many other of the postulates of the orthodox creed to which I cannot subscribe. (Letter to his brother, Henry; <https://campuspress.yale.edu/mssa/william-howard-taft/>)

On the other hand, Lord Byron, the famous British poet, noted:

If ever man was God, or God man, Jesus Christ was both. (https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/torrey_ra/fundamentals/63.cfm)

The divinity of Christ was debated by the early church and to some extent is still debated today. Does the Bible

present Jesus as divine or having the nature of God? Let us begin with what John writes in his gospel. Speaking of Jesus under the symbol of the Word, he writes:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*. (John 1:1)

While the great majority of the time the Bible uses the word *God* to denote the supreme being of the universe, i.e., the Father, there are enough times the word *God* refers to Jesus Christ that it is clear he is considered divine or to have the divine nature.

Paul begins Hebrews by stating that God (the Father) in the last days has spoken especially by his Son (Hebrews 1:1–2). He then states:

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (Hebrews 1:3–4)

Here Christ is said to be the “*express image*” of God’s person. The Greek word for this is *χαρακτήρ* (*charaktēr*), from which we get our word *character*. It means an exact reproduction or the distinctive quality of one. We are told that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Certainly Christ is love just as much as the Father. When we see Jesus, we see the character of the Father.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (John 14:8–9)

Paul also notes in Hebrews 1 that Christ has a name above the angels. In verse 5 he begins to clarify this:

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? (Hebrews 1:5)

The angels are not on the same level as Christ. They are sons by creation and are not begotten.

A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,”—not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, *but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person*, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895, par. 3)

Then Paul says that the angels were commanded to worship Christ, even when he was a baby in the manger:

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. (Hebrews 1:6–7)

Remember that worship belongs alone to the one who can create. Paul then allows his message to hit its crescendo.

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8)

Paul writes that Christ is God; he is divine, but this is not simply Paul’s thoughts but the very words of God the Father himself! God calls his Son God, not in the sense that he is the supreme being in the universe but God in the sense of having the divine nature.

I remember being among some one true God believers who in their minds were trying to exalt the Father but denied the divinity of Jesus. I said to them, “But does the Father not call Jesus God.” They replied, “God calls Jesus God, but we cannot.” But that is like saying, “The Bible says the seventh-day is the Sabbath, but we must keep Sunday.” Please note this clear presentation of the Father’s view of his Son:

The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father’s throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. About the throne gathered the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng—“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Revelation 5:11.), the most exalted angels, as ministers and subjects, rejoicing in the light that fell upon them from the presence of the Deity. Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to *exercise divine power*, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God’s plan, but would exalt the Father’s glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love. (Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.2)

There are many other Scriptures which teach the divinity of Jesus, such as:

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Timothy 3:16)

The God manifested in the flesh was Christ. This cannot be speaking of the Father, for he was not “received up into glory,” but the Son was.

Before the birth of Jesus, Gabriel appeared unto Joseph and told him: “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Then Matthew goes on to give inspired commentary, stating:

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us*. (Matthew 1:22–23)

A very clear text is also found in Titus. Paul waxes bold and even calls Jesus the “great God”:

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of *the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; (Titus 2:13)

It might be argued that Paul is speaking of the Father as the great God and then also mentions Jesus. There is, however, a Greek grammar rule called Sharp’s Rule of Interpretation. This rule, first codified by Granville Sharp, basically states that if two substantives [both singular] are connected by *καί* and both have the article, they refer to different persons or things; but if the first substantive has an article and the second does not, the second refers to the same person or thing as the first. The Greek of Titus 2:13 has the article for the first substantive but not the second, so we know that the same person is being spoken of in the verse.

We mentioned earlier that the divinity of Christ was debated by the early church and to some extent is still debated today. Today, part of the debate is over the idea that Jesus had to retain his powers usually associated with divinity to be divine. But did the incarnate Jesus need to have super powers to be divine? Or we might also ask, if one has these super powers does that make them divine?

The apostle Paul under inspiration writes concerning Christ: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6–7).

The beginning of verse 6 has also been translated, “Who, being in very nature God.” In his very nature, Christ held

the divine form, and in verse 7 we find that it can be translated that he emptied himself. But of what did he empty himself? Christ emptied himself of the divine attributes in the incarnation and accepted the essential attributes of a slave.

Jesus laid aside his *omnipotence*. The faithful and true witness stated very clearly: “Verily, verily [truly, truly], I say unto you, *The Son can do nothing of himself*, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. . . . *I can of mine own self do nothing*: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:19, 30). Ellen G. White wrote: “All the miracles of Christ performed for the afflicted and suffering were, by the power of God, through the ministration of angels” (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 67.2). Notice it was not by his own power but by the power of God through the angels. The evidence from inspiration states that Christ did not retain his omnipotence in the incarnation; instead, he totally depended on the Father.

Christ laid aside his *omnipresence*. Even a casual reading of the gospels reveals that Jesus accepted the physical restrictions of humanity. This is one reason that Jesus told the disciples that it was “expedient” for him to go away so that the omnipresent Comforter could come.¹

Writing about the gospel narrative when Jesus was sleeping in the boat while he and the disciples were crossing the lake, Ellen White states:

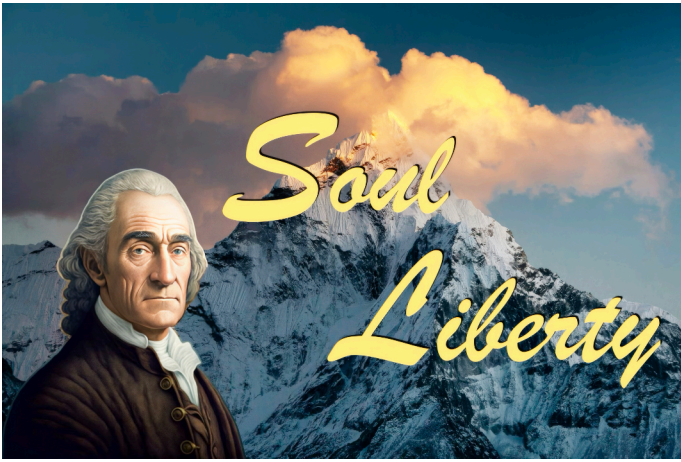
When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested not in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the “Master of earth and sea and sky” that He reposed in quiet. *That power He had laid down*, and He says, “I can of Mine own self do nothing.” John 5:30. He trusted in the Father’s might. It was in faith—faith in God’s love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.1)

Inspiration states that Christ had laid down the power to control the elements. He had laid down his omnipotence.

Christ laid aside his *omniscience* in the incarnation. Luke 2:52 states that “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” One cannot increase in wisdom, if he already possesses it all. In fact, Jesus plainly told the disciples that he did not even know the

1. See John 11:1–21; John 16:7; etc.

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By Raquel Akens

It is ironic that, in recent times, the loudest voices proclaiming the principle of separation of church and state have often been the most secular, using it to advance their own godless agenda. This irony lies in the fact that this principle is rooted in the Bible. It was a deeply religious, Bible-believing Christian who first fought to establish this vital principle of freedom of conscience—or, as he termed it, soul liberty—in the United States. That man was Roger Williams, who was providentially excommunicated from the Massachusetts colony due to his beliefs. With no other option, he went on to establish his own colony, where religious liberty became its most striking and foundational tenet.

Soul liberty did not originate with Roger Williams—it can be traced back through history as small glimmers of light in a long expanse of darkness. Most importantly, it is a biblical principle seen as the very foundation of God's kingdom. Because God is love (1 John 4:8), it follows that liberty must be the atmosphere of His realm (2 Corinthians 3:17). Love, when forced, ceases to be love. It is only love when it is given willingly and freely. Thus, we see how love and liberty are inseparable.

A government is characterized by its laws, whether they are just or unjust. God's kingdom, however, is founded on the law of love (2 John 1:6), and He will never accept obedience or worship that is forced or insincere. God desires worship that is genuine and comes from the heart.

On Mt. Sinai, Moses was given the law of God on two tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18). It is interesting to note that there were two tablets and not just one. Why would this be? It certainly was not because God could not fit all the commandments on one tablet. Rather, it may signify that there were two main branches of the law upon which all others would rest, or perhaps two classifications of the law. This conclusion can be drawn from Christ's words:

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy

mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Matthew 22:37-39)

Here we see the two classifications of the Ten Commandments, the moral law:

- ☞ Love to God (first four commandments) - Religious duty
- ☞ Love to Man (last six commandments) - Civil duty

Both of these tablets, or classifications, teach us morality, but there are clear distinctions between them. The first tablet, which contains the first four commandments, focuses on love for God. These laws guide us in how to worship and honor Him—they are religious in nature, and judgment in such matters belongs solely to the religious realm. Ultimately, only God can discern the heart of a person and will serve as the final judge of a believer's sincerity. Salvation is not a collective matter but an individual one, and the conscience must remain free to answer ultimately to God alone in religious matters. (Matthew 22:21).

The second tablet, which contains the last six commandments, focuses on love for others. It teaches the principles of what it means to love our neighbor and safeguards the liberties of others. The principles of this tablet should form the foundation of civil laws and govern the state. It is within this realm—and only this realm—that governments should have jurisdiction to legislate and enforce morality.

However, moral legislation and adherence to it do not make anyone a Christian. Such laws may create good citizens, but they do not transform or make someone righteous. God requires more than outward conformity; He desires the heart and soul to be aligned with our actions. This can only happen through conversion and the granting of a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26).

While humans can only observe outward behavior and judge accordingly, God sees the innermost thoughts and intentions and will judge our motives (Hebrews 4:12). He alone can determine whether we obey from the heart out of love for Him or merely out of fear of consequences. Do we obey because we truly love God or simply because we are afraid of being caught?

Throughout history, and even in modern times, some have believed that enforcing religious conduct through legislation and civil authority is not only acceptable but pleasing to God. However, God will never accept disingenuous, forced, or hypocritical worship. If we, as sinful mortals, are offended by feigned love, how much more so would our holy God and Father be, in whose image we were created?



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exact time of the second coming: “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32).²

Finally, Christ laid aside his *immortality* in the incarnation. The Scriptures teach that the soul of Christ died, that he gave up the “breath of life” at Calvary.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:12)

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. (Matthew 27:50)

When we tie these four attributes together, we see that Christ, in the incarnation, laid aside the attributes of divinity while retaining his divine relationship with his Father; in other words, *he was divine because of who he was and not because of powers or abilities he had* within himself. He was still the divine Son of God.

Further, in the incarnation, Jesus claimed to have divinity, he claimed to be the I AM of Exodus 3:14.

I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins. (John 8:24)

The word *he* is italicized in the King James, showing it is an added word that the translators thought needed to be inserted to clarify the text, but the text does not require it. Christ is saying that if we do not believe he is the I AM, there is no salvation for us. Continuing in the same chapter, we read:

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, *I am*. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. (John 8:56–59)

Here the Jewish leaders clearly understood Christ’s claim, for they took up stones to stone him. (See John 10:33.) Ellen White links Christ’s divinity with his claim to be the Son of God.

2. If God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit were three coequal beings, all being omniscient, then the Holy Spirit would also know the time of the coming of Christ.

If men reject the testimony of the inspired Scriptures concerning the divinity of Christ, it is in vain to argue the point with them; for no argument, however conclusive, could convince them. . . . None who hold this error can have a true conception of the character or the mission of Christ, or of the great plan of God for man’s redemption. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, 1888 ed., p. 524.2)

Christ’s divinity is to be steadfastly maintained. When the Saviour asked his disciples the question, “Whom say ye that I am?” Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Said Christ, “Upon this rock,” not on Peter, but on the Son of God, “I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, March 2, 1905, par. 4)

When Jesus was asked if he was the Son of God, Jesus said yes.

But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, *I am*: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. (Mark 14:61–62)

Are humans divine?

What about humanity? Is humanity divine, or will it ever become divine? Humans who are saved at last will receive immortality, yet that immortality is given by God. It is not inherent within man. Further, there is no text that specifically teaches that conferred immortality is a hallmark of divinity.

The new age movement today seeks to give to humanity a type of divinity, teaching that the divine essence is in all of creation. Charles Eastman, an American Indian doctor and writer who was clearly influenced by Indian culture, stated:

Among us all men were created sons of God and stood erect, as conscious of their divinity. (Charles Eastman, *The Soul of the Indian*, Chapter 1, par. 2)

The Bible does not teach that all have divinity. As we noted earlier, 2 Peter 1:4 states that by the “precious promises” of God we may become “partakers of the divine nature.” As we also noted earlier, the Greek word for *nature* is φύσις (*phusis*), and it may be translated *to share in what God is like* or *to be like God* in certain ways.

It is in God’s character that we are to be like him. We will never be omnipotent nor omniscient like God, but we can have his character of love. Man should never be considered divine in the sense that God is divine and worthy of worship.

The Bible repeatedly commands us to worship Jehovah.

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. (Psalm 96:9. See Psalms 29:2; Jeremiah 7:2, etc.)

In contrast the Bible never commands us to worship man who is a creature created by God.

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (Romans 1:25)

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. (Psalm 60:11)

Are angels divine?

The Bible is clear that we are not to worship angels, and if we do not worship angels they certainly are not divine. The apostle Paul specifically warns against such a teaching.

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (Colossians 2:18)

Twice in the Revelation we read of the beloved John about to worship the angel who is revealing God's message to him and each time the angel forbids him, the second time instructing him to worship God.

And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10)

And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. (Revelation 22:8-9)

There is a statement in the writings of Ellen White that, with a superficial reading, might be understood to teach that angels are divine. It reads:

Love kindles in our hearts toward Him "who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," and faith grasps the promise, "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Thus Jesus becomes the medium of communication between Heaven and our souls, and holy angels are sent to minister unto us. And while these *divine messengers* are striving to lead sinners to plant their feet on the ladder that extends from earth to Heaven, let us be co-laborer's with them, and urge all who will to climb the shining way. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, June 26, 1884, par. 12)

Notice the phrase "divine messengers." Does that make the angels divine? Divine is an adjective here, expressing what kind of messengers the angels are, correct? Not necessarily so. There are presidential assistants. They are helpers to the president, but they are not presidents.

A hammer is a human instrument. If I use a hammer, it doesn't make the hammer human, but I can call it a human tool without any trouble. Monkeys can use human tools. That does not mean the tools or the monkeys are human. Calling angels divine messengers does not mean they are divine, just tools of the divine one.

When we consider the teachings of the Bible and the volume of Ellen White's writings, we cannot, with good exegesis, come to the conclusion that angels are divine.

The new age and all false religions have sought to take worship away from God and put it towards Lucifer and then man. The desire for worship and divinity brought about the downfall of Satan:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Isaiah 14:12-14)

When we worship or call the created "divine," we are taking our eyes away from the Creator, the true divine one.

God has given a very special sign that he is the Creator—the seventh day Sabbath.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

It is eternal life to worship only the Father and Son, for they alone are able to create and are divine.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3)

Let us keep our worship and reverence to the Father and Son alone.

The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted. (Ellen White, *The Youth's Instructor*, July 7, 1898, par. 2)



Angels Watching Over Us

By Rob Chisum

(This is an edited version of a sermon given at the Pismo Beach, California, meetings held October/November this year. Editor)

The message that the Lord has placed upon me to share this morning I have entitled “Angels Watching Over Us.” I want to share what the Lord has shown me of the many different ways in which he has sent his angels to minister to his people. My heart just thrilled as I was putting this together. I had never thought about angels as much as I have now, and to see God’s love and concern for us and what he does is just to me fabulous. So to start, turn to Psalm, chapter 34 and verse 7. This is a verse that I am sure most of us have read many times and probably have even quoted. It says simply that the angel of the LORD encamps round about those that fear him and delivers them.

God sends his angel, or angels, to surround us. I like to think of this more in the plural than in the singular—not just one angel coming and camping about us, although I am sure one is enough, but a multitude of angels, depending on the situation we find ourselves in. In 2 Kings 6, starting in verse 8, we read about the king of Syria coming to war against Israel, and the king wondered how Israel always knew what he was going to do. He asked his leaders who the spy was in their camp, and when he learned it was because of Elisha, he sent for him. We read about this in 2 Kings, chapter 6, starting with verse 13:

And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. (2 Kings 6:13–14)

When Elisha’s servant woke up the next morning and went “forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do” (verse 15)?

I love that Elisha was so calm and just said not to worry and not to fear. I see him having such great peace, even though it looked like devastation was before them. He said “they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (verse 16).

And Elisha prayed:

LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (2 Kings 6:17)

I understand this verse does not mention angels, but do you think the horses and chariots are there by themselves? I do not believe that. Why would God have just sent horses and chariots? No, he sent an army of angels to encircle the army that had encircled the city. God knows what is needed. He knows how to take care of things, and he knows what you and I need all the time. He sends his angels to encompass round about us for whatever it is we need. I do not always know what I need, but I am glad God does. I am glad he sends what is sufficient for my needs. I know that I can trust him to do this. I am also glad I do not see everything going on because not only is God sending his angels, but the devil is sending his. God loves me so much that even without me asking, he has his army surrounding me. This is our God.

Now turn to Psalm 103:20. Here we read about these angels, and Peter refers to this in Second Peter, as well, but in Psalm 103:20, we read:

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, That excel in strength, that do his commandments, Harkening unto the voice of his word.

We find a similarity in 2 Peter, chapter 2, starting in verse 9. Peter writes:

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. (2 Peter 2:9–11)

Peter mentions different people but brings in the angels which are greater in power and might. The angels are greater in power and might, and in Psalms it is written that they excel in strength. I used to think that I was pretty strong, but I have never been that strong. I could do some

I saw the saints leaving the cities and villages, and associating together in companies, and living in the most solitary places. Angels provided them food and water, while the wicked were suffering from hunger and thirst.—*Early Writings, 282.2*



Ellen White

things other people could not do, but I always knew there were those much stronger than I was. I remember in high school when I said something to someone one time, and he reached out real quick and punched me in the nose. It was real tempting to get up and go after him, but I was smart enough to know he was much stronger than I was, and I thank God that I had the sense not to engage any further. And I thank God now that I do not have to, for he sends his angels which excel in strength well beyond anything that I even imagined I had and beyond the strength of my enemies, and also beyond the strength of the powers of darkness. God's angels excel even over them, though it sometimes does not appear that way. Sometimes there is a struggle. Gabriel was held up from coming to Daniel because of the struggle he was in, and the Bible says that Michael had to come and help. There are things going on that you and I do not realize the extent of, but the Scriptures tell me that God's angels excel in strength. They are greater in power and might than you and I are, and we can rest in the power of his might and not in our own.

When I think about the the power of these angels, I think about when Christ was crucified. They put him in the tomb, and they rolled the stone down in front of the face of the tomb. Now my understanding of how they would do this is basically the stone would be uphill from the tomb, and it would roll downhill into place, and even then it took more than one man to get it to happen. Can you imagine trying to roll it back up? When Mary and the other ladies went to the tomb, what was their question? Who will roll the stone away for us? They knew they could not do it, but when they got there the stone had been rolled away. How an angel rolled it gives us another glimpse into the power of the strength of these angels that God sends to encamp about us.

We have an account in Exodus 23 of when God was getting ready to send Israel into the Promised Land, and we are told basically the same thing in Exodus 33. In Exodus 23 and verse 20, God says:

**In the time of trouble just before the coming of Christ, the righteous will be preserved through the ministration of heavenly angels; but there will be no security for the transgressor of God's law. Angels cannot then protect those who are disregarding one of the divine precepts.—
*Patriarchs and Prophets, 256.1***



Ellen White

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

When God has a plan for us, when he has something he wants us to do or when there is somewhere he wants us to go, he sends his angels to prepare the way for it to happen. It does not mean nothing is going to happen contrary to what we would like, but it means God will send his angels to help work things out. The Lord will take care of it. We do not have to fret about things. We do not have to worry about everything going on. It is in God's control. God loves you so much that he sends his angels before you to prepare the way. Nothing is going to happen that is out of his control. Nothing is going to happen that he does not already know before you get there.

In this same passage of Exodus 23, dropping down to verse 23, he says:

For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

In Exodus 33:2, he says he will send an angel beforehand and will drive them out. He will get them out of the way as much as he wants them out of the way. He will get them out of your way, whoever or whatever it is. This is the love of our God for you. Turn to 2 Kings, chapter 19. When we have a battle to fight, remember the words of the Lord—the battle belongs to the Lord. We may think it is our fight, but we are to leave it in his hands.

I do not have stress because I do not worry about things. I give them to God, and I do that with most things. I fail sometimes, but I really try to give it all to God. I am not going to worry because God will take care of it, and I leave it in his hands. So, my stress level most of the time is pretty low. Things do not cause me problems like they do some people. I hear Christians stressing about all the trials they are going through, but I cannot really think of any trials that I have. When I start listening to the things they are talking about, however, I realize it is happening in my life, too, but I never think about them as trials because I just do not worry about them. God's got it all under control. Yes, I have trials, but God takes care of them, and I do not worry about them. You see, the battle is not ours. It belongs to the Lord. Whatever battle is in your life, it belongs to him. Now, sometimes he tells us to stand up and fight, but sometimes he says I will completely take care of it, as in 2 Kings, when the king of Assyria was coming against Israel and the the king of Israel was talking to God about it. Starting in verse 32, it says:

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an

arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor cast a bank against it. (2 Kings 19:32)

Not only is the army not coming into the city, they are not even going to shoot any arrows into the city. They are not even going to be able to lay a siege against the city. They are not going to be able to accomplish anything, but God takes it even further than that:

For I will defend this city, to save it for mine own sake. (2 Kings 19:34)

If I can be so bold as to say it, you are the city of the Lord. Now, I cannot show you an exact scripture that says you are the city of the Lord, but the Lord cares for you as much as any city that has ever been under his name, and he will do these same things for you. He will defend you and save you for his sake. The verse goes on to say:

. . . for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD . . . (2 Kings 19:34, 35)

That is written in the singular, but whether it is singular or plural, it just shows what God can do. The angel of the LORD went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred fourscore and five thousand. That is 185,000. One hundred eighty-five thousand the angel of the LORD went out and killed in one night.

. . . and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. (2 Kings 19:35)

That is what the angel of the LORD can do. That is the protection your God has set up around you. This is what your God wants to do for you.

It is amazing the way God works things out, and we do not have to worry. God will work things out. Trust him. Trust the Lord with all your heart and in all your ways. Acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths. He will send the angels before you to open up your path, but it does not mean you will not find yourself somewhere that you do not want to be.

Acts 5 talks about Peter and John who were thrown into prison, and starting in verse 17, we read:

Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. (Acts 5:17-20)

Do you think they wanted to be in prison? We may find ourselves in positions we do not want to be in, but that does not mean that the angels of the Lord are not still with us. It does not mean that he is not watching out over us.

What it means is he has a plan for you to be there. Look at the deliverance he gave them at this point. It is no wonder that when you get to Acts chapter 12 and Peter is in prison again and it looks like he will probably be executed the next day that he is sleeping.

Do you think if you knew you were going to die the next day that you would be sleeping? Usually what we would be doing is getting down on our knees all night long and praying, but that is not what Peter was doing. What were the chances of Peter getting out of this? Peter was bound between two guards. He was not just sitting between them, but he was chained to them and locked in a cell with a guard outside the cell. They were not taking a chance on him getting away, but what happened? An angel came, shining brightly in the cell. Scripture tells us he shined brightly, but it did not wake anybody up, not even Peter. He had to nudge Peter to get Peter to wake up. He told Peter to get up, and the chains fell off, not off the guards but off of Peter. The guards continued to sleep. He took him out through the doors. The guard at the door still slept. Your angel can help you without disturbing anybody else. That boggles my mind and excites me and tells me I have nothing to worry about, nothing to fear.

When you read this story, you realize Peter was not really sure what was going on. He thought at first he was just seeing a vision. I can only imagine how elated he was at that point. This shows God's protection over me and what he can do. This is what he wants to do for you. This is his plan for you.

Now again, you may find yourself in a situation you do not want to be in, and you may not be released from the prison. I personally feel like I have been told of God that I am going to prison. Whether I am going to die there or not, I do not know. I do not want to go to prison. I used to be a volunteer in a prison, and I was an unrestricted volunteer, so I could go anywhere in the prison I wanted to go, but it also came with responsibilities. I had a group in there, and we were in the chapel and did Sabbath school lessons with them. When it was time for us to leave, they would have lockdown, but one particular time they said I was to stay behind with one prisoner because he was waiting on a phone call for his dad who was about to have surgery. They took the rest of the people out, but I had to stay behind with the prisoner. I was not worried about the prisoner, but when they took my people out, and the guards walked out, and the doors went click, that set something off in me that I never wanted to experience again.

I cannot really tell you what happened at that time as it was probably thirty-five years ago, but I have not done prison ministry since then. Even though someone has tried a lot to talk me into it, I just cannot bring myself to

do it, for God told me I am going to end up in prison not as a volunteer but as a prisoner, and it is not going to be as easy as that one experience had been. Granted nothing happened. They came back and opened the door and let me out, and I joined my my group. After that I moved away, so I never actually went back, and I was never available to do it after that. But God has told me, I believe, that I am going to end up in prison, and I am not looking forward to it. Even though I am going to be somewhere that I really do not want to be at all and where I will have no control over anything, one thing I do have control over is whether I am going to trust him and remember that he is there with me through the angels. He sends his angels to minister to us, and seeing these verses I have been sharing with you just thrills my heart. I am fine with the truth that Christ uses his angels to come to us (not that Christ, himself, could not come, if he so chose). I mean I like the idea that he would come, but just the fact that he loves me enough to send someone that can fully take care of me, that is good enough. I am okay with that. I hope you are because really that is the way it happens. It does not diminish his love for us whatsoever. It kind of expounds on it because he can send even more angels if the situation calls for it, and he brings in all the resources that are needed. He takes care of it and delivers us. It thrills me to see that he loves me so much that he provides all this for me.

We also have the story similar to this of Daniel. Daniel was sentenced to death by being thrown in a den of lions, not lions that just happen to be there, but lions that are kept hungry so that when you are thrown there, they are going to tear you to pieces. They want their meal, and Daniel was thrown into such a den of lions. When the king the next morning came to Daniel, he had been frantic all night long. He loved Daniel. He knew he could trust Daniel, and he knew he had been tricked into doing this to Daniel. The king fretted all night long. He waited until the morning, and it says in Daniel 6:

Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? (Daniel 6:19–20)

And Daniel answered.

Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. (Daniel 6:21–22)

I cannot tell you how many times I read that before I realized God did this with an angel. I just kind of skipped

over that God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths. This is the kind of power that God has given the angels. They can even control the animals. This is what God is doing for us, for me and you. There is not anything about us that God is not concerned. Everything in our lives is of concern to God, and God has a plan for everything.

Matthew, chapter 4, is where Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. He was there in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights. He did not eat or drink. Satan came and tempted him. The way some of the scripture reads is that at the end of the forty days and forty nights, Satan tempted him. By some others, it was throughout that time. In the *General Conference Bulletin* of April 8, 1901, paragraph 21, Ellen White tells that it was the whole forty days and forty nights that he was tempted, but then at the end of it, it appears there were these three major temptations. The first one was because he was so hungry that Satan tempted him to turn the stones into bread, but hunger is not really what it was about. It was not about appetite—that was just a means for the temptation—but it was really all about trusting God and trusting his word. It really is. If you want something to read on it, read *The Story of Redemption*. There is a section that deals with the temptations of Christ. I shared this in a sermon, and I had people tell me Ellen White says it was all about diet or about appetite. So I searched what she has written on this and found that it was almost word-for-word what I had shared in the sermon. It is amazing the things that she says about this and that Christ had been fasting all this time and that he had been tempted so severely of the devil.

After Satan left, verse 11 says that angels came and ministered unto him. We find a similarity when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane just before his trial and crucifixion. He was in agony over what he faced and said, Father, if there is any way that this cup can pass from me let it pass, but nevertheless not my will but yours, and in Luke 22:43 it says then appeared an angel unto him and ministered to him, but it is not just that God sends them to Jesus. It is not just because Jesus was his only begotten Son. Think about Elijah.

We all know the story of Elijah. Elijah said it was not going to rain, and it did not rain for three and a half years, and the king was mad at Elijah and with everything going on. At the end of this time, they all come together with the prophets of Baal to see who the true God is. After a simple prayer, Yahweh proves who the true God is in a dramatic fashion. Can imagine you how easy it would have been for Elijah to look at himself and be proud that he was the prophet of the right God? From this point, he had the prophets of Baal killed and then outraced Ahab's chariot to get back to the city. Jezebel then threatened him, and he ran off. After what he had done, it is hard for me to understand why. I would not have done the same thing, I would

hope. Elijah went out into the wilderness, and he is there by himself, or he thinks he is there by himself, but not if you look in 1 Kings 19. He had been with a servant, and he left his servant in Beersheba.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. (1 Kings 19:4–6)

Elijah is in pretty deep depression. Verse 7:

And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. (1 Kings 19:7)

Even when we think we are all alone, even when we are at a point where we think the only good thing is to die, God sends his angels for whatever our need might be. Right now, the need for him was to stay nourished.

He arose and did eat and drank and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights (1 Kings 19:8)

God sends his angels to minister to us so that we can do whatever it is God would have us to do. From here Elijah went into a cave, and then God ended up speaking to him, and Elijah went on from there. Elijah no longer wanted to kill himself. He left and recruited Elisha, who went on to do great things for the Lord. God does not leave us helpless or hopeless. He never leaves us by ourselves.

One more passage—Psalm 91. I am sure most of us know this Psalm. At one point I had it memorized, and some of you probably have it memorized also. Psalm 91, starting in verse 9, says:

In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, . . .—*Prophets and Kings, 513*



Ellen White


Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, Even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. (Psalm 91:9–10)

This does not mean things are not going to happen that you might wish were different, but let me tell you this. Every trial that comes up in your life really has one of three purposes. Every trial, I do not care what it is, has at least one of these three purposes. It is either to strengthen you in your walk with God, or it is to help you so that you will be able to strengthen somebody else in their walk with God, or it is simply that through that trial you will glorify God's name. It is at least one of those three things. Every trial. I have not seen anything any different. So anytime a trial comes upon you, something that you think is evil, and it may be evil, it is an opportunity for you to glorify God. It is an opportunity for you to exalt God in your life and for people to see what God can do. If that is why I am going to prison, bring on prison. If my death is going to glorify God and cause somebody else to be saved, let it happen now, but I tell you more than your death, your life will do it a whole lot more, and that is harder. You only die once. I can endure something to the point of death, but can I keep enduring it the whole time I am alive? I know that is harder, but God is providing everything we need for it.

There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, To keep thee in all thy ways. (Psalm 91:10–11)

I used to think it is Christ who is doing all this, and the angels were up in heaven watching things, but what God has shown me, I am sharing with you. This is really the beginning of my study, and to me this is just fabulous. It just shows God's supreme love and care over us and that wherever we are, he sends his army to encamp round about us and to deliver us.

God loves you. He is holding nothing back from you. He is giving you everything he possibly can to guide you, to deliver you, to bless you, and to ultimately reunite you with him.

Let us pray. Father God, we thank you so much for your great love for us. We thank you that there is nothing about us that is not of concern to you, that you do have ways of doing everything to guide us, teach us, help us, protect us, and deliver us, that you have such an army of angels that excel in strength and power to encamp round about us. Father, help us to always remember this in whatever situation we are in, that though you may not personally be there, you have those who are, those whom we can trust because we trust you, Father. Thank you for showing us the way that you work in our lives, and I pray, Father, that this will help us to love and trust you even more. I pray this in the holy name of Jesus. Amen. 

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. This month we finish Chapter 11.)

THE APPEAL OF THE MAGAZINE IN THE GUTTER

Approaching an Irish policeman, a timid girl presented the Watchman magazine. The policeman took the magazine, glanced at it a moment, and then spoke very roughly to the young woman, at the same time throwing the magazine into the gutter. It was a crushing experience for the young girl, and she went on her way with tears in her eyes and fearing to approach another person. But her effort in scattering the printed page was not to be in vain, for God has said that His word shall not return unto Him void, but shall prosper in the thing where unto it is sent or designed.

When this policeman returned over his beat, he spied the magazine lying in the gutter where he had thrown it, but the title of an article, standing out in bold letters, attracted his special attention and aroused curiosity. He picked up the magazine, brushed off the dirt, and read far enough to become really interested. But he, a policeman, could not stand there by the side of the road and read a magazine, so he slipped the paper into his pocket, and when he got home he read it from cover to cover — not simply once, but twice.

So keen was the impression made upon his mind by reading the magazine, that he did not retire that night. The next day he went to the Seventh-day Adventist church, the location of which he well knew, as he had passed by often, and finding the pastor, he told of the experience of the previous day, and inquired if there was any way of reaching the young lady, so as to make apology to her. This policeman became a regular attendant at the Sabbath services in the church, and a friend and helper to all colporteur evan-

gelists with whom he came in contact.

AN UNWANTED MAGAZINE FALLS INTO GOOD HANDS

“I was brought up in the environment of the church, but at a certain period of my life began to drift away, until, by neglecting prayer and church duties, I gradually reached the point where religion had no place in my life. I was miserable; I had found no happiness in the church, and I failed to find happiness in the world. The only difference between the two was that the world brought me a far greater portion of unhappiness. In fact, the unhappiness became so great that I cared not whether my life continued or not. But there is a blessing in all sorrow if we will only learn what it is. I found this to be true in my experience, for when misery had done its work, a great longing for truth took possession of me. I prayed to God to send me truth, not caring what the truth might be or where it might lead. For a number of months this was the sincere prayer of my heart, and it was the only prayer my heart had uttered for a long time.

“One day, while seated at my desk in the office, an elderly gentleman of the firm placed a magazine on my desk, saying, ‘Miss C.,

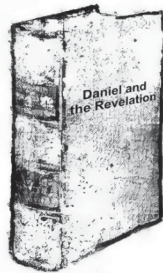
perhaps you may care to look at this little publication. A young lady down at the custom house a few minutes ago insisted upon my buying it. I did not want the paper, but finally took it to get rid of her. Perhaps you will find something of interest in it.’

“I found the publication to be a copy of the Watchman magazine, and I picked it up and began to glance through it. Not a thing interested me until I came to an article giving an explanation of ‘the beast’ and ‘the number of the beast’ of Revelation. This explanation was so radically different from anything I had ever read or heard that it immediately arrested my attention. In this article there

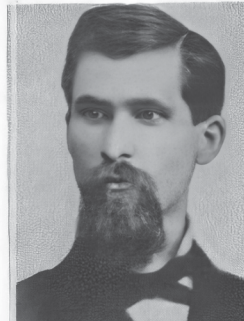
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George A. King



The first subscription book, *Daniel and the Revelation*, was sold by King to Reavis. George King was the father of the Adventist literature evangelism work. D. W. Reavis would become a Seventh-day Adventist from the book he bought from King.



D. W. Reavis

Hid in My Heart

By Sheri Stump

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

We are so blessed to have a Bible. Many of us have many Bibles and various versions of Bibles. But is the Bible hid in your heart? The word of God instructs us in 1 Peter 3:15 to:

Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3:15)

I do not carry my Bible with me wherever I go. Do you? If not, then how shall we be ready always to give an answer?

In this verse we see that we are to be ready to share our faith with anyone who asks. Being ready includes more than being able to quote the Scriptures from memory. Do we understand the scriptural teachings that we hold to? Can we explain what we believe? Can we find these important scriptures in the Bible? Memorizing is an important step in being ready. I must admit that I am not ready. I need to know where to find these teachings in God's word. This is the reason I feel impressed to write these articles. They are helping me, and I hope you, dear reader, will find these articles motivational and that you will be diligent to put these texts to memory with me.

In the book *Maranatha*, Ellen White states the following:

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth know not what they believe. ...And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe; but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth...

The servants of Christ are to prepare no set speech to present when brought to trial for their faith. Their preparation is to be made day by day, in treasuring up in their hearts the precious truths of God's word, in feeding upon the teaching of Christ, and through prayer strengthening their faith; then, when brought into trial, the Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance the very truths that will reach the hearts of those who shall come to hear. (*Maranatha*, p. 45.2, 4)

Ellen White says that our preparation is to be made day by day, treasuring up the precious truths of God's word and feeding upon them and through prayer strengthening our faith.

In these articles we are following the 1889 Principles. We have focused on Principles numbers 1 and 2, which are as follows:

I. That there is one God, a personal, spiritual being, the creator of all things, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal; infinite in wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and mercy; unchangeable, and everywhere present by his representative, the Holy Spirit. Ps. 139:7.

II. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, the one by whom he created all things, and by whom they do consist; that he took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham for the redemption of our fallen race; that he dwelt among men, full of grace and truth, lived our example, died our sacrifice, was raised for our justification, ascended on high to be our only mediator in the sanctuary in heaven, where, through the merits of his shed blood, he secures the pardon and forgiveness of the sins of all those who penitently come to him; and as the closing portion of his work as priest, before he takes his throne as king, he will make the great atonement for the sins of all such, and their sins will then be blotted out (Acts 3:19) and borne away from the sanctuary, as shown in the service of the Levitical priesthood, which foreshadowed and prefigured the ministry of our Lord in heaven. See Leviticus 16; Hebrews 8:4, 5; 9:6, 7.

Today we will look at Principle number 3—the Holy Scriptures,

III. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain a full revelation of his will to man, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Recently I heard a sermon by David Ng on spiritual warfare. He lives in Malaysia. He emphasizes how important it is to have the word of God memorized so that we can effectively stand against the advances of the devil. He said we should quote God's word when we pray.

The word of God is our sword. It is at the word of God that the devil will flee.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

And we also find the sword of the Spirit is the word of God in Ephesians 6:17. I have included verses 11–18 for context here:

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt

about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Ephesians 6:11-18)

From the book *Early Writings*, we see that God will give us grace and strength to overcome and break the power of the enemy.

We must have on the whole armor of God and be ready at any moment for a conflict with the powers of darkness. When temptations and trials rush in upon us, let us go to God and agonize with Him in prayer. He will not turn us away empty, but will give us grace and strength to overcome, and to break the power of the enemy. (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 46.2)

I encourage you to be diligent as we memorize God's word and prepare yourselves to give an answer of the reason for the hope that is in us.

Here are the December verses. These verses instruct us on the great importance of the word of God.

Memory verse #1

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

TwhIhimh, tImnsat. P 119:11

Memory verse #2

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

FtwoGiq, ap, astats, pettdaosas, aotjam, aiadottaioth. H 4:12

Memory verse #3

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:16)

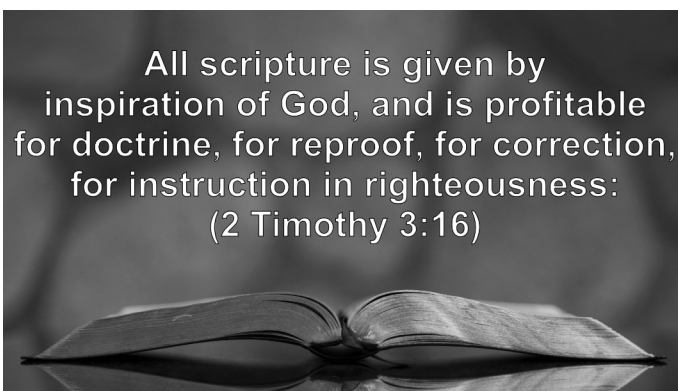
AsigbioG, aipfd, fr, fc, fir: 2 T 3:16

Memory verse #4

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

StstauG, awtnntba, rdtwot. 2 T 2:15

Memory verse #5



Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)

Twialumf, Aalump. P 119:105

Here are more verses to consider. I have memorized all of these verses, but I need to work on memorizing the scriptural references.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; It giveth understanding unto the simple. (Psalm 119:130)

For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)

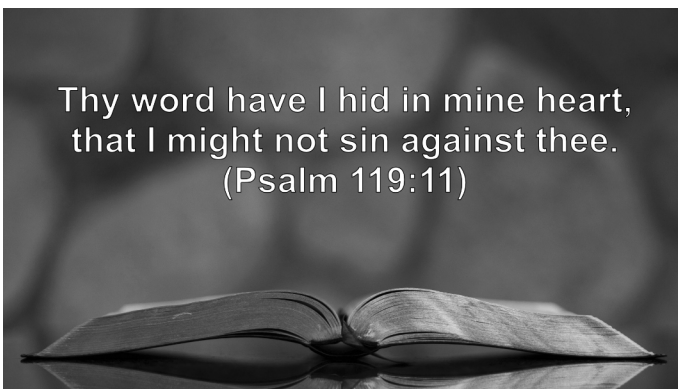
Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matthew 24:35)

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: But the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isaiah 40:8)

You may communicate with me at sheri1844@icloud.com. I would like to know how you are doing with your scripture memorization.

Build a wall of scriptures around you, and you will see that the world cannot break it down. Commit the scriptures to memory, and then throw them right back upon Satan when he comes with his temptations, "it is written." This is the way that our Lord met the temptations of Satan, and resisted them. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, April 10, 1888, par. 9)

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Health Matters

When You Eat

By Sheri Stump

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)

In this article I will share with you some information about how important it is not only *what* you eat but also *when* you eat.

To understand why this is important, we need to look at the hormone called insulin and how it regulates many metabolic processes that provide the cells with needed energy. When you eat, your intestines break down carbohydrates into glucose. This glucose enters your bloodstream and raises your blood sugar levels. The pancreas releases insulin to help regulate the glucose by storing excess glucose in your cells, where it can be used for energy or stored long-term. Insulin levels peak about 45 minutes to 1 hour after eating, and then the insulin levels fall back to normal.

From this understanding of the pancreas and insulin production, it is easy to see how important the excretion of insulin is. It helps glucose to be stored in the cells. This stored glucose is then ready to supply us with energy as needed. If food is consumed frequently, insulin will be excreted each time you eat food. An abundance of insulin in the blood will continue the process of storing glucose from our food in our cells which results in weight gain, which, in turn, makes insulin resistance worse.

I found a clear explanation of insulin and food consumption on a website called Endocrine Society. I have included a segment from that website here:

Understanding insulin, what insulin does, and how it affects the body, is important to your overall health. Tucked away behind the stomach is an organ called the pancreas, which produces insulin. Insulin production is regulated based on blood sugar levels and other hormones in the body. In a healthy individual, insulin production and release is a tightly regulated process, allowing the body to balance its metabolic needs.

What Does Insulin Do?

Insulin allows the cells in the muscles, fat and liver to absorb the glucose that is in the blood. The glucose serves as energy to these cells, or it can be converted into fat when needed. Insulin also affects other metabolic processes, such as the breakdown of fat or protein.

The most common problem associated with insulin is diabetes. Diabetes occurs when the body either does not secrete enough insulin or when the body no longer uses

the insulin it secretes effectively. Diabetes falls into two categories:

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the pancreas cannot produce insulin sufficiently to meet its own needs. This commonly occurs in children, and while an exact cause has not been found, many consider it to be an autoimmune disease. Some symptoms of type 1 diabetes include tiredness, increased urination and thirst, and problems with vision.

Type 2 diabetes is more commonly associated with adults and lifestyle choices. People with type 2 diabetes will produce insulin but often not enough for their body's needs. They (Type 2 Diabetics) may also struggle to use the insulin they produce effectively. Patients may not know they have type 2 diabetes until they have an annual checkup, as symptoms tend to be mild until the disease has become severe.

When the body does not produce enough insulin or use it efficiently, blood sugar levels build in the body. Also, the body's cells do not receive the energy they need from glucose, so the patient may struggle with fatigue. When the body turns to other tissue, like fat or muscle, for energy, weight loss may occur.

High blood sugar levels are a common symptom of diabetes, but patients who are treating their diabetes with insulin injections may inject too much insulin on occasion. This causes the body's cells to take too much glucose from the blood, leading to a low blood sugar episode. Low blood sugar (called Hypoglycemia) can cause confusion, dizziness and fainting. Because nerve cells rely entirely on glucose for energy, low blood sugar can also trigger a nervous system response." (<https://www.endocrine.org/patient-engagement/endocrine-library/hormones-and-endocrine-function/pancreas-hormones>. You will find this information on the first page under the title *Insulin is Essential in the drop-down window titled Insulin*)

There are a couple perspectives on how many meals should be eaten in a day. Some doctors recommend several small meals each day to stabilize blood sugar levels. Other professionals recommend two to three meals a day. There is general agreement that food eaten later in the day has a more negative effect on blood sugar and insulin sensitivity.

The truth is found in Inspiration. We trust the writings of Ellen White. I will include some of those quotes later in this article.

A simple explanation of what happens when you eat food is that each bite of food stimulates the production and excretion of insulin. The pancreas has a lifespan of insulin production. We can abuse our pancreas by frequent food consumption. The pancreas can become fatigued, and, depending on the kind of food consumed, the pancreas may not be able to keep up with the insulin production re-

quired. This results in diabetes. On a side note; the stomach also needs time to rest from the digestion process. Grazing is a term used for people who eat frequently. This is very hard on the stomach and the pancreas. We will look at the digestive process in a future article.

On The Cleveland Clinic website, I found this information:

What is insulin resistance?

Insulin resistance happens when cells in your muscles, fat and liver don't respond to insulin as they should. This is also known as impaired insulin sensitivity. Insulin is essential for life and regulating blood glucose (sugar) levels. (<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22206-insulin-resistance>, under the title "What is insulin resistance?")

Here are a few Ellen White quotes dealing with food consumption, specifically about when we eat:

It is quite a common custom with people of the world to eat three times a day, besides eating at irregular intervals between meals; and the last meal is generally the most hearty, and is often taken just before retiring. This is reversing the natural order; a hearty meal should never be taken so late in the day. Should these persons change their practice, and eat but two meals a day, and nothing between meals, not even an apple, a nut, or any kind of fruit, the result would be seen in a good appetite and greatly improved health. (Ellen White, *The Review And Herald*, July 29, 1884, par. 11)

There should be no eating between meals; and at least five hours should be allowed to elapse between the meals. Indigestion is the result of food taken into the stomach before the digestive organs have had time to dispose of the foregoing meal. (Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts*, Letter 208, 1905, par. 10)

After the regular meal is eaten, the stomach should be allowed to rest for five hours. Not a particle of food should be introduced into the stomach till the next meal. In this interval the stomach will perform its work, and will then be in a condition to receive more food. (Ellen White, *Counsels on Diets and Food*, p. 179, par. 1)

I am astonished to learn that, after all the light that has been given in this place, many of you eat between meals! You should never let a morsel pass your lips between your regular meals. Eat what you ought, but eat it at one meal, and then wait until the next. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 373, par. 2)

From these Ellen White quotes, we see that eating a large meal late at night is injurious to your health. She says we should eat only two meals a day. Nothing should be eaten between meals, not even an apple, a nut, or any kind of fruit. If this advice is followed, the result would be seen in a good appetite and greatly improved health.

Another very important food consumption detail found in these quotes is that five hours should be allowed to elapse between meals without any food consumption.

When you make a change regarding when you eat food, please remember that your body is used to eating at certain times. When you change your eating habits, it will take a few days or even weeks for your body to adjust. You may get very hungry in the evenings when you stop eating at night. I have experienced this, but the good news is that your body will adjust. Soon, if you are faithful, your body will not be hungry at night.

I eat two meals a day. Since I have been eating this way for a while, I no longer feel hungry at night. There are times when I have slipped back into eating food at night, and then I experience an adjustment period of hunger as I avoid eating at night and return to two meals a day.

I know a man who had hypoglycemia and suffered many headaches due to low blood sugar. He attended a 21-day lifestyle center program. At the lifestyle center he was counseled to finish his last meal of the day by no later than 3:00 pm and then eat nothing until breakfast the next day. They explained that this 15–16 hour food fast would reset his blood sugar and that he would no longer have hypoglycemic headaches. He followed this counsel. Within the three weeks of his health program at the lifestyle center his headaches disappeared and never returned as long as he continued the 15–16 hour daily fasts.

I currently know a lady who eats only one meal per day, the lunch meal. She has been doing this for almost a year. It has helped her lose weight and she claims to enjoy sustained energy. She said recently that she plans to continue eating one meal a day for the rest of her life. When she gets hungry she eats a small piece of Celtic rock salt. The piece of salt she eats is less than half the size of a pea. It curbs her appetite. This may be something that will help you. According to Barbara O'Neill, a healthy salt (Celtic is her recommendation) should be consumed each time you drink water to assist in proper hydration.

On a personal note, knowledge is power for me. When I understand what happens when I eat food, it gives me strength to make the right decision. For example, the knowledge that every bite I eat at night or between meals releases insulin, and stores additional fat in my cells and understanding that this results in weight gain, I am empowered to resist the temptation. I hope this information helps you make better eating choices as well.

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31



We Are Against Sin – All of It!

By Allen Stump

President Calvin Coolidge was renowned for his sharp wit and economy of words. In one instance, a woman told him she had bet her husband that she could get the president to say more than two words. Coolidge's response was, "You lose."

But my favorite story about him happened after a church visit one Sunday. Mrs. Coolidge, who hadn't attended the service, asked her husband what the preacher's sermon was about. Coolidge replied with a single word: "Sin." When she pressed further, asking what the preacher said about it, Coolidge succinctly responded, "He was against it."

This preacher shared the truth from the Bible, teaching that God is a sin-hating God. While He loves the sinner, He cannot allow sin in His presence. The Father sent His Son to deliver humanity from all sin.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

God does not save people in continual sin but rather from sin. This has consistently been my position, as well as the position of those at Smyrna and the 1889 HSDA Church. It was also the position of our pioneers. With this understanding, I was surprised to be notified about a comment made regarding a sermon by Brother Rob Chisum at this year's camp meeting, where his topic was overcoming all sin:

Hi Brother.

Just watched this sermon ("That Ye Sin Not") you presented about a month ago....I have never before seen this message given by any of the so called leading lights of the OTG [One True God] movement, . . . I have seen sermons on be saved by grace and believing and you are counted as righteous both true, but never have I seen a sermon on putting away of sin in our lives. It has become my view that those OTG sermon presenters, the leading lights only give half the truth and either don't believe there is a work of obedience on our part by GOD'S grace or they are afraid of being call legalistic. It tells us in the Bible there is a reward for overcoming I don't see a reward for just being a believer and not a doer. When probation ends what are the words our High Priest speaks? You brother Chisum are a carpenter as was Jesus a cabinet maker and you faithfully presented a powerful message and put it simply as Jesus

did. If I am faithful, I will look for you in the earth made new. Amen

I replied to this brother:

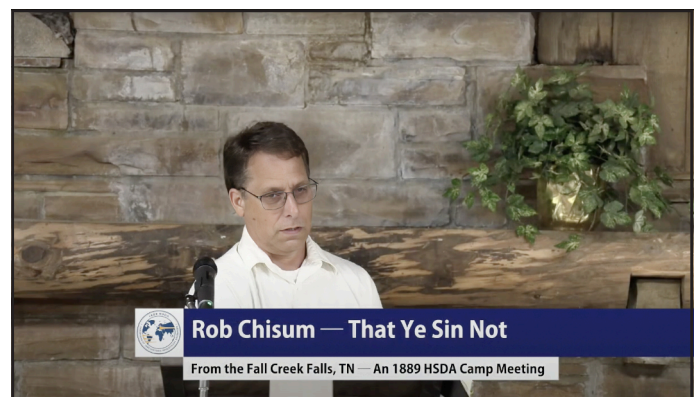
Dear _____, thank you for your comments. I must admit that they came as quite a surprise to me as the one true God believers I am associated with all believe in victory over all sin. We are a group of believers who are re-organizing the work under the banner of 1889 HSDA (Historic Seventh-day Adventists). We at Smyrna are a part of a worldwide movement that wants to restore all the truths given to our pioneers. Blessings!

This brings up a point that should be considered. Is believing in just the One True God enough to be a part of God's last-day people? The Bible certainly cannot agree with such a position, for we are told that the remnant "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

We are certainly very glad to set the record straight for any who might be in confusion as to our stand against sin, all of it!

I can only speak for myself, but it's evident that some ministers teach the truth about the Father and Son while also claiming that believers cannot overcome all sin. On this point, we cannot agree, and this disagreement is significant enough to prevent collaboration. Let us pray earnestly for biblical unity in truth among the OTG group. As a people, we face far too many divisions. May we each fall upon the Rock and be broken. God began a great work through the Second Advent Movement, grounded in truth, and He will finish this work through those who remain steadfast in upholding and teaching that same truth.

If you would like to see the presentation by Brother Chisum this article mentions, you may use this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQ2pp6OKOc4&list=P L s E - 5 c 9 1 8 f Z E p H Y _ z - M U T r 4 Z T W L J O 4 m q 6 y & index = 7 or scan this QR code:



The Shaking

By Winnifred Anderson

And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? (Mark 13:1-4)

Christ's words had been spoken in the hearing of a large number of people; but when He was alone, Peter, John, James, and Andrew came to Him as He sat upon the Mount of Olives. "Tell us," they said, "when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus did not answer His disciples by taking up separately the destruction of Jerusalem and the great day of His coming. He mingled the description of these two events. Had He opened to His disciples future events as He beheld them, they would have been unable to endure the sight. In mercy to them He blended the description of the two great crises, leaving the disciples to study out the meaning for themselves. When He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, His prophetic words reached beyond that event to the final conflagration in that day when the Lord shall rise out of His place to punish the world for their iniquity, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. This entire discourse was given, not for the disciples only, but for those who should live in the last scenes of this earth's history. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 628.1)

There on the Mount of Olives Jesus outlined for his disciples what lay ahead for Jerusalem, as well as for the entire world. He told of false Christs appearing, wars and rumors of war, nations rising against nation, kingdom against kingdom, pestilences, earthquakes and other calamities. And he told his disciples "all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (Matthew 24:6).

Everything in the world is in agitation. The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before. The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods, murders of every grade. Who can read the future? Where is security? There is assurance in nothing that is human or earthly. Rapidly are men ranging themselves under the banner they have chosen. Restlessly are they waiting and watching the movements of their leaders. There are those who are waiting and watching and working for

our Lord's appearing. Another class are falling into line under the generalship of the first great apostate. Few believe with heart and soul that we have a hell to shun and a heaven to win. (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 636.1)

Dear ones, we can see these prophecies fulfilling before our very eyes in the so recent dock workers' strike of 450,000 workers along the eastern and southern coastlines of the United States, in the hurricanes that devastated the eastern section of America, in the political unrest in our nation, and in the brutal murder of one of our brethren in the Philippines. We have read the prophesying of these events, but just the same their happenings can shake us to our very core. They so plainly tell us where we are in the course of earth's history.

Yet there is much ahead of us: the shaking which is currently happening and has been happening for quite some time, the sealing of God's people and the mark of the beast, the little time of trouble, the individual close of probation and the general close of probation, and then the great time of trouble and the seven last plagues. Over a period of time, we shall consider these events and learn how we can be prepared to meet each event.

In this article, we want to look at the shaking. Concerning a vision given to Ellen White on January 26, 1850, we read:

The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause. (Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 50)

As we can see, the shaking began early in the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and this shaking will continue up until the close of probation. Now the question has to be asked, how do we avoid being shaken from the truth? How can we be prepared to answer questions asked of our faith and beliefs? How can we be prepared to meet our Savior? How can we be ready for Christ's second coming? Many questions.

We are told:

I was shown that the work was not left in the hands of any one upon earth. Angels of God have charge of the work, and they counsel and direct God's people through chosen agents, and thus the work moves forward. (Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 282)

With the angels of God being in charge of the work here on earth and these angels using chosen agents to move the work forward, we need to be able to determine who these agents are, to discern who is preaching truth and who is promoting error. Therefore, we will have to be well grounded in God's truths, being able to rightly divide the word of God. We are told:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

Studying God's word is absolutely a necessity in preparing to be ready for Christ's second coming. This is not just a casual study, but an in-earnest study, searching the Scriptures, having right beside you concordances, dictionaries, writing tools, and whatever else would be of support to you in your study. Learn the original meanings of words, writing out your findings, and as you study and read and write, plead for God's Spirit to lead you into all truth.

We need to use the example left for us by the only begotten Son of God when he was accosted by the devil in the wilderness. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, and there tempted three times of Satan, but on each occasion Jesus answered "it is written." Satan was forced to flee the presence of Jesus because God's word was presented as a shield against the darts of the evil one.

Memorization is another absolute in our preparations to be ready for Christ's second coming. We must have scripture—God's word—indelibly written on our hearts and in our minds. Sister Sheri Stump is writing articles on various means to enhance our memorization skills. Read these articles. Determine what method is easiest for you personally to memorize Scripture, then put it to use! Select the scriptures you want to know by heart and commit them to memory. How can we defend, if we are not equipped with the weapons of warfare to engage in battle? Ephesians 6:11 tells us to "put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Prayer. Our communion with our God. As we have been told, prayer is as vital to the spiritual life as breathing is to the physical. Pray without ceasing is the admonition given us in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. We must pray without ceasing just as we must breathe without ceasing. In either case, death is the certain result of neglecting to follow the laws that govern these areas of our spiritual and physical lives. Luke 18:1 reads: ". . . men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Prayer changes us; it changes our attitudes, and it changes our character. There is power in prayer. We are told Satan dreads nothing but prayer. Prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion mean nothing to him. But when we pray, Satan trembles.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)

Begin your day with prayer, then pray without ceasing through the day.

A life of daily prayer and praise...cannot be maintained without earnest effort. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 607)

Faith and Works.

(34) Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world: (35) For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: (36) Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. (37) Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? (38) When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? (39) Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? (40) And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Matthew 25:34-40)

According to Webster's Dictionary, faith is confidence or trust in something or someone. Within our context, that confidence, or trust, is concerned with God, our Father, and Christ, his only begotten Son.

Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest precious fruit. Where faith is, good works appear. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 398)

Faith and works go together, for genuine faith cannot exist without corresponding works.

The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the word of God? Says the apostle James: 'What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?... Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?... Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.' James 2:14-24. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 472)

Genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the scriptures. (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 126)

We must realize that faith is in no way allied with presumption. Presumption is Satan's counterfeit for faith, and many times when Satan fails to cause an individual to distrust, he will succeed in leading a person to presumption.

Faith claims God's promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression. (Ibid., p. 126)

Faith makes the Christian secure against presumption.

What has been written here is by no means a comprehensive compilation concerning the shaking. An entire volume could be, and possibly has been, written on the topic. Through time, many superficial believers have been shaken from the truth, and this will continue to be. Please realize there will come a time when God will have a church (a people) that will be purified. God's work will be a complete work.

Oh that every lukewarm professor could realize the clean work that God is about to make among His professed people! (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 190.0)

The superficial will continue to be removed; sinners will be sifted out.

The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. There are precious ones now hidden who have not bowed the knee to Baal. (White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 80:1)

Dear ones, precious ones. We are all God's children by right of creation and by the redeeming blood of his only begotten Son, Jesus. He gave everything for us and is still at this moment pouring out the very riches of heaven to secure our salvation. Why do we hesitate to return to him our minds, our hearts, our lives? When we give to God, whether it is time, money, our lives, or whatever else, we are only returning to him what is already rightfully his. Why do we delay? Why do we linger?

We are saved as individuals. No one can say, do this or do that, and your salvation will be secure. The above mentioned topics of study—memorization, prayer, faith and works—are just suggestions to assist in growing a relationship with your God and your Saviour, Jesus, the Christ. This relationship you share with your Heavenly Father is very personal, and the details of that relationship are to be established between you and your Father.

Our Father has his ear ever bent earthward, waiting for the faintest whisper from you to ask him to be your Father. Christ is now knocking at the door of your heart, wanting you to answer and invite him in to sup with him and he with you. Answer the call. Give all that you are and all that you have without reserve. How can any of us give less?

There will be a shaking of the sieve, the chaff must in time be separated from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest. There will be [a] separating from us of those who have not appreciated the light or walked in it. (Ellen White, *5LtMs*, Lt 46, 1887, par. 16)



“Youth's Corner” continued from page 14

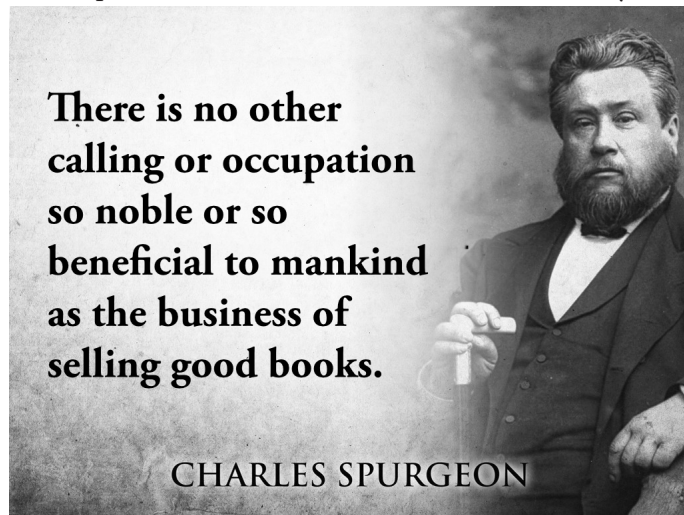
Unfolding,’ and this I at once sent for. This book proved to be God's answer to my repeated petition for truth.

“On the cover of this book I saw the advertisement of a book entitled ‘Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation.’ I procured this book also, and it proved to be the final link in the chain of circumstances which bound me to God's glorious message for to-day. Then began my search for the people who were the custodians of this wonderful message, and I gladly cast in my lot with them; and soon the way opened for me to engage in the work of selling this wonderful truth-filled literature.” Thus once more was demonstrated the convincing power of truth in the pages of a magazine which, at an unexpected moment, falls into the hands of an honest searcher after light, and leads into a joyful experience of peace and service in literature ministry.

THE BOOK WHICH CAME TO HAND IN MID-OCEAN

A sergeant of the United States Army, who spent several years in service overseas during the World War, says that when in midocean a Catholic soldier handed him a copy of the book entitled, “The Great Controversy,” saying he had purchased the book from a colporteur a short time before boarding the ship, and that he had found it to be worth reading.

The sergeant read the book with increasing interest. He and the Catholic soldier then began studying the book together, and with the Holy Spirit as their teacher, they heard the message of truth and responded to the conviction of duty. Since that time the sergeant has been the means of bringing the truth before his comrades in such a way that three soldiers, who have obtained honorable discharge and have returned to their homes, are keeping the Sabbath, and another soldier is planning to engage in business where he can keep all God's commandments. How wonderfully do



Edible Wild Plants

By Allen Uhl

How will we endure the time of trouble when buying, trading, or selling is no longer possible? How will we find food and drink in the mountains or wilderness? Hard times may be closer than we realize! Our survival will rely on God's protection and our ability to utilize the resources he has provided in nature—such as edible wild plants, roots, berries, flowers, and even vines and trees. Understanding these natural provisions will be essential as we await the return of our Redeemer and the fulfillment of our blessed hope.

One plant worth considering is the mayapple, also known as mandrake. Only the fruit is edible, an egg-shaped, greenish-yellow berry.



Blooming Mayapple

Courtesy of medicinalgardens.web.unc.edu



Mayapple fruit

The mayapple thrives in the openings of moist woods, ranging from Minnesota and western Quebec to Texas and Florida. It blooms between March and June, with its fruit ripening from late summer to early fall.

The ripe fruit is not only delicious when eaten fresh but can also be used to make jelly or can be processed into juice.

Another plant to consider is the wild potato vine. This trailing vine features single, heart-shaped leaves and large, bell-shaped white flowers with pinkish-purple centers, measuring 2 to 4 inches in size. Its roots are large, vertical, and deeply buried. Wild potato vines thrive in dry soil and are often found in fields, along roadsides, and near fences, with a range stretching from Kansas, Michigan, and Connecticut to Texas and Florida. The plant flowers from May to September. The roots can be prepared like regular potatoes—either baked or boiled—but must be boiled with several changes of water to remove their natural purgative proper-



Wild potato vine

Courtesy of Suzanne Caldwell_flickr

ties. These roots can be harvested from fall to early spring.



Elderberry flowers

One more useful plant is the common elderberry. Elderberry plants grow in damp, rich soil along stream banks, in thickets, and in roadside ditches. They are found from Manitoba and Nova Scotia in

the north to Texas and Georgia in the south. The white flowers form in clusters



Elderberry fruit

during June and July and ripen into berries from August through October. The berries can be eaten only when they turn purple-black. They can be processed into juice or jelly or eaten raw.

The word of God tells us:

But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: (Matthew 24:20)

Elisha purifies the deadly stew.

And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: (for they knew them not.) So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot. (2 Kings 4:38-41)

Remember that the right knowledge of herbs and plants is important!



Pismo Beach Meetings

A convocation took place in the Pismo Beach area from October 30 to November 3. While some referred to it as a camp meeting, that is not entirely accurate, as attendees stayed in local hotels rather than camping.

The theme of the meetings was centered on “Drawing Closer to God.” The speakers included Rob Chisum, Pastor Daniel Mesa, Pastor Allen Stump, Sheri Stump, and John Opsahl. Sister Naomi Hilton played a key role in securing the venue for the meetings and in coordinating the food arrangements.

Most of the meetings were recorded and a playlist of the meetings can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsE-5c918fZFt8kCb4M-CMJ0H3aMjNLkU9>. You can scan this QR code also to get to the playlist.



To participate with a phone in the United States dial: 1-646-931-3860 and enter conference ID 613 212 7443, followed by the # symbol when prompted. Then press the # symbol again.



You may join the Week of Prayer by scanning this QR code



1889 HSDA News

The Annual Council of the 1889 HSDA Church in the United States convened on November 17. This yearly gathering serves to elect officers and committee members for the upcoming year, make any necessary adjustments to the church’s bylaws, and, as much as possible, outline plans for the year ahead.

The officers elected for the upcoming term are as follows: Pastor Allen Stump as the committee chairperson, Pastor Todd Brown as the committee vice-chairperson, Sister Taryn Royal as the committee secretary, Sister Bev Ropka as the church treasurer, and Sister Ana Marie Woodward as the church auditor.

The committee members were evenly distributed among the sister churches, with each church having three members on the committee.

Most of the meeting time was spent electing officers and committee members, as well as making a few minor changes to the church’s bylaws. While there was some discussion on medical missionary work, evangelism, and camp meetings, the majority of the planning was deferred to the committee, which will begin meeting this month.

Please pray for the church at the local, national, and international levels. There is much work to be done, and one of our greatest needs is to find and train workers.



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From left to right: John Opsahl, Sheri and Allen Stump, Naomi Hilton, Rob Chisum, Daniel Mesa



Week of Prayer

Please join us for a Week of Prayer as we welcome a positive and spiritually uplifting New Year! The event will take place from December 29 to January 4, hosted at Smyrna Chapel and streamed virtually via the Smyrna Zoom Room beginning at 7:00 EST each evening. Everyone is warmly invited to participate in this meaningful time of study and prayer.

Each session will include a brief but impactful reading from Ellen White or a selected study by a pioneer, followed by a dedicated time of prayer.

You may join the meetings on the Internet by clicking the following link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6132127443?pwd=VGNhRTViOFpEYU0QmY0R2JzN-WINQT09> or using the QR code.