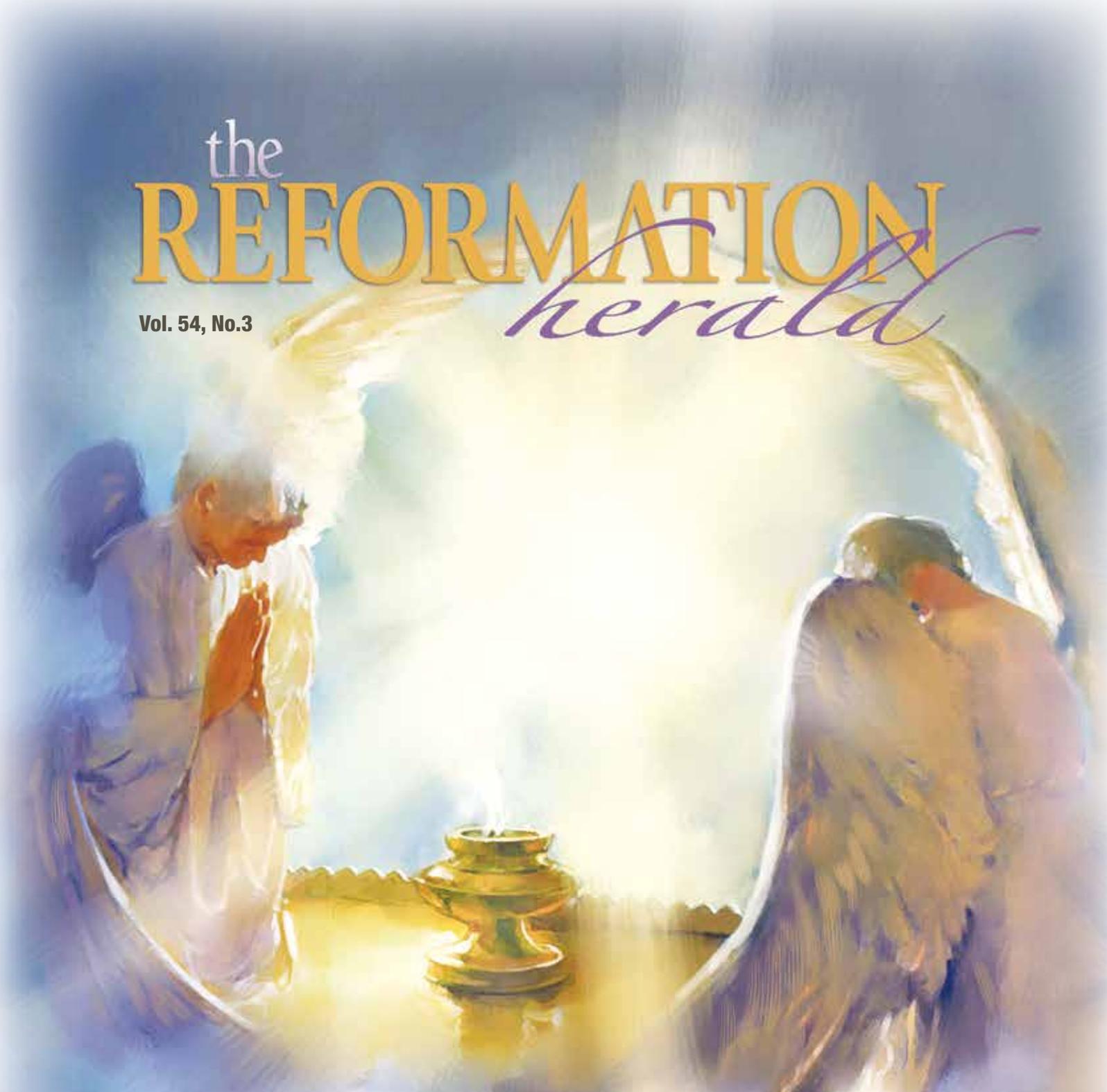


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Vol. 54, No.3



Christ in His Sanctuary

NOW AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

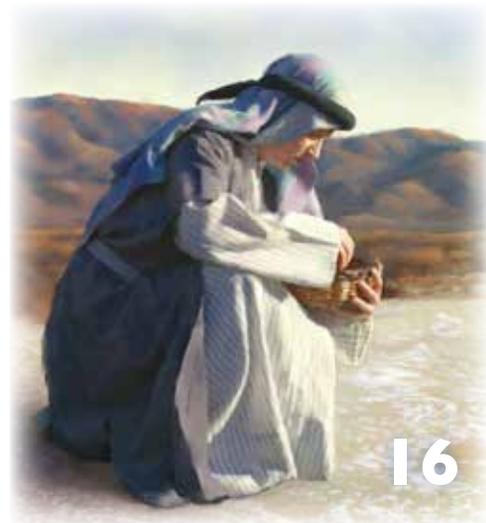
The Ark of His Testament / The Pot of Manna / Aaron's Rod / The Shekinah

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Volume 54, Number 3

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—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 488.

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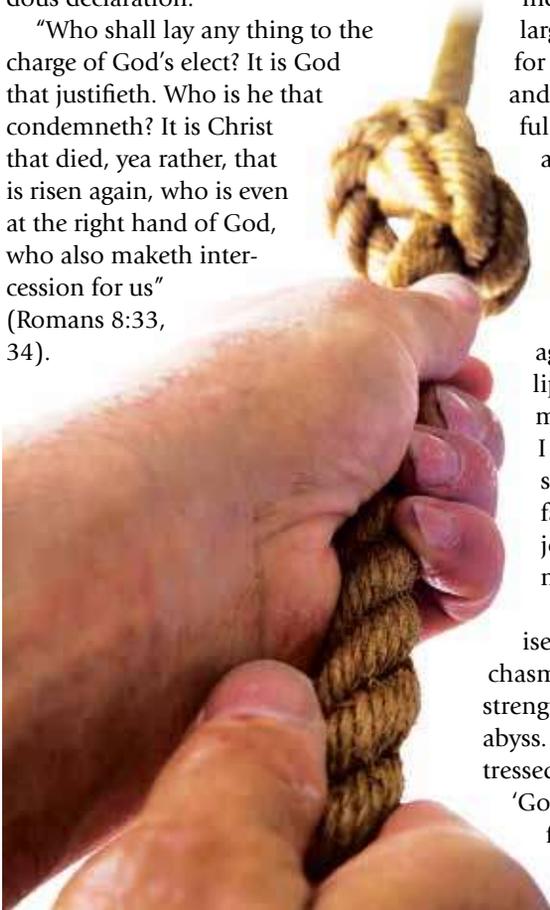
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THE CORD FROM GOD'S RIGHT HAND

A right hand person is generally known as one who contributes to the fulfillment of a need or furtherance of an effort or purpose. Such a one is often considered indispensable.

Does the Father of lights (with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning, James 1:17) need Someone indispensable? Definitely! The universe is in a state of emergency: God's children are under siege. We are under attack. The enemy of our souls is accusing us day and night—and with good reason. After all, we are sinners who come short of the glory of God. Yet the inspired Scripture makes this tremendous declaration:

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:33, 34).



Jesus Christ, our Advocate, stands in the heavenly courtroom, pleading the blackened, pitiful case of every repentant, believing soul.

Christ's intercession—we need it!

You may feel as if you are hanging by a thread. If so, you're not alone! Remember the dream of Ellen White, depicting the spiritual journey of the people of God climbing up the strait way. The pathway became narrower and narrower, yet she describes how a cord was extended from the sky to assist each traveler. Until finally—

"We came to a large chasm, at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size, until they were as large as our bodies. Here we were for a time thrown into perplexity and distress. We inquired in fearful whispers, 'To what is the cord attached?' My husband was just before me. Large drops of sweat were falling from his brow, the veins in his neck and temples were increased to double their usual size, and suppressed, agonizing groans came from his lips. The sweat was dropping from my face, and I felt such anguish as I had never felt before. A fearful struggle was before us. Should we fail here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for naught."¹

They saw the glorious promised land on the other side of the chasm, but they needed to trust in the strength of the cord to cross over the abyss. "We were hesitating and distressed. The words were then spoken: 'God holds the cord. We need not fear.' These words were repeated by those behind us, accompanied with: 'He will not

fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety.' My husband then swung himself over the fearful abyss into the beautiful field beyond. I immediately followed. And oh, what a sense of relief and gratitude to God we felt! I heard voices raised in triumphant praise to God. I was happy, perfectly happy."²

What was this agony?

"The light of truth, sanctifying the life, will discover to the receiver the sinful passions of his heart which are striving for the mastery, and which make it necessary for him to stretch every nerve and exert all his powers to resist Satan that he may conquer through the merits of Christ."³

"It is the design of God to arouse the dormant energies of His people to look out of and away from self to One who can bring help and salvation, that the promises given for just such a time may be seen in their preciousness, and relied upon with unwavering trust. Here faith is proved.

"Deep anguish of soul will be felt by the people of God, yet their sufferings cannot be compared with the agony endured by our adorable Redeemer in the garden of Gethsemane. He was bearing the weight of our sins; we endure anguish on our own account. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! To wrestle with God is to have the soul drawn out with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch, while waves of despair that no language can express sweep over the soul; and yet the suppliant will not yield, but clings with deathlike tenacity to the promise."⁴ R

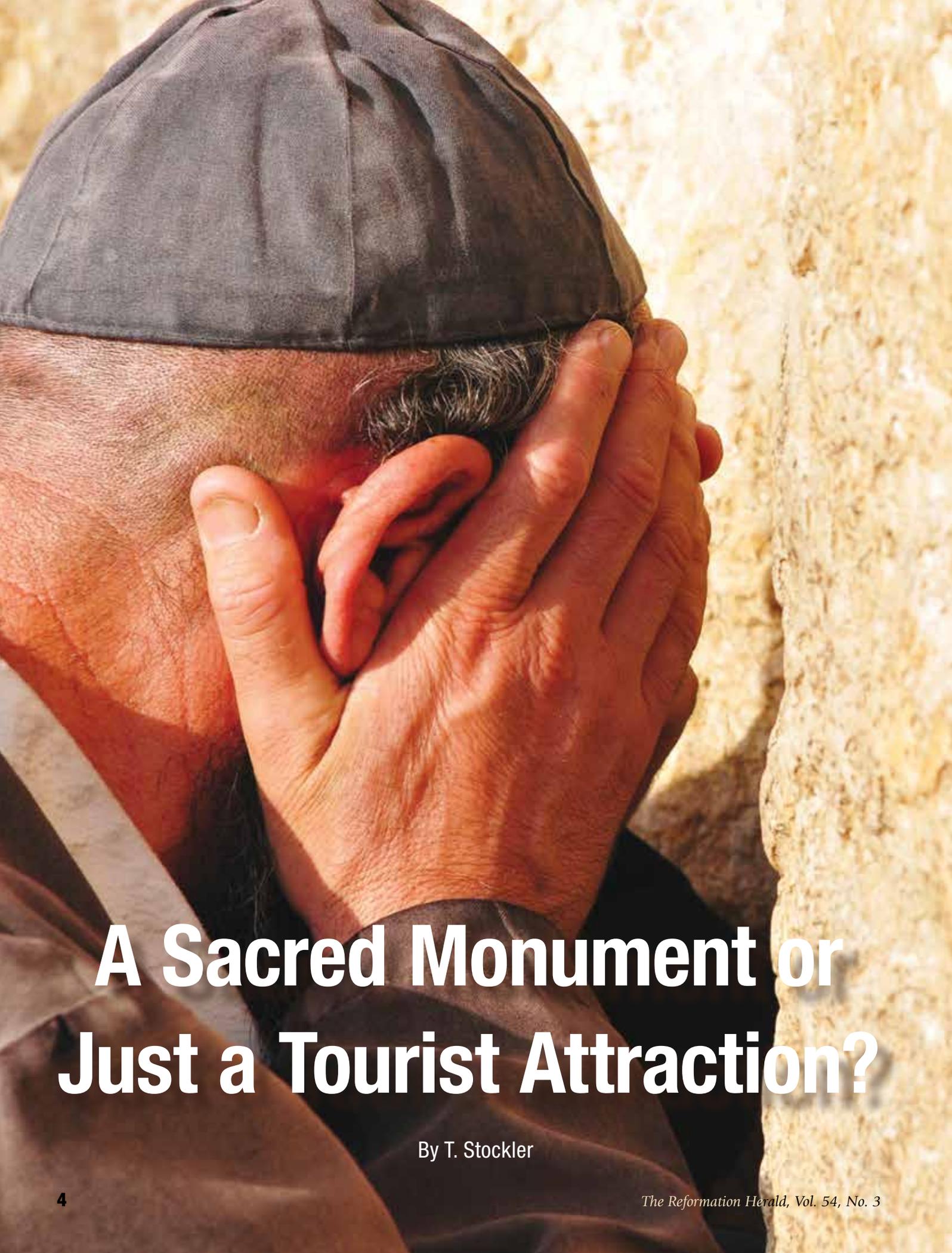
References:

¹ *Life Sketches*, p. 192.

² *Ibid.*, p. 193.

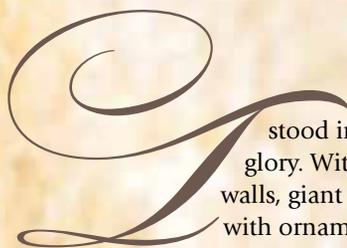
³ *The Youth's Instructor*, August 18, 1898.

⁴ *The Signs of the Times*, November 27, 1879.



A Sacred Monument or Just a Tourist Attraction?

By T. Stockler



Here it stood in all of its glory. With marble walls, giant columns with ornamental ivy, and golden ornaments, it was one of the most beautiful architectural accomplishments of humanity. It was *the* landmark of ancient Israel. Hard to miss on the sacred hill, no one thought of traveling to ancient Jerusalem without having a look. And thousands of people traveled to Jerusalem whether they wanted to or not, for it was on the land route between most of the important nations of ancient history. This made it one of the most common sightseeing locations of its day. No matter what pagan god the travelers worshipped or whether they had no god at all, questions filled their mind and curiosity was aroused by looking at the Jewish Temple on the hill.

As it stood in all of its beauty, the Temple was a constant reminder for centuries of the Messiah. But Jesus never used its services or entered into its holiest rooms. During His earthly ministry, He taught in its courtyard to the multitude. Yet the Temple building itself, the building of the Messiah, was hallowed by the presence of Jesus in human form. See *Prophets and Kings*, p. 597.

The first room Jesus never stepped into had constant light from the famous golden candelabra, held a table filled with bread that was always available, and smelled pleasant from the incense on the altar. This simple room with its few furnishings had very different memories for three groups of people. The tourists saw one holy place, the child of God another one, and the clergy who worked in it saw yet another one.

For the travelers through Israel, religion was a way of bribing gods that didn't listen very carefully into being kind to yourself or your loved ones. Expensive contributions and obedience to complex demands from powerful clergymen would supposedly motivate gods that only the priests knew to bring a more favorable economy, good

crops, or health. You gave the bribe and hoped that the god in control got the point. Thinking people tended to see it as fraud and were generally not very religious. The poor couldn't afford to bribe the gods, so they tended to feel very helpless and to be very frustrated. Realistically, the rich who did not think deeply could bribe the priests but not the elements. You could donate money to get the priests to sell their influence to you. But the sun and rain could never be bribed. So these religions had a hit-and-miss success rate that were part of their problem.

To these thousands of tourists over the years, the Temple was a pretty building. They talked about the architectural design and the cost of the building materials. The sanctuary had no spiritual value for them, no meaning for their everyday life. They lost out on its lessons because they were too busy or careless to learn. But to the few travelers and Jews who prayerfully thought about the Temple, its meaning became plain.

If we join Peter or Mary as they travel to the Temple, we get a glimpse of it from their experience. Many different reasons would lead them to travel to the sacred hill. The Temple had services for celebration and gratitude, for unity and peacemaking, and for reconciliation. It was the center of Jewish social life, the reminder of their dependence on God, and the pulse of the nation's spirituality. Much of their pride and reflection were focused on the courtyard or on the mysterious holiest room. Two moments in their day-to-day life brought them into contact with the holy room.

Forgiveness and the holy place

The God of Israel has always had a completely different character from that of the pagan gods. He makes provision for the poor. He provides a religion that satisfies the thoughtful and intelligent. He is powerful. He does control sun and rain. He does control life and destiny. But He refuses to ever be bribed. No matter how many times

you come to the temple, how many offerings you bring, or how "good" you behave, He is not impressed. He already freely gives the sun and the rain to the good and to the unjust. He does not hold back blessings because of who we are. But there is one blessing He refuses to give out freely:

He does not give Himself, His friendship, His intimate joy, peace, and contentment. These are reserved for anyone who recognizes that he or she is a sinner who has hurt a loving God.

The Temple was not built as a memorial to manipulation and control, power and intrigue. That was what the pagan temples stood for. God instituted His building as the doorstep on which He was waiting for every prodigal son and daughter born into this world to find our way home. It was the constant reminder of His willingness to forgive every one of us, and be reconciled with His enemies. It was the monument to His compassion for all of us who have hurt ourselves or others. It was a reminder that every act of evil and injury in this world is also an act of ingratitude and hostility toward God Himself. A sin against any human being is simultaneously a sin against God. We may apologize to each other. We may forgive each other. But reconciliation is not complete until we are reconciled with God for what we have done to other humans. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

For too long we have supposed that we are fine as long as no one is too angry at us. But we keep making the same mistakes over and over again. When we recognize that wronging any of God's creation is an insult to its Creator, we find our way toward reconciliation with God. And in repentance and reconciliation with the Creator, we find the power to be reconciled with His creatures.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of

God can never give us the complete benefit of a restored relationship with Him—eternal life outside of the world of sin—until we have lived a forgiven life.

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12, 13).

The first room of the Temple was part of this message of the double nature of sin. For the average Jew, the holy place had meaning as the recording place for his or her personal sin. Offerings of gratitude and peace were completed in the courtyard. But repentance could not be completed in the courtyard. Each animal sacrificed for sin had blood taken into the holy room and sprinkled there. Common people had blood from their sacrifices placed on the altar of incense. Leaders had the blood of their sacrifices placed on the sweet smelling altar and sprinkled on the veil separating between the two holy rooms.

Arriving at the sanctuary, the common Israelite had already gone through the awkward experience of traveling, perhaps for miles, with the national symbol of guilt. Your neighbors and the Jerusalem gossips all knew that you were going to the Temple because you believed you were guilty. Your family and close friends probably even guessed at what it was that your soul wrestled with. As you carried a dove or a loaf of bread, led a lamb or a cow to the church, you could not escape the notice of your neighbors and friends. You could not hide the offerings that were presented as you repented of whatever had separated between God and your soul. It may be that the confession itself was offered silently so that not even the priest knew what was the source of your guilt. But the act of confession was a private action that happened in a very public place. Repentance was carried out in the center of the nation and in its most visible location. Reconciliation with God occurred in a spot so visible that the very nation held you accountable for its durability.

Yet that public act was still a very individual one. Now that you had publicly admitted that you were a sinner, you must kill the animal. No one else did it for you. There was no group sacrifice for personal sin and no hired hands to do it for you. Repentance could never be delegated. It was individual and personal. It was a lonely path in a public place.

For the butcher this might have been easy. For many it was not. And then you watched the creature die, looking at you as its killer in its last act of life. Maybe the blood made you long to run away. Maybe the look in the lambs dying eyes haunted you. But the service was not done until the blood of the animal was taken into that holy place. I am sure that many times the people asked the priest for an assurance that the blood from their sacrifice had been deposited inside that sacred room in the appropriate places. After this much work and grief, they could not leave without the assurance that the service was complete.

As the individual soul went home, that holy place took on a new meaning. It was not only a beautiful marble palace for the king. It was not only a glorious national landmark. It was the reminder of the sum of all the believers' sins. Every injustice to their families and friends was marked on that altar of incense. There was the blood marking a short temper which was overcome. There were the drippings, inaugurating the resolution of many misunderstandings based on habits of dishonesty. Marriages were saved and made strong by the adulterous eyes forgiven at the two altars. The holy room held the marks of success in abandoning greed, envy, and covetousness. So for almost all of the worshippers of the Creator of all humanity, the holy room was the end of the process of daily forgiveness, the vault to contain

the record of their humanity. The stains of blood on that altar and the curtain recorded the vulnerable honesty of a church of sinners being remade into saints.

Forgiveness completed

But the Temple came to mean more than this. It was the demonstration of the sacred, solemn process of God's forgiveness, He forgives instantly, yet conditionally: This simple truth is controversial in our world today. Millions have been taught that God forgives our evil when we ask Him to, and then it is over. People lose all humility and decency when you suggest otherwise.

If we will only compare our human relationships to our relationship with God, it might be easier to understand. Forgiveness is the riskiest act in the universe. It is opening up your friendship to someone who has treated you evilly. As humans we struggle with how and whether to do this. We find rejecting those that injure us much safer. But at some point every one of us humans does something that injures someone else. If all of us adopt a policy of rejecting every person that has injured us, life will become very lonely. Besides, the person who injured us has good qualities we will miss. We lose something important when we reject others. Forgiveness allows us to restore a relationship to those that have injured us when they take responsibility for having injured us. We can be safe with them when they take responsibility for their actions toward us and stop the injury.

Separately from the act of forgiveness is the personal preparation to forgive. That struggle can be difficult. But we need to stand ready to forgive every human that has injured us. This preparation allows us to live without a burden of stress and anger. Our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being require that we are willing to forgive. But we dare not actually forgive and fully repair our relationship until the other person takes responsibility for their injury to us. And even once the other person does confess his or her fault, we still cannot risk making ourselves fully

vulnerable yet. We welcome them back into friendship. In doing this we lay ourselves open to the possibility of injury. They could hurt us all over again, the same way they hurt us last time. We protect ourselves by holding back the intimacy of what we think and feel and need in our inmost thoughts until the other person demonstrates the genuineness of his or her change of heart.

In fact, healthy humans forgive provisionally. They must. For permanent, unjustified forgiveness opens up the forgiver to be abused. When forgiveness comes without the forgiven persons owning up to their contribution and their faults, there is nothing to stop them from hurting others all over again. It is the apology, the confession, the repentance, the recognition of how wrong it is, the learning to hate your own mistake that protects the forgiver from new injuries. When we want the love and admiration of someone we admire and love, we are motivated to change to be kind to him or her.

People do not realize the consequences of believing that God forgives without reservation. We turn forgiveness into nothing at all. For if God forgives the murderer David for having killed his friend Uriah and stolen his wife without repentance and change, then God really is willing to let David keep murdering his friends. If God is willing to forgive me while I continue to do wrong, then wrong becomes right. As soon as wrong becomes right, we have no protection from evil at all. The idea that God would prefer to agree with murder and smile at one who does it, just because he or she said the rhetorical "I am sorry," removes God from His position as Protector of the universe from all evil.

God forgives us provisionally. We could never live free from evil otherwise. We need His forgiveness to deliver us from the guilt and the passion and the propensity to injure God's children. But God can never give us the complete benefit of a restored relationship with Him—eternal life outside of the world of sin—until we have lived a forgiven life.

At the end of Matthew 18, Jesus tells a story of a man who was forgiven. The

parable presents the man as forgiven without any preconditions. But the forgiven man then behaved in a way that was unfitting and unjust. Forgiven for a large debt, he was impatient with a small one.

We are all like that man. God forgives us for greater injustices that we do toward Him than any human will ever do toward us. But, like the man in the parable, we are often unkind and impatient with those that injure us. We treat our family members, our relatives, our neighbors, and our friends like the man treated the person with the small debt.

When we treat other humans cruelly, we lose the forgiveness that God already gave us. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:15).

And so that holy place stood as a perpetual monument to the forgiven sins across the world. It was a reminder of the joy and peace of reconciliation with God. It was a landmark of the soul's journey as well as of the national grandeur. It was also a reminder that sin once forgiven was later unforgiven if the child of God treated his or her fellow humans with cruelty.

Nurtured by God

For the clergy the holy room had a very different experience. These men saw the bread constantly available and the light always shining. The smell of the incense was a welcome relief from the blood and bodies of animals in the courtyard. The quiet place, away from people bringing problems, anxieties, and concerns, was a relief. The coolness out of the sun, the solitude from being visible in the courtyard to the nation provided serenity. For the priests, the holy place felt like a sanctuary. To them, the room reminded them of the constant blessing provided by God. There they were nurtured by Him.

In the solemn silence the priest would discern that the table of bread was on the north side of the room (*The Great Controversy*, p. 413), just where the heavenly Father told us that He dwells. He would recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in lightening across

the room from the table of bread. This is just as John the Revelator saw in heaven itself, when he describes the sevenfold Holy Spirit as visible in front of the throne of the Father. And He would recognize the work of Jesus, interceding at the altar of incense on the right hand of His Father. To the priest, the holy place would be the calm assuring realization of the constant every-day work between all three Divine Beings to help and to save sinners. It was the pledge of Divine nurture and help as the priests went out into the courtyard to serve the people.

All this was the experience of those three groups of people as they saw the earthly sanctuary in Palestine, thousands of years ago. The casual tourist, the child of God, and the priest each saw the holy place from his own experience.

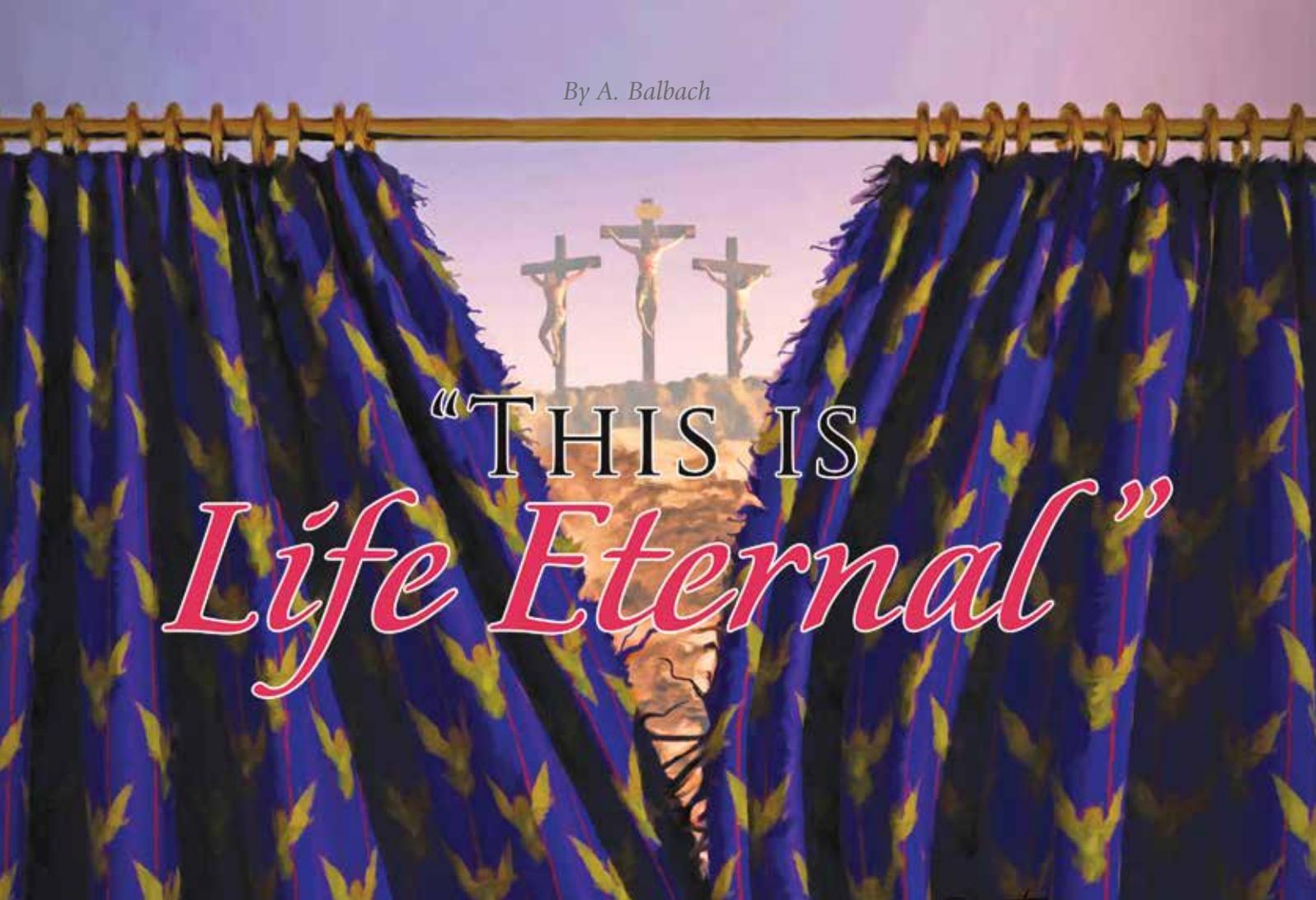
That building was a shadow from what happens in heaven (Hebrews 8:5). Each of these experiences is still taking place today. We still have the same three groups of people.

Today many will only think of heaven and God's work there as a tourist attraction; a nice place to visit if they ever have a chance.

For some, it will be a look of faith. They will trust that the blood of Jesus has been shed and God offers forgiveness. Heaven will be a reminder of the glorious experience of forgiveness itself. It will also be a reminder that forgiveness can be thrown away when we treat other debtors with less kindness than God has exercised in forgiving us.

And finally, for a few of those children of God, the great priesthood made up of all who trust Him, that heavenly sanctuary stands as the shelter in tumultuous experiences and a place of heavenly bread and heavenly light.

We are assured that someday the opportunity of forgiveness will close. The chance for repentance will be gone. All that the holy room stood for of old will only be a memory in the heart of millions of saved human beings. May God hasten that moment. But may God grant us all to first receive every benefit we possibly can get from the heavenly holy place! *R*



“THIS IS
Life Eternal”

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

“And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John 5:20).

To know God is much more than to have a favorable opinion about Him. We may now be doing “many wonderful works” in His name, and yet in the last day we may hear from His lips the verdict, “I never knew you” (Matthew 7:22, 23). If we ignore what it is our duty and privilege to know about Christ and the loyalty that He expects from us, we cannot say that we know Him.

There is a condition:

“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make

our abode with him.” “He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us” (John 14:23; 1 John 3:24).

We have an Intercessor—for how long?

We need to know what Christ is doing, at present, in the sanctuary in heaven. He is still interceding for us.

“We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

It is solemn to consider that Jesus will be interceding in our behalf, yet only as long as the time of probation shall last. We should know that the door of probation will not remain open forever. It will be closed shortly before Christ’s second coming. The time is at hand when the declaration is made from the “thrown of the Majesty in the heavens.”

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. . . . Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:11, 12, 14).

The time of probation will not last forever

Many Christians do not know that, when the cry is heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," it will be too late to supply the spiritual needs of those who are not prepared to meet our coming Saviour. At that time no one will help us if our "lamps are going out" for the lack of the "oil" of the Holy Spirit. In the parable about the coming of Christ, we read that the "foolish" or unprepared Christians will cry: "Lord, Lord, open to us," but as "the door" is already "shut," the Lord will say to them: "I know you not." Read Matthew 25:1-12.

Those that think that the door of opportunity to turn to the Lord will remain open forever should read Luke 13:24, 25, 28:

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are.... There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The pre-advent judgment

Together with the announcement, "Behold, I come quickly," as we just read in Revelation 22:12, Christ says that, at His coming, He will reward everyone according to his or her work. This great day, which is before us, is also described in Romans 2:6-8:

"[God] will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath."

Everyone will be rewarded according to the choice he or she has made while the door of opportunity was open. Read Isaiah 55:6, 7. There will be very few who have chosen eternal life. What will happen to the majority of the human race? Christ explained:

"As it was in the days of Noe, so

shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

These verses (Revelation 22:12; Romans 2:6-8; Luke 17:26-30) show that there must be a pre-advent judgment. Otherwise, we would not be warned that Christ, at His coming, will bring with Him the reward that has already been attributed to everyone. At His coming there will be an executive judgment (2 Timothy 4:1). The investigative judgment is taking place now, before His coming. A comparison of Revelation 14:7 with Revelation 14:14, 15 and with Matthew 13:38, 39 demonstrates that there is a pre-advent investigative judgment to take place. And, by reading Revelation 14:7, we can also be sure that the servants of God, in these last days, would be able to identify the exact time for the beginning of this event. Otherwise they would not be authorized to say: "The hour of His judgment is come."

The investigative judgment, which is going on in the heavenly sanctuary, was shown to the prophet Daniel in a vision, which he described as follows:

"I beheld till the thrones were [set up], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9, 10).

The same event, with more details, was also shown to John the apostle. He described it as follows:

"The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven,

saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament" (Revelation 11:15-19).

Here the apostle sees the Lord God sitting on His throne (Revelation 20:11, 12) and presiding over the judgment in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, where the ark of the covenant with the Law of God is seen by faith.

When will our sins be blotted out?

We pray every day asking God to forgive our sins (Matthew 6:12) and we believe that we are pardoned every day, but that does not mean that our sins are blotted out at the same time and by the same act.

We know that our sins are transferred to the heavenly sanctuary to be blotted out when our names are called up in the judgment if we remain faithful "unto the end"? (Matthew 24:13).

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Timothy 5:24).

"Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers" (Isaiah 65:6, 7).

Our sins will be eliminated from the "books" in the heavenly sanctuary if we heed the divine call for repentance and conversion before the coming of the Lord.

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so

that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" Acts 3:19–21 (NKJV).

Jesus had in view this very act—the blotting out of our sins before His coming—when He said:

"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

Once saved, always saved?

In the parable of the two debtors, a king had a servant who owed him ten thousand talents and finally, "moved with compassion," the king "forgave him" his debt. But, later, that servant was still punished for the same debt, which was considered unpaid, because that servant refused to forgive a much smaller debt to one of his fellow servants. Read Matthew 18:23–34. In this parable, Jesus teaches that sins forgiven still stand against us until they are blotted out.

For a confirmation of the doctrine taught in this parable, read Ezekiel 18:24.

If we say, "I am saved," and we mean, "once saved, always saved," we may deceive ourselves and miss the way to the kingdom. We should better say, "we have obtained the hope of salvation."

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11–13).

"We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:24, 25).

When the apostle Paul accepted Christ, he admitted that he would be finally saved only if he "endured unto the end" (Matthew 24:13). He wrote:

"I keep under my body, and bring it



into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27).

The apostle Peter addressed those who had already "obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: . . .

"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. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things

is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:2, 3–11).

In these words Peter taught that we cannot say we are "saved" before we have reached the "entrance" to the everlasting kingdom.

Lessons from the sanctuary service

The sanctuary service under the old covenant served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 8:5).

"Once a year, on the great Day of Atonement, the priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary. The work there performed completed the yearly round of minis-



tration."¹ From the service performed on the Day of Atonement (the tenth day of the seventh month), we learn that "on that day"—not on the day the repentant sinner brought a sin offering, and made a confession, and was forgiven (Leviticus 4:22–35)—but on the Day of Atonement for the whole nation he was pronounced "clean."

"For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Leviticus 16:30).

"Important truths concerning the atonement were taught the people by this yearly service. In the sin offerings presented during the year, a substitute had been accepted in the sinner's stead; but the blood of the victim had not made full atonement for the sin. It had only provided a means by which the sin was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood, the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed the guilt of his transgression, and expressed his faith in Him who was to take away the sin of the world; but he was not entirely released from the condemnation of the law. On the Day of Atonement the high

priest, having taken an offering for the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, above the tables of the law. Thus the claims of the law, which demanded the life of the sinner, were satisfied."² The yearly atonement was made not only to remove sin from the congregation, but also from the sanctuary itself. This was the rule:

"[The high priest] shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation" (Leviticus 16:33).

Not before all the iniquities were removed from the congregation and from the sanctuary and confessed on the head of the scapegoat, could the congregation and the sanctuary, and everything that belonged to it, be pronounced "cleansed." Read Leviticus 16:30.

It was "necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified" with the blood of animals; "but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices" (Hebrews 9:23).

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:26–28).

For the Jews, the Day of Atonement was a day of judgment, when all confessed sins were removed from the sanctuary. And, in the antitype, at the end of the judgment, "in the end of the world," all confessed sins will be removed from the heavenly records and, thus, the heavenly sanctuary will be purified. Read Isaiah 65:6, 7; 1 Timothy 5:24. This fact was explained to the prophet Daniel when the angel of God said to him:

"Unto two thousand and three hundred [prophetic] days [*i.e.* literal years]; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14).

The Day of Atonement, when the sanctuary was cleansed, was a day of

judgment. So the end of the period of time, announced in Daniel 8:14, was seen by the pioneers of the Advent Movement as the beginning of the pre-advent investigating judgment in 1844.

"In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, 'without sin unto salvation' (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life."³ He will not have to propitiate for the sins of the redeemed. This problem has already been solved before. This is why He will come without having to deal with our sins. "As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away 'unto a land not inhabited' (Leviticus 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil."⁴ After these considerations about our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, we must say with the apostle Paul:

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Hebrews 10:19–23). *R*

References

¹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 355.

² *Ibid.*, pp 355, 356.

³ *The Great Controversy*, p. 485.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 485, 486.

The Ark of His Testament:

The Character of Christ in Ten Precepts



Introduction

The great principles of righteousness are set forth in the Word of God. Here we find the sacred precepts of the truth unto salvation; those precepts are they which give us instruction, reproof, and upon which correct doctrine is based. As we seek for perfection and holiness of character, we will find what the fruits of Bible conversion and sanctification are.

Where are these principles found? When we search for true perfection, we need not look any further than to the law of God. As we read in Psalm 1:1–3, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his

fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

By these words we find that it is through the counsel of the Lord and by obedience to His law that we will reach the perfection to which we must attain, if we desire to please Him and develop the perfect character necessary to enter heaven. Of ourselves we cannot be in perfect obedience, but as we look to Jesus who has trod the way before us, we can, through Him, be victorious.

The law and its purpose

What is the moral law of God—those ten precepts spoken of throughout the Scriptures? It contains the principles upon which the government of God is based. Just as the nations of the earth must have laws by which their civilizations are governed so that



By K. Clark

If we truly want to be among God's people, our life and character will be in harmony with His law. It is up to us to choose whom we will serve, whom we will resemble.

there can be safety and harmony in the actions of their people, God has a law by which all are to live in harmony with Him and with one another. The whole of creation is governed by a law given by its Creator; otherwise there could be no harmony in its workings.

The apostle Paul describes it thus, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). Who gave God's law to humanity? We find in Exodus chapter 20, verses 1, 2 these words, "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

As we see by these verses, the holy law of God was given to humanity by God Himself. He spoke these ten precepts unto Moses who, in turn, presented them to the people. The ten commandments are recorded in the 20th chapter of Exodus, verses 3–17. The law gives instruction as to how we are to relate to God and to our fellow man. It is a symbol of God because it reveals to us His character. It is as a mirror into which we can look and see the status of our life. Are we being obedient and are our characters developing according to God's will?

If we are not living according to the will of God and being in obedience to His law, we are living in sin. What is sin? The Scripture sheds light on this also in 1 John 3:4, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Here we see another purpose of the law. Not only is it to show us how to relate to God and to others, but it is also to help us discern right from wrong. When we deviate from the principles laid out in the law of God, it is called sin.

A Christian is a person who has accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the One who can free him or her from sin. It is the gracious love of Christ which awakens love in the heart of a sinner to desire to do God's will. The true follower of Jesus will be happy in the keeping of God's law; it is not a burden, but a joy.

A look into the ten precepts

Just what are these ten precepts, the

obedience to which will lead us into perfect character development; the disregard of which is called sin? Much importance is placed upon them, because our choosing of what we will do with them can lead either to eternal life or to eternal death. We choose our destiny by how we answer the question, "what shall I do with Jesus," the sinless One, who Himself lived according to the law of God while He was upon this earth.

There is nothing in the law itself that can save us, but it is as a solid foundation for us upon which we can base our beliefs and make our decisions. We know that it is only through God's grace that we are saved, but this does not annul the principles of God's law, for as we read in Romans 3:31, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

When Jesus was asked by the rich young ruler what he must do to have eternal life, He told him that if he would "enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17).

The first four commandments reveal our relationship with God

• **PRECEPT #1** in Exodus 20:3. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Is there anything or anyone in our life that we place in importance above God? If so, that object or person becomes as an idol to us and claims first place in our affections and service. Jehovah is the only true God, self-existent, uncreated, and eternal. This command contains the substance of all the rest, the true God who is the Source and Sustainer of all things.

• **PRECEPT #2** in Exodus 20:4–6. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the

water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. . . ."

Here we are forbidden to worship the true God by images or things similar, for through doing this our thoughts would be turned from the Creator to the created. By doing this, our conception of Him would be lowered. In the rest of the precept He states that He is a jealous God; He holds His relationship with His people sacred as in a marriage vow, thus making idolatry the same as spiritual adultery. He is not willing that we share that affection and worship which belongs to Him with anyone or anything else. He, indeed, is to hold first place in our life.

So important is this precept that it has been placed near the beginning of the ten-commandment law. In Isaiah 45:5, 6 we read, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else."

We may truthfully say that idolatry and false worship go together.

Since children usually walk in the examples of their parents, they may suffer the consequences of their parents' wrongdoing. The inherited tendency to evil becomes a great force in the life of the children, something that they will have to deal with and endeavor to overcome. The overcoming of inherited tendencies is often more difficult than of those that are acquired.

In verse 6, which is the last verse of this commandment, we read, "And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." How much our loving Father desires that we love Him and live for Him a life of faith-

ful obedience. Then, instead of a few generations receiving the consequences of wrongdoing, thousands will be blessed!

• **PRECEPT #3** in Exodus 20:7.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

How many times we hear the name of God spoken lightly or in a careless manner. Even in the taking of an oath in which an individual is to tell the truth about a matter but then tells a falsehood, the holy Name is taken in vain and dishonored. Often when people pray, the name of God is used repetitiously throughout the prayer. This also is bringing dishonor to Him whose name should be spoken only with reverence and solemnity.

• **PRECEPT #4** in Exodus

20:8–11. “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 maid-servant, 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.”

This commandment lies in the midst of the ten. The instruction that it contains is straightforward, but it is the one of all the Decalogue that so many professed followers of Christ want to overlook and have controversy over. It contains the seal of God and is the sign between Him and His faithful people. It is the sign of loyalty to Him when we observe it as He commands. Many times we think we are keeping the day holy but talk about business or things of the world during its sacred hours, thus dishonoring it and the One who set it aside and blessed it. When we think about or talk about business transactions or secular plans during the Sabbath, it is considered the same as

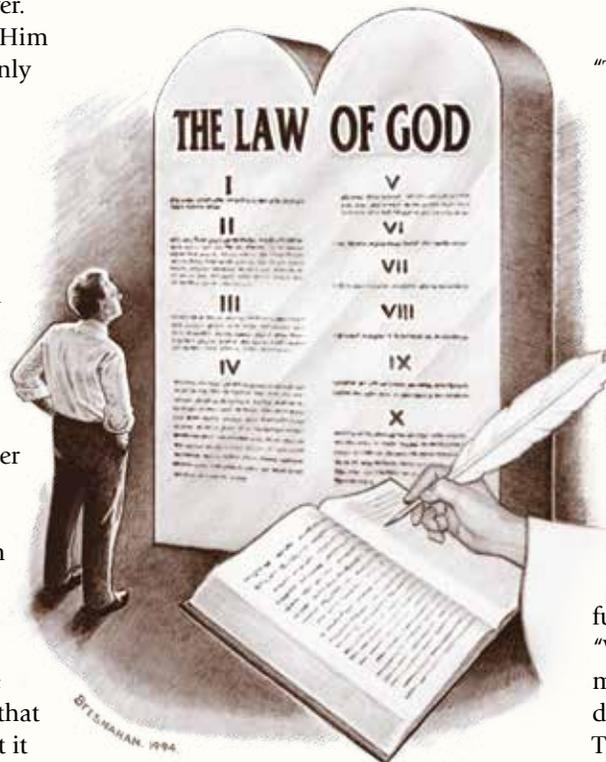
our having done them on the Sabbath.

When we observe these first four commandments of the law of God given to His people, we are honoring Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein; who also created man in His own image. Thus, we are able to begin to build upon that firm foundation of honor and truth of which He is the Author.

The last six commandments reveal our relationship with other people.

• **PRECEPT #5** in Exodus 20:12.

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”



According to Ephesians 6:2 this is the first commandment with promise, making this fifth precept of special import in the relationship that should exist between parents and children. Just as we are to honor and obey our heavenly Father, we have here a command that we need to honor and obey our earthly parents. When two people become parents, they have a special responsibility for the teaching and care of the little ones placed in their home circle.

Here is what the servant of the Lord admonishes, “Parents are entitled to a

degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them the responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. . . . The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. It also enjoins respect for ministers and rulers and for all others to whom God has delegated authority.”¹ We see that this is a far-reaching principle of life.

• **PRECEPT #6** in Exodus 20:13.

“Thou shalt not kill.”

In our present day we hear of so many losing their life at the hands of others. In many cases there is no motive found in someone taking the life of another. In Genesis 4:1–15, we find the account of the first murder committed and of its consequences.

Many times the taking of the life of another happens because of pride and selfishness found in the heart of a person. Crimes of passion seem to be rampant, and there exists so much injustice of humans to humans that in many ways this commandment is violated.

The breaking of this precept goes further, as stated in 1 John 3:15: “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” This speaks for itself as to cause and consequence.

• **PRECEPT #7** in Exodus 20:14.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Much like the breaking of the sixth commandment is the violation of this seventh precept and this, too, has far-reaching results. It encompasses more than just the unfaithfulness of a spouse in the marriage relationship; it also includes impure thoughts or desires for these practices. Matthew 5:28 states that whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her commits adultery with her in his heart. The very intent of the heart,

though hidden from others, is considered a violation of this commandment. The evil thought or look can be as much a sin as the actual deed.

• **PRECEPT #8** in Exodus 20:15.
"Thou shalt not steal."

Those who are desiring to be faithful followers of Jesus will have strict integrity in all ways. There will be no fraudulent acts against them because they have been fair and right in dealing with others. This precept encompasses more than the taking of something from another without permission. We will not do anything that will extract from another that which belongs to him or her, whether it be money, possessions, reputation, physical or social well-being. The taking advantage of someone when he or she is in poor or weak circumstances would also be a form of stealing.

It is possible also to steal from God by withholding tithes and offerings and by withholding the service which He wants from us. When we owe an honest debt and do not pay it, we are guilty of breaking this precept.

• **PRECEPT #9** in Exodus 20:16.
"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

What does it mean to bear false witness? False speaking about something or someone is included under this principle. And this can be done by more than just telling a falsehood; those sly expressions on the face, the looks of disbelief, slandering, tale bearing and gossiping are all ways in which this precept may be broken. Many people have had their life disrupted because of the dishonest actions and words of others about them.

Everything that a Christian does needs to be as transparent as the sunlight. We cannot speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is the truth.

• **PRECEPT #10** in Exodus 20:17.
"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

It is in this commandment that warns us of our selfishness; that sin which we may not recognize within our mind but which will bring about other sins when we desire to have possessions or positions which belong to another person. As we develop the character of Jesus we will not covet, or desire, that which belongs to others but will keep the heart and hands from the defilement of covetousness and dishonesty.

What have we discovered about ourselves?

As we have looked more closely at the moral law of God, the ten commandments, and have had them magnified over and beyond our previous understanding, have we seen just how far we may be from truly being obedient to them? It may have been our habit of reading quickly through them and not really comprehending just what each one is pointing out to us. They were of such import that when they were presented to Moses by God Himself, the event was accompanied with, "thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off" (Exodus 20:18).

When we realize that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), we understand how much we need to study the perfect character of Christ in the light of His law, which is perfect. Although He was tempted just as we are, He did not yield to the temptations of Satan. He stood firmly upon the foundation of God's government, His law, concerning how the relationship of humans to God and humans to humans should be.

How do we stand?

Our stand before God is determined by our obedience or disobedience to His law. If we obey, we are His people; but if we disobey, we are not considered loyal to Him. If we truly want to be among His people, our life and character will be in harmony with His law.

It is up to us to choose whom we will serve, whom we will resemble. "From the very beginning of the great con-

trovery in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same."²

The glory of God to be revealed through us

Since the ten commandments are the transcript of God's character, it is in the keeping of His law that we give glory to Him. If we are truly His people, living in obedience to Him, others will see in us a revelation of Him. Our life will reveal, resemble, and reflect His perfect character at all times and in all situations. The countenance will be softened and love will be seen shining from it. Our tongue will form words of praise to Him, our lips will speak forth words of help and comfort to others. Our feet will be swift to go wherever He sends; our hands will be used to perform duties faithfully as unto Him as they bring comfort to others.

How important are these things to us?

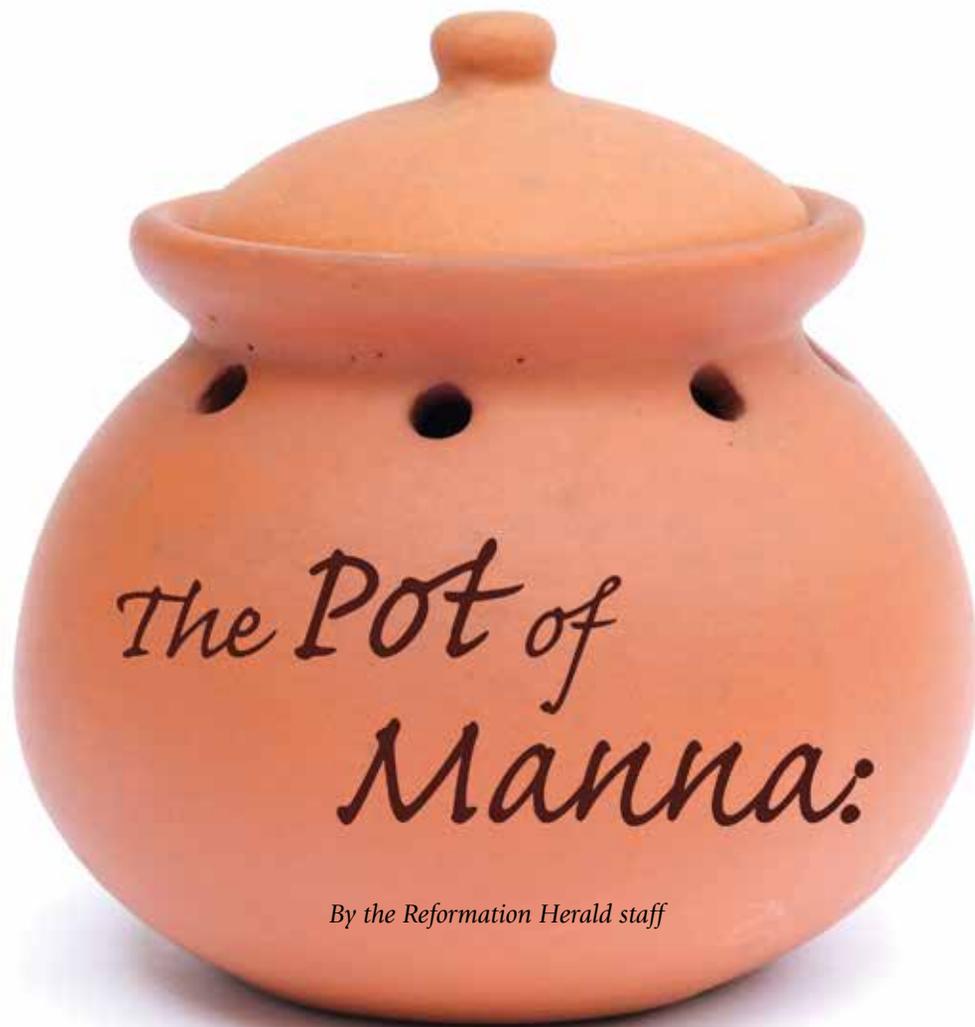
God weighs character, motives, and purposes; He knows the heart of humanity and thus understands from whence our actions come. This is why we should be examining our own motives and actions by the holy law of God. It behooves us to seek and do the will of God from the heart so that we will render full spiritual obedience to His law and to His will. It is a heart work; when the heart is right with God, the whole life will be purified and sanctified.

Let us continually look upon Jesus and desire to emulate His perfect character as He gives us the help we need to do so. Amen. *R*

References

¹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 308.

² *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.



By the Reformation Herald staff

Health Reform for the Final Generation

Health Reform for the Final Generation

When verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was **the golden pot that had manna**, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:1-4, emphasis added).

The history behind the pot of manna is found in Exodus chapter 16 and Num-

bers 11. Beside the ten commandments and Aaron's rod, the pot of manna was to be kept in the ark of the covenant to symbolize God's plan for His people as it pertained to health reform.

"The Lord brought His people out of Egypt in a victorious manner. He led them through the wilderness to prove them and try them. He repeatedly manifested His miraculous power in their deliverances from their enemies. He promised to take them to Himself, as his peculiar treasure, if they would obey His voice and keep His commandments. He did not forbid them to eat the flesh of animals, but withheld it from them in a great measure. He provided them food which was the most healthful. He rained their bread from heaven and gave

them purest water from the flinty rock. He made a covenant with them if they would obey Him in all things, He would preserve them from disease.

"But the Hebrews were not satisfied. They despised the food given them from heaven and wished themselves back in Egypt where they could sit by the flesh-pots. **They preferred slavery, and even death, rather than to be deprived of meat.** God, in His anger, gave them flesh to gratify their lustful appetites, and great numbers of them died while eating the meat for which they had lusted."¹

Since the children of Israel never heartily accepted God's plan of a nonflesh diet, the Lord removed the pot of manna from the ark of the testament to reflect their spiritual state (2

Chronicles 5:10). In fact, the entire ark was eventually removed from them.²

What is the pot of manna for today?

“The light that God has given and will continue to give on the food question is to be to His people today what the manna was to the children of Israel.”³ Therefore, what is the responsibility of God’s church today?

The servant of the Lord explained, “It has been clearly presented to me that God’s people are to take a firm stand against meat eating. Would God for thirty years give His people the message that if they desire to have pure blood and clear minds they must give up the use of flesh meat, if He did not want them to heed this message? By the use of flesh meat, the animal nature is strengthened and the spiritual nature weakened.”⁴

“Is it not time that all should aim to dispense with flesh foods? How can those who are seeking to become pure, refined, and holy, that they may have the companionship of heavenly angels, continue to use as food anything that has so harmful an effect on soul and body?”⁵

“When the animal part of the human agent is strengthened by meat eating, the intellectual powers diminish proportionately. A religious life can be more successfully gained and maintained if meat is discarded, for this diet stimulates into intense activities lustful propensities, and enfeebles the moral and spiritual nature.”⁶

The duty of church leaders

“A reformation is needed among the people, but it should first begin its purifying work with the ministers. . . .

“One important part of the work of the ministry is to faithfully present to the people the health reform as it stands connected with the third angel’s message as part and parcel of the same work. They should not fail to adopt it themselves, and should urge it upon all who profess to believe the truth.”⁷

“God’s true commandment-keeping people will be instructed by Him. The true medical missionary will be wise in the treatment of the sick, using the remedies that nature provides. And then he will look to Christ as the true Healer of

disease. The principles of health reform brought into the life of the patient, the use of nature’s remedies, and the cooperation of divine agencies in behalf of the suffering, will bring success.

“Satan will try to place barriers in the way of the true medical missionary. He will seek to bring discouragement upon those who recognize the commandments of God and are determined to obey them. We must be careful not to carry our views of health reform to extremes, thus making it ‘health deform.’ Our food should be plain and free from all objectionable elements, but let us be careful that it is always palatable and good.”⁸

The true medical missionary physician

“A physician who has the moral courage to imperil his reputation in enlightening the understanding by plain facts, in showing the nature of disease and how to prevent it, and the dangerous practice of resorting to drugs, will have an uphill business, but he will live and let live. He will not use his powerful drug medication, because of the knowledge he has acquired by studying books. He will, if a reformer, talk plainly in regard to the false appetites and ruinous self-indulgence, in dressing, in eating and drinking, in overtaxing to do a large amount of work in a given time, which has a ruinous influence upon the temper [and on] the physical and mental powers.

“Knowledge is what is needed. Drugs are too often promised to restore health, and the poor sick are so thoroughly drugged with quinine, morphine, or some strong health-and life-destroying medicine, that nature may never make sufficient protest, but give up the struggle; and they may continue their wrong habits with hopeful impunity.

“Right and correct habits, intelligently and perseveringly practiced, will be removing the cause for disease, and the strong drugs need not be resorted to. Many go on from step to step with their unnatural indulgences, which is bringing in just as unnatural a condition of things as possible.

“Diseases of every stripe and type have been brought upon human beings

by the use of tea and coffee and the narcotics, opium and tobacco. These hurtful indulgences must be given up, not only one, but all; for all are hurtful and ruinous to the physical, mental, and moral powers, and should be discontinued from a health standpoint. The common use of the flesh of dead animals has had a deteriorating influence upon the morals as well as the physical constitution.

“Ill-health in a variety of forms, if effect could be traced to the cause, would reveal the sure result of flesh eating. The disuse of meat with healthful dishes nicely prepared to take the place of flesh meats, would place a large number of the sick and suffering ones in a fair way of recovering their health without the use of drugs.

“But if the physician encourages a meat-eating diet to his invalid patients, then he will make a necessity for the use of drugs. Nature will want some assistance to bring things to their proper condition, which may be found in the simplest remedies, especially in the use of nature’s own furnished remedies—pure air, and with a precious knowledge of how to breathe; pure water, with a knowledge of how to apply it; plenty of sunlight in every room in the house, if possible, and with an intelligent knowledge of what advantages are to be gained by its use. All these are powerful in their efficiency, and the patient who has obtained a knowledge of how to eat and dress healthfully, may live for comfort, for peace, for health, and will not be prevailed upon to put to his lips drugs, which, in the place of helping nature, paralyze her powers. If the sick and suffering will do only as well as they know in regard to living out the principles of health reform perseveringly, then they will in nine cases out of ten recover from their ailments. . . .

“The health institutions for the sick will be the best places to educate the suffering ones to live in accordance with nature’s laws, and cease their health-destroying practices in wrong habits in diet, in dress, that are in accordance with the world’s habits and customs, which are not at all after God’s order. They are doing a good work to enlighten our world. . . .



“There is now positive need even with physicians, reformers in the line of treatment of disease, that greater pains-taking effort be made to carry forward and upward the work for themselves, and to interestedly instruct those who look to them for medical skill to ascertain the cause of their infirmities. They should call their attention in a special manner to the laws which God has established, which cannot be violated with impunity. They dwell much on the working of disease, but do not, as a general rule, arouse the attention to the laws which must be sacredly and intelligently obeyed to prevent disease.

“Especially [is this true] if the physician has not been correct in his dietetic practices, if his own appetite has not been restricted to a plain, wholesome diet, in a large measure discarding the use of the flesh of dead animals, [if] he loves meat, [and] he has educated and cultivated a taste for unhealthful food. His ideas are narrow, and he will as

soon educate and discipline the taste and appetite of his patients to love the things that he loves, as to give them the sound principles of health reform. He will prescribe for sick patients flesh meats, when it is the very worst diet that they can have. It stimulates, but does not give strength.

“They do not inquire into their [patients’] former habits of eating and drinking, and do not take special notice of their erroneous habits which have been for many years laying the foundation of disease. Conscientious physicians should be prepared to enlighten those who are ignorant, and should with wisdom make out their prescriptions, prohibiting those things in their diet which he knows to be erroneous.

“He should plainly state the things which he regards as detrimental to the laws of health, and leave these suffering ones to work conscientiously to do those things for themselves which they can do and thus place themselves

in right relation to the laws of life and health. When from enlightened conscience they do the very best they know how to do to preserve themselves in health, then in faith they may look to the Great Physician, who is a healer of the body as well as of the soul.

“We are health reformers. Physicians should have wisdom and experience, and be thorough health reformers. Then they will be constantly educating by precept and example their patients from drugs; for they well know that the use of drugs may produce for the time being favorable results, but will implant in the system that which will cause great difficulties hereafter, which they may never recover from during their lifetime. Nature must have a chance to do her work. Obstructions must be removed and opportunity given her to exert her healing forces, which she will surely do if every abuse is removed from her and she has a fair chance.

“The sick should be educated to have confidence in nature’s great blessings which God has provided; and the most effective remedies for disease are pure, soft water; the blessed God-given sunshine coming into rooms of the invalids; living outdoors as much as possible; having healthful exercise; eating and drinking foods that are prepared in the most healthful manner.”⁹

“Vegetables, fruits, and grains should compose our diet. Not an ounce of flesh meat should enter our stomachs. The eating of flesh is unnatural. We are to return to God’s original purpose in the creation of man.”¹⁰

Should the principle of health reform be a test of fellowship?

We are well familiar with the statement, “We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship.”¹¹ Yet let us look at the chronological sequence as the servant of the Lord was given the advancing light:

1884: “Use less and less meat, until it is not used at all. If meat is discarded, if the taste is not educated in that direction, if a liking for fruits and grains is encouraged, it will soon be as God in the beginning designed it should be. **No meat will be used by His people.**”¹²

1890: "Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. **Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet.** We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to **work steadily toward it.** I cannot think that in the practice of flesh eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us. All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains, and vegetables. If we move from principle in these things, if we as Christian reformers educate our own taste, and bring our diet to God's plan, then we may exert an influence upon others in this matter, which will be pleasing to God."¹³

1898: "There is no safety in the eating of the flesh of dead animals, and in a **short** time the milk of the cows will also be excluded from the diet of God's commandment-keeping people. In a short time it will not be safe to use anything that comes from the animal creation. Those who take God at His word, and obey His commandments with the whole heart, will be blessed. He will be their shield of protection. **But the Lord will not be trifled with. Distrust, disobedience, alienation from God's will and way, will place the sinner in a position where the Lord cannot give him His divine favor.**"¹⁴

1899: "The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up using any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded."¹⁵

Why was the decisive step not taken?

Why didn't the question of abstaining from flesh already become a test of fellowship back in the days of Sister White, when the warnings were first issued? Simply because the leaders of her day refused to surrender themselves fully to practicing health reform. Therefore the people could certainly not be expected to do so!

"God gave the light on health reform, and those who rejected it rejected God.

One and another who knew better said that it all came from Dr. Kellogg, and they made war upon him."¹⁶

"If church members do not act the part God has assigned them, the movement of health reform will go on without them, and it will be seen that God has removed their candlestick out of its place."¹⁷

"The ministers must be converted before they can strengthen their brethren. They should not preach themselves, but Christ and His righteousness. A reformation is needed among the people, but it should first begin its purifying work with the ministers. . . .

"One important work of the ministry is to faithfully present to the people the health reform as it stands connected with the third angel's message as part and parcel of the same work. **They should not fail to adopt it themselves,** and should urge it upon all who profess to believe the truth."¹⁸

"When the third angel's message is received in its fullness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the conference, in the work of the church, in the home, **at the table,** and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body."¹⁹

"Can we possibly have confidence in ministers who at tables where flesh is served join with others in eating it?"²⁰

Christ is going to have a perfected people when He comes back again, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

In order to be perfected, what must happen to the church?

"Those who have received instruction regarding the evils of the use of flesh foods, tea and coffee, and rich and unhealthful food preparations, and who are determined to make a covenant with God by sacrifice, will not continue to indulge their appetite for food that they know to be unhealthful. **God demands that the appetites be cleansed, and that self-denial be practiced in regard to those things which are not good. This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfected people.**"²¹

Sobering thoughts

"It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the Ten Commandments."²²

"When God shall work His strange work on the earth, **when holy hands bear the ark no longer, woe will be upon the people.**"²³

"Satan has laid every measure possible that nothing shall come among us as a people to reprove and rebuke us, and exhort us to put away our errors. **But there is a people who will bear the ark of God.** Some will go out from among us who will bear the ark no longer. But these cannot make walls to obstruct the truth; for it will go onward and upward to the end. In the past God has raised up men, and He still has men of opportunity waiting, prepared to do His bidding—men who will go through restrictions which are only as walls daubed with untempered mortar. When God puts His Spirit upon men, they will work. They will proclaim the word of the Lord; they will lift up their voice like a trumpet. The truth will not be diminished or lose its power in their hands. They will show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins."²⁴ ☞

References

- ¹ *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 412. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ² See *Prophets and Kings*, p. 453.
- ³ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 269. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ⁴ *Medical Ministry*, pp. 278, 279.
- ⁵ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 317.
- ⁶ *Medical Ministry*, pp. 277, 278.
- ⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 469, 470.
- ⁸ *The Medical Evangelist*, April 1, 1912.
- ⁹ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, pp. 276–280.
- ¹⁰ *Medical Ministry*, p. 229.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 159.
- ¹² *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 407. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹³ *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 119.
- ¹⁴ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 411. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 384.
- ¹⁶ *The General Conference Bulletin*, April 6, 1903.
- ¹⁷ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, p. 339.
- ¹⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 469, 470. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 327. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ²⁰ *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 402.
- ²¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 153, 154. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ²² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 70.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 77. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ²⁴ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 411. [Emphasis supplied.]



Aaron's Rod: Organized for Restoration

Abridged and adapted from the book *People of the Ark* by P. Lausevic

The book of Hebrews was the apostle Paul's utmost attempt to explain to the Jewish people why Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, and why they urgently needed to accept His ministration in their behalf. The best way to do so was by comparing their unique services in the sanctuary—which they revered and held to such high esteem and worshipped ignorantly—with the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. Christ made the best attempt possible, combining human thought with Divine inspiration to convey this idea to all who would be impressed by the Holy Spirit.

In order to explain the heavenly, Jesus needed to describe the earthly. As we read in the previous article, within the second veil of the tabernacle was "the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:4, emphasis added).

Because we are living in the great antitypical Day of Atonement which is signified by the ministration of the high priest in the most holy place of the sanctuary, we need to study its significance relevant to our time. It is named as such because the visible presence of God was manifested in that part of the sanctuary together with the most important piece of furniture in the entire sanctuary service—the ark of the covenant. The presence of this ark with the people of God meant that God was in reality in their midst, while its

absence meant that God was displeased with His people and no longer working with them.

Bearing the ark

When the nation of Israel was walking in the will of Jehovah, the spiritual leaders were bearing the ark of a holy God. When they turned away from Him, they were not permitted to touch that sacred chest upon penalty of death. This term is not merely used in Old Testament times but also in the last days of this earth's history, as we are ministering on earth in conjunction with Christ's ministry in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

Hence the prophet describes the condition of the church on earth in these terms:

"Many of our people are lukewarm. They occupy the position of Meroz, neither for nor against, neither cold nor hot. They hear the words of Christ, but do them not. If they remain in this state, He will reject them with abhorrence. Many of those who have had great light, great opportunities, and every spiritual advantage praise Christ and the world with the same breath. They bow themselves before God and mammon. They make merry with the children of the world, and yet claim to be blessed with the children of God. They wish to have Christ as their Saviour, but will not bear the cross and wear His yoke. . . .

"Who knows but that the preachers who are faithful, firm, and true may be the **last** who shall offer the gospel of peace to our unthankful churches? . . .

"When God shall work His strange work on the earth, **when holy hands bear the**

ark no longer, woe will be upon the people."¹

If the people who have had such great light in the past do not continue in that light, they will no longer be the ones bearing the sacred ark representing the presence of God in this earth. This may seem alarming if we truly understand its significance. What if we really want to serve a holy God when the leaders refuse to walk in His presence and be the ones to bear that ark? Does that mean that no one will be representing the work of God in this earth? Does it mean that we will be left without direction or a method of communicating with heaven?

"Satan has laid every measure possible that nothing shall come among us as a people to reprove and rebuke us, and exhort us to put away our errors. **But there is a people who will bear the ark of God.** . . . They will show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins."²

The ark of the covenant

According to the writer of the book of Hebrews, the original ark contained "the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant." However, as the nation of Israel rejected the true meaning of each of these symbols, one by one they were removed from the ark, as they ultimately had no real meaning. By the time the Temple was dedicated in the time of Solomon, some items were missing from the ark. The inspired writer astonishingly declares: "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt" (2 Chronicles 5:10). Only the tables of the covenant remained, while the other two items were gone.

As the people continued their state of apostasy and rebellion, what ultimately happened to the ark itself together with the ten commandments remaining inside? "Because of Israel's transgression of the commandments of God and their wicked acts, God suffered them to go into captivity, to humble and punish them. Before

the temple was destroyed, God made known to a few of His faithful servants the fate of the temple, which was the pride of Israel, and which they regarded with idolatry, while they were sinning against God. He also revealed to them the captivity of Israel. These righteous men, just before the destruction of the temple, **removed the sacred ark containing the tables of stone**, and with mourning and sadness secreted it in a cave where it was to be hidden from the people of Israel because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hidden. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted."³

Restoration

Since God's church in the last days has an important responsibility of effectively sharing the truth to the entire world, what needs to be restored to give them that same sense of the presence of God? The servant of the Lord describes a vision given to her:

"In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. . . . **In the ark was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book.** Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God."⁴

In modern Adventism we have often spoken about the ark—but we must include all of its contents: The tables of stone, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod.

The rod that budded

The history of Aaron's rod is found in the book of Numbers, chapters 16 and 17. Inspiration is speaking about leadership—specifically that it was God who had appointed Moses and Aaron to this important post of duty. This was not the result of some kind of personal career ambition on the part of Moses the meek—quite the contrary.

In sharp contrast Moses' cousin, Korah, was a very ambitious individual who determined to seize control of the leadership of Israel. His attitude was directly contrary to the fundamental principle of Christianity that teaches that there is satisfaction in service to

others. This rebellion of Korah was not a mere popular commotion or sudden impulse of a crowd gone wild but, rather, "a deep-laid conspiracy was formed, the result of a determined purpose to overthrow the authority of the leaders appointed by God Himself."⁵

"Jealousy had given rise to envy, and envy to rebellion. [Korah and his companions in the conspiracy] had discussed the question of the right of Moses to so great authority and honor, until they had come to regard him as occupying a very enviable position, which any of them could fill as well as he. And they deceived themselves and one another into thinking that Moses and Aaron had themselves assumed the positions they held. The discontented ones said that these leaders had exalted themselves above the congregation of the Lord, in taking upon them the priesthood and government, but their house was not entitled to distinction above others in Israel; they were no more holy than the people, and it should be enough for them to be on a level with their brethren, who were equally favored with God's special presence and protection."⁶

This is the same way that Lucifer had mysteriously become Satan in the courts of heaven. Because this principle originated with Satan, when a person submits to that kind of reasoning, he or she actually becomes possessed with the same destructive element that changed the brightest of the heavenly angels into a despot and a demon. It is for this reason that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Samuel 15:23). "Those who set themselves against the government of God have entered into an alliance with the arch-apostate."⁷

When God appoints a leader, is it possible to fashion a way to insult Him in a greater way than by rejecting such a leader? "It is hardly possible for men to offer greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities He would use for their salvation. The Israelites had not only done this but had purposed to put both Moses and Aaron to death."⁸ This is why genuine rebelling is simply a person who surrenders his or her mind to the control of Satan—a witch. Once

this genuine rebellion takes hold of a person, is there a way to remedy that? Speaking of the angels that associated with Lucifer in his rebellion in heaven, we are told that “they had learned the lesson of genuine rebellion against the unchangeable law of God, and this is incurable.”⁹ For this reason they had to be expelled from the courts of heaven.

Those who led the rebellion were actually among those who had gone up with Moses into the mount and beheld the divine glory at the giving of the tables of stone. Their high privilege made their sin all the greater.

In this whole process Moses had not been an overbearing ruler; he was a patient leader—the meekest man in all the earth. The base accusation that he was assuming too much authority was totally unfounded, because he was a man that was closely connected to God and his only desire was to spend eternity with his Saviour (Hebrews 11:24–27).

The core of rebellion

Why is it that such a rebellious attitude went like wildfire throughout the camp of the Hebrew people? The seeming problem was that Moses “had reproved the people as sinners, when they felt that they were a holy people, and that the Lord was among them.”¹⁰

“Korah had cherished his envy and rebellion until he was self-deceived, and he really thought that the congregation were a very righteous people and that Moses was a tyrannical ruler, continually dwelling upon the necessity of the congregation’s being holy, when there was no need of it, for they were holy.

“These rebellious ones had flattered the people in general to believe that they were right and that all their troubles arose from Moses, their ruler, who was continually reminding them of their sins. The people thought that if Korah could lead them and encourage them by dwelling upon their righteous acts instead of reminding them of their failures, they would have a very peaceful, prosperous journey, and he would

without doubt lead them, not back and forward in the wilderness, but into the Promised Land. They said that it was Moses who had told them that they could not go into the land, and that the Lord had not thus said.”¹¹

Because there seemed to be such great success among the people and large numbers began to support Korah, this had a serious negative effect on him. He actually believed that he was now in the right.

A new order

As a result of the seeming triumph of Korah in successfully mobilizing the



congregation through the effective use of flattery, what did the people expect? They “had fondly cherished the hope that a new order of things was about to be established, in which praise would be substituted for reproof, and ease for anxiety and conflict.”¹²

In the history of this experience as recorded in *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 345, 346, we learn that the rebellious, discordant elements were eventually “the larger part of the congregation of Israel”—they actually were the majority! Although Moses and his associates were now the minority, they were the

people of God because they still held onto the ark of God and His personal presence, which the ark symbolized.

The miracle of Aaron’s rod

In reading the entire history we learn that there was a test made between the followers of Korah in contrast to the men of God’s appointment. The dry, dead stick used by Aaron as a rod miraculously budded and bore fruit—symbolic of God’s endorsement and blessing upon the ministry of Moses and Aaron. As a continual reminder of rightful leadership that is prepared to tell the people their true condition, this miraculous rod was placed inside the ark of the covenant, next to the ten commandments.

In the life of Moses we can see that genuine humility is not one that glosses over wrongs but, rather, is prepared to defend the character of our God at any time—not merely by mild measures alone, but even by the stern virtues that are combined with the mild nature of a forgiving person.

Lessons for our time

Today is no different than the experience of those people who left Egypt and spent 40 years wandering in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. “Some who occupy the position of watchmen to warn the people of danger have given up their watch and recline at ease. They are unfaithful sentinels. . . . They apprehend no special danger; they see no cause to raise an alarm.

To them everything seems to be going well, and they see no necessity of raising the faithful, trumpet notes of warning which they hear borne by the plain testimonies, to show the people their transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. These reproofs and warnings disturb the quiet of these sleepy, ease-loving sentinels, and they are not pleased. They say in heart, if not in words: ‘This is all uncalled for. It is too severe, too harsh. These men are unnecessarily disturbed and excited, and seem unwilling to give us any rest or quietude.’ “Ye take too

much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them" (Numbers 16:3). They are not willing that we should have any comfort, peace, or happiness. It is active labor, toil, and unceasing vigilance alone which will satisfy these unreasonable, hard-to-be-suited watchmen. Why don't they prophesy smooth things, and cry: Peace, peace? Then everything would move on smoothly.'¹³

The Hebrew people wanted the presence of God combined with a freedom to sin. This is why they complained of being deprived of their liberty and independence when the reality was that they "were not willing to submit to the directions and restrictions of the Lord. They were restless under restraint and unwilling to receive reproof. This was the secret of their murmuring against Moses. Had they been left free to do as they pleased, there would have been fewer complaints against their leader. All through the history of the church God's servants have had the same spirit to meet."¹⁴

"Like Korah and his companions, many, even of the professed followers of Christ, are thinking, planning, and working so eagerly for self-exaltation that in order to gain the sympathy and support of the people they are ready to pervert the truth, falsifying and misrepresenting the Lord's servants, and even charging them with the base and selfish motives that inspire their own hearts. . . .

"Every advance made by those whom God has called to lead in His work has excited suspicion; every act has been misrepresented by the jealous and faultfinding. Thus it was in the time of Luther, of the Wesleys and other reformers. Thus it is today."¹⁵

In the history of Korah, the rebels eventually blasphemed God. In later history, when Israel demanded a king (1 Samuel 8:4-9), the Lord gave them their desire (Hosea 13:11), although by this act they rejected His authority and became just like the other nations. As a result, the rod of Aaron was removed from the ark, and they were eventually left with a mere hollow reminder of their association with the God of heaven.

God will indeed have a people to bear His ark— a complete ark, with all the items found in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

Restoration of Aaron's rod principles

How can we determine if we are following the principles of Korah or those of Aaron's rod? "If you seek to turn aside the counsel of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."¹⁶ God has given us the same messages of reproof in the testimonies from the modern-day prophet. If we reject them merely as advice and suggestions, we are preparing ourselves to receive any modern-day Korah, in person or organization, that may arise.

In order for this last-day church to have a true experience, they must have the same concern for the well-being of each individual member, as Moses had for the people he was leading in his time. "On the church in its organized capacity [Christ] places a responsibility for the individual members. Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore. 'Reprove, rebuke, exhort,' the Lord says, 'with all long-suffering and doctrine' (2 Timothy 4:2). Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. 'They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God' (Galatians 5:21). If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's word is pronounced upon them in heaven. **In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in**

heaven. He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself."¹⁷

If we fail in this respect, we are acting the part of Korah, not Moses' part. We are called to be reformers just like John the Baptist. He has a message plain and pointed, rebuking sin rather than whitewashing it. To give such a message, our love for Christ must swallow up love for self. We must be "willing to be emptied of self."¹⁸

To reject the ministry of Moses—the ministry of high standards and loving reproof in order to uplift those standards—indulging instead in the spirit of self-sufficiency in whatever way it may be found, is to reject Aaron's rod. Let us ever remember that God will indeed have a people to bear His ark—a complete ark, with all the items found in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. Let us determine to be among that people! *✍*

[For a more detailed evaluation of this subject you can obtain the book of notes entitled "People of the Ark" by the same author.]

References

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 76, 77. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ² *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 411. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ³ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 414. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ⁴ *Early Writings*, p. 32.
- ⁵ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 395.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 397.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 635.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 402.
- ⁹ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 21.
- ¹⁰ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 397.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 349.
- ¹² *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 401.
- ¹³ *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 440.
- ¹⁴ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 404.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 66.
- ¹⁷ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 805, 806. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ¹⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 334.



THE SHEKINAH:

A manifestation of the glory of God

Compiled from the writings of E. G. White

God reveals His will

Beyond the inner veil of the wilderness tabernacle built in the time of Moses, was the holy of holies, where centered the symbolic service of atonement and intercession. In this apartment was the ark, a chest of acacia wood, overlaid within and without with gold, and having a crown of gold about the top. It was made as a depository for the tables of stone, upon which God Himself had inscribed the ten commandments. Hence it was called the ark of God's testament, or the ark of the covenant, since the ten commandments were the basis of the covenant made between God and Israel.

The cover of the sacred chest was called the mercy seat. This was wrought of one solid piece of gold and was surmounted by golden cherubim, one standing on each end. One wing of each angel was stretched forth on high, while the other was folded over the body in token of reverence and humility. The position of the cherubim, with their faces turned toward each other, and looking reverently downward toward the ark, represented the reverence with which the heavenly host regard the law of God and their interest in the plan of redemption. Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, the manifestation of the divine presence; and from between the cherubim, God made known His will.¹

Christ Himself was the Lord of the temple. When He should leave it, its glory would depart—that glory once visible in the holy of holies over the mercy seat, where the high priest entered only once a year, on the great day of atonement, with the blood of the slain victim (typical of the blood of the Son of God shed for the sins of the world), and sprinkled it upon the altar. This was the Shekinah, the visible pavilion of Jehovah.²

The earthly sanctuary: A mere copy of the original

The sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. God placed His Spirit upon the builders of the earthly sanctuary. The artistic skill displayed in its construction was a manifestation of divine wisdom. The walls had the appearance of massive gold, reflecting in every direction the light of the seven lamps of the golden candlestick. The table of shewbread and the altar of incense glittered like burnished gold. The gorgeous curtain which formed the ceiling, inwrought with figures of angels in blue and purple and scarlet, added to the beauty

of the scene. And beyond the second veil was the holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of God's glory, before which none but the high priest could enter and live.

The matchless splendor of the earthly tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple where Christ our forerunner ministers for us before the throne of God. The abiding place of the King of kings, where thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him (Daniel 7:10); that temple, filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration, could find, in the most magnificent structure ever reared by human hands, but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory.³

In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah was permitted in vision to look into the holy place, and into the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary. The curtains of the innermost sanctuary were drawn aside, and a throne high and lifted up, towering as it were to the very heavens, was revealed to his gaze. An indescribable glory emanated from a personage on the throne, and His train filled the temple, as His glory will finally fill the earth. Cherubim were on either side of the mercy seat, as guards round the great king, and they glowed with the glory that enshrouded them from

the presence of God. As their songs of praise resounded in deep, earnest notes of adoration, the pillars of the gate trembled, as if shaken by an earthquake. These holy beings sang forth the praise and glory of God with lips unpolluted with sin. The contrast between the feeble praise which he had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim, astonished and humiliated the prophet. He had for the time being the sublime privilege of appreciating the spotless purity of Jehovah's exalted character.

While he listened to the song of the angels, as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3), the glory, the infinite power, and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord passed before his vision and was impressed upon his soul. In the light of this matchless radiance that made manifest all he could bear in the revelation of the divine character, his own inward defilement stood out before him with startling clearness. His very words seemed vile to him.

Thus when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollution of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness. In deep humiliation Isaiah exclaimed, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (verse 5). This is not that voluntary humility and servile self-reproach that so many seem to consider it a virtue to display. This vague mockery of humility is prompted by hearts full of pride and self-esteem. There are many who demerit themselves in words, who would be disappointed if this course did not call forth expressions of praise and appreciation from others. But the conviction of the prophet was genuine. As humanity, with its weakness and deformity, was brought out in contrast with the perfection of divine holiness and light and glory, he felt altogether inefficient and unworthy. How could he go and speak to the people the holy requirements of Jehovah, who was high

and lifted up, and whose train filled the temple? While Isaiah was trembling and conscience-smitten, because of his impurity in the presence of this unsurpassed glory, he says, "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me (verses 6-8)."⁴

The seraphim before the throne are so filled with reverential awe in beholding the glory of God that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with self-complacency, or in admiration of themselves or one another. Their praise and glory are for the Lord of Hosts, who is high and lifted up, and the glory of whose train fills the temple. As they see the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song of praise is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." They are fully satisfied to glorify God; and in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. In bearing His image, in doing His service and worshiping Him, their highest ambition is fully reached.⁵

Does the significance of the ark really impact us like it should?

[In the days of Joshua, the Israelites] had not realized that their faith was only a nominal faith and had lost its power to prevail with God. The law of God, contained in the ark, was also a symbol of His presence; but they had cast contempt upon the commandments, had despised their requirements, and had grieved the Spirit of the Lord from among them. When the people obeyed the holy precepts, the Lord was with them to work for them by His infinite power; but when they looked upon the ark and did not associate it with God, nor honor His revealed will by obedience to His law, it was no more to them than a common box. They looked to the ark as the idolatrous nations

looked to their gods, as if it possessed in itself the elements of power and salvation. They transgressed the law it contained, for their very worship of the ark led to formalism, hypocrisy, and idolatry. Their sin had separated them from God, and He could not give them victory until they had repented of and forsaken their iniquity.

It was not enough that the ark and the sanctuary were in the midst of Israel. It was not enough that the priests offered sacrifices, and that the people were called the children of God. The Lord does not regard the requests of those who cherish iniquity in their hearts, and it is written that "he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

We may learn from these examples of God's dealing with ancient Israel, that the controversy for truth will have little success when sin is upon those who advocate it. Men and women may be well versed in Bible knowledge, as well acquainted with the Scripture as were the Israelites with the ark, and yet if their hearts are not right before God, success will not attend their efforts. God will not be with them. They do not have a high sense of the obligations of the law of heaven, nor do they realize the sacred character of the truth they are teaching. The charge is, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isaiah 52:11).

It is not enough to argue in defense of the truth. The most telling evidence of its worth is seen in a godly life; and without this the most conclusive statements will be lacking in weight and prevailing power; for our strength lies in being connected with God by His Holy Spirit, and transgression severs us from this sacred nearness with the Source of our might and wisdom. We are to bring to the attention of the world the truth for this time; and if we should see the work advance, we must be sure that there is no accursed thing among us. Says Paul, "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? . . . Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" (Romans 2:21, 23).

The Israelites forgot that their strength was in God and not in the ark,

and those who advocate the truth today will have to learn that their power is not in the clearness of their arguments; not in the reasonableness of their doctrines, though these be sustained by the word of God; not in their belief in the law and the truth of its claims, but in obedience to all of its requirements, through the faith of the Son of God.

Let us take heed to the warning of the past, remembering that God requireth truth in the secret hearts of His followers; for only that worship is acceptable that is rendered in spirit and in truth. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart will realize the aid of heavenly power and will see of the salvation of God; but let no one think that God will favor those who go contrary to His word; for He says, "Thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you" (Joshua 7:13).⁶

The glory of God in earthen vessels

The glory of God is His character, and it is manifested to us in Christ. Therefore it is by beholding Christ, by contemplating His character, by learning His lessons, by obeying His words, that we become changed into His likeness. As we are enlightened by His Spirit, we see no virtue or merit in ourselves. We realize there is naught in us but deformity. But the glory of the Redeemer, manifested in His atoning sacrifice, in His justifying righteousness, in His fullness of grace, whereby we not only obtain pardon but receive sanctification, fills the whole soul with love and adoration, and in contemplating the goodness, mercy, and love of God, we become transformed in character. Jesus said, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:22). On him who receives Christ, the glory of the Lord has risen, the Sun of Righteousness has shined, and, rising from his low and worldly state, the believer reflects the light of Christ's glory. As he continually looks to Jesus and contemplates His beauty, he is more and more transformed into the child of light.

Jesus said of His followers: "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see

your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Matthew 5:14; John 15:8). God is glorified in His children as they represent Christ in character. Jesus says, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (verse 5). Good works are the fruits borne upon the Christian tree. It is impossible to be a disciple of Christ and be as a fruitless branch. The good works of the believer are wrought through the human agent by Christ Himself. They are doers of the words of Christ and will not only impart blessings of the highest order to others, but as they render implicit obedience to Christ, they represent His character, and bring joy to the heart of Christ, and to all the holy ones of heaven.⁷

Glory in the Christian life

Those who consecrate their all to God will not be left unmolested by the enemy of souls. Satan will come to them with his specious temptations, designing to allure them from their loyalty to God. He will present to them his bribe, as he did to Christ in the wilderness of temptation, saying, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9). But what should be the answer of the Christian to all the temptations of the evil one? He should say, "I will not lend my influence in any way to the advancement of anything save the cause of Christ. I am not my own; I have been bought with a price. I am not to live to please myself; for I have been purchased, ransomed by the blood of Christ. It is not possible for me to give to Christ more than that which belongs to Him; for every moment of my life belongs to Him. I am His possession, a servant employed to do the will of my Master." This is the only position that is safe for us to occupy; and if the individual members of the church felt in this way, what a power would the church exert to draw and win souls to Christ. It is this halfhearted work, the effort to serve God and the devil at the same time, that leaves the church so destitute of the Spirit of God. Were the members of the church consecrated

to God, were they in the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, were they organized for the purpose of imparting to others an influence of good, the church would be indeed the light of the world. Should the individual members seek to represent Christ to the world in character and life, thousands would be attracted to the Saviour, who now have reason to criticize the words and works of those who profess the name of Christ. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:6, 7).⁸

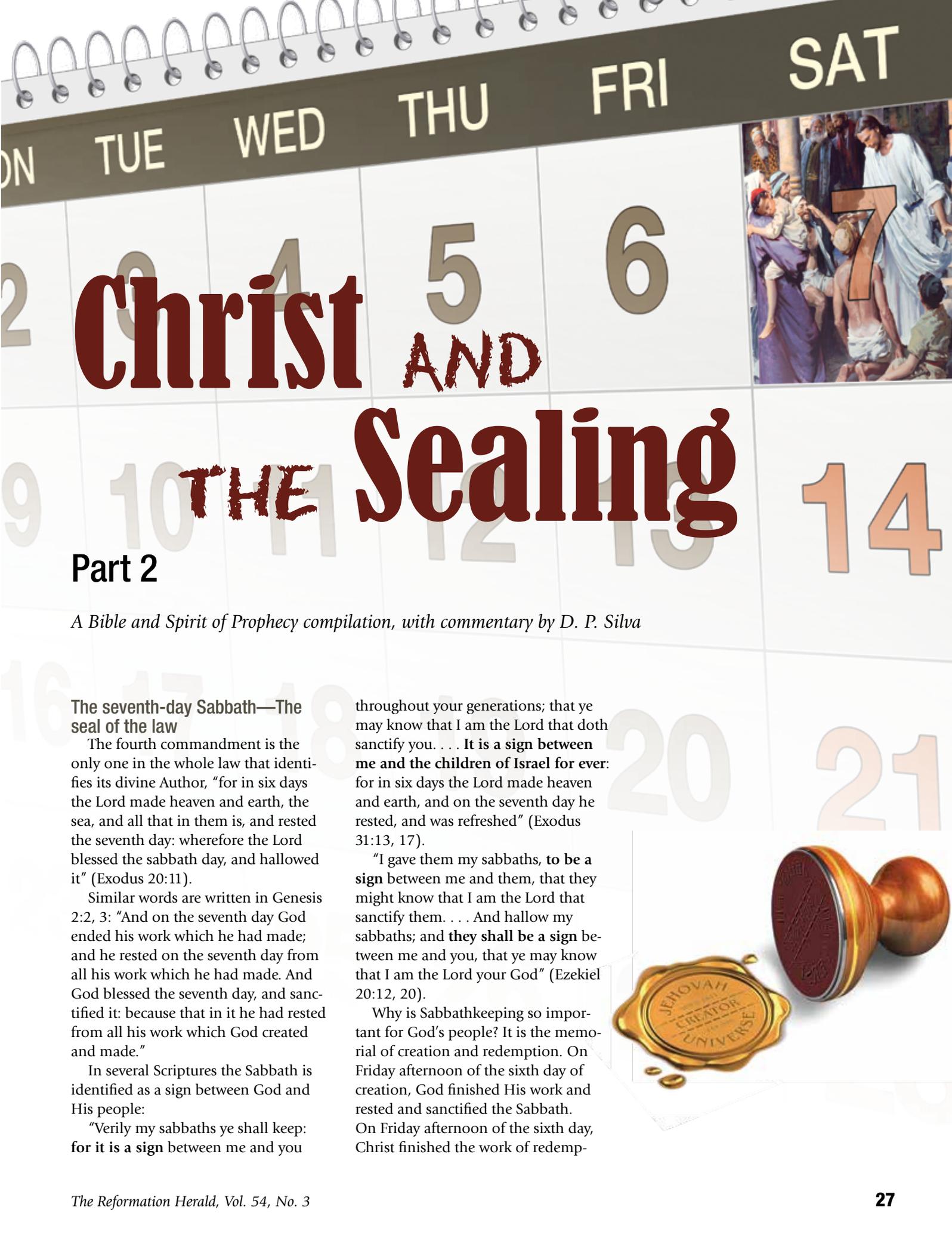
God's glory also revealed in a refreshing new relationship with our brethren and sisters

Each one of us is to stand where we shall be under the transforming influence of the grace of Christ, and then in our association one with another, we shall be able to impart and to receive the light of the Sun of Righteousness; for each member will be in harmony with Christ and with every other member, striving to attain to perfection of life and character through faith in Him. Then shall we know how to sympathize with our brethren, to manifest forbearing love, and the very least will be united through vital connection with Christ to the working agencies that God has ordained for the dissemination of light and truth.⁹

In what way is our light shining? The influence of our work upon the world will be affected to a great degree by the attitude we maintain toward one another.¹⁰ *R*

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Christ AND THE Sealing

Part 2

A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with commentary by D. P. Silva

The seventh-day Sabbath—The seal of the law

The fourth commandment is the only one in the whole law that identifies its divine Author, “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 20:11).

Similar words are written in Genesis 2:2, 3: “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

In several Scriptures the Sabbath is identified as a sign between God and His people:

“Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you

throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:13, 17).

“I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. . . . And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God” (Ezekiel 20:12, 20).

Why is Sabbathkeeping so important for God’s people? It is the memorial of creation and redemption. On Friday afternoon of the sixth day of creation, God finished His work and rested and sanctified the Sabbath. On Friday afternoon of the sixth day, Christ finished the work of redemp-



“Does my character correspond to the qualifications essential that I may receive a passport to the mansions Christ has prepared?”

tion when He surrendered His life on the cross of Calvary and rested on the Sabbath. Of His faithful disciples it is written that they “rested the sabbath day according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56).

“By thus setting apart the Sabbath, God gave the world a memorial. He did not set apart one day and any day in seven, but one particular day, the seventh day. And by observing the Sabbath, we show that we recognize God as the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth.”¹

“What is the condition of those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus? If in families there are those who are refusing obedience to the Lord in keeping His Sabbath, then the seal cannot be placed upon them. The sealing is a pledge from God of perfect security to His chosen ones. Sealing indicates you are God’s chosen. He has appropriated you to Himself. As the sealed of God we are Christ’s purchased possession, and no one shall pluck us out of His hands.”²

“The Sabbath is a token between God and His people. It is a holy day, given by the Creator to us as a day upon which to rest, and reflect upon sacred things. God designed it to be observed through every age as a perpetual covenant.”³

“Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master’s will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. These who were so familiar with prophecy and the treasures of divine wisdom should have acted their faith. They should have commanded their households after them, that by a well-ordered family they might present to the world the influence of the truth upon the human heart. . . .

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost.”⁴

According to this last quotation, merely professing to keep the Sabbath is not enough to be sealed. We need a close relationship with Christ, obeying by grace His sacred words.

“Those who would have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. This is what distinguishes them from the disloyal, who have accepted a man-made institution in the place of the true Sabbath. The observance of God’s rest day is the mark of distinction between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.”⁵

Our passport to Heaven

Especially those who travel overseas know how essential it is to bear a passport. We may do all the necessary preparation for a trip, we may have enough money and all of our luggage well packed—but even after having bought our tickets, if we have no passport, we cannot travel at all. Period.

What is our passport to the heavenly mansions?

“Higher education is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation, and this knowledge is secured by earnest and diligent study of the Scriptures. Such an education will renew the mind and transform the character, restoring the image of God in the soul. It will fortify the mind against the deceptive whisperings of the adversary, and enable us to understand the voice of God. It will teach the learner to become a coworker with Jesus Christ, to dispel the moral darkness about him, and bring light and knowledge

to men. It is the simplicity of true godliness—our passport from the preparatory school of earth to the higher school above.”⁶

“He who cooperates with the divine purpose in imparting to the youth a knowledge of God, and molding the character into harmony with His, does a high and noble work. As he awakens a desire to reach God’s ideal, he presents an education that is as high as heaven and as broad as the universe; an education that cannot be completed in this life, but that will be continued in the life to come; an education that secures to the successful student his passport from the preparatory school of earth to the higher grade, the school above.”⁷

“Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly’ (Psalm 138:6). Those who reveal the meek and lowly spirit of Christ are tenderly regarded by God. They may be looked upon with scorn by the world, but they are of great value in His sight. **Not only the wise, the great, the beneficent, will gain a passport to the heavenly courts; not only the busy worker, full of zeal and restless activity. No; the poor in spirit, who crave the presence of an abiding Christ, the humble in heart, whose highest ambition is to do God’s will—these will gain an abundant entrance.** They will be among that number who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them’ (Revelation 7:15).”⁸

“**The rabbis counted their righteousness a passport to heaven; but Jesus declared it to be insufficient and unworthy.** External ceremonies and a theoretical knowledge of truth constituted Pharisaical righteousness. The rabbis claimed to be holy through their own efforts in keeping the law; but their works had divorced righteousness from religion. While they were punctilious in ritual observances, their lives were immoral and debased. Their so-called righteousness could never

enter the kingdom of heaven."⁹

"Jesus Christ has given Himself as a complete offering in behalf of every fallen son and daughter of Adam. O what humiliation He bore! How He descended, step after step, lower and lower in the path of humiliation, yet He never degraded His soul with one foul blot of sin! All this He suffered, that He might lift you up, cleanse, refine, and ennoble you, and place you as a joint heir with Himself upon His throne. How shall you make your calling and election sure? What is the way of salvation? Christ says, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). However sinful, however guilty you may be, you are called, you are chosen. 'Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you' (James 4:8). Not one will be forced against his will to come to Jesus Christ. The Majesty of heaven, the only-begotten Son of the true and living God, opened the way for you to come to Him, by giving His life as a sacrifice on Calvary's cross. But while He suffered all this for you, He is too pure, He is too just, to behold iniquity. But even this need not keep you away from Him; for He says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance' (Mark 2:17). Let perishing souls come to Him just as they are, without one plea, and plead the atoning blood of Christ, and they will find acceptance with God, who dwelleth in glory between the cherubim above the mercy seat. **The blood of Jesus is a never-failing passport, by which all your petitions may find access to the throne of God.**"¹⁰

"Jesus receives and welcomes you as His own friend. He loves you; He has pledged Himself to open before you all the treasures of His grace for your appropriation. He says, 'At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God' (John 16:26, 27). **He virtually says, Make use of My name, and it will be your passport to the heart of My Father, and to all the riches of His grace.**"¹¹

"Only those who receive the seal of

the living God will have the passport through the gates of the Holy City."¹²

"Will this seal be put upon the impure in mind, the fornicator, the adulterer, the man who covets his neighbor's wife? Let your souls answer the question, Does my character correspond to the qualifications essential that I may receive a passport to the mansions Christ has prepared for those who are fitted for them? Holiness must be inwrought in our character.

"God has shown me that at the very time that the signs of the times are being fulfilled around us, when we hear, as it were, the tread of the hosts of heaven fulfilling their mission, men of intelligence, men in responsible positions, will be putting rotten timbers in their character building—material which is consumable in the day of God, and which will decide them to be unfit to enter the mansions above. They have refused to let go the filthy garments; they have clung to them as if they were of precious value. They will lose heaven and an eternity of bliss on account of them."¹³

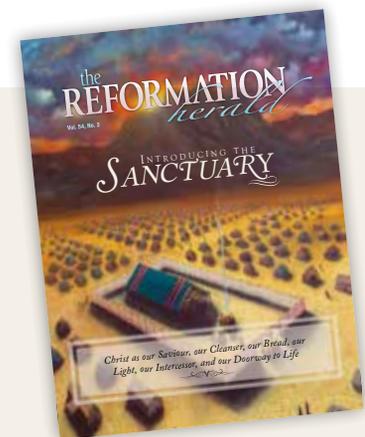
"All self-righteousness must be given up, for we have no righteousness of ourselves. It is the gift of God; therefore we should not be exalted, or buy any means pretentious, for it is an offense to God. What have we that we have not received? Man cannot rely upon himself for anything good or righteous. **Christ, only Christ and His righteousness, will obtain for us a passport into heaven.**"¹⁴

"When God's people are clothed with white robes and crowned as true subjects of His kingdom, those who have been disloyal will see the inconsistency of their uniting with the loyal to honor and magnify the law of God, which they have educated themselves to disregard. They have regarded the law of God as null and void, and should they be trusted to come through the gates into the city? They then find that they have no passport, nothing in them that can change their life sentiments. They have made their choice of false sentiments in the place of truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and they cannot change them. Every man who, by his actions, has declared, I will not

have this Man to reign over me, will no longer have the privilege of being under that rule."¹⁵ *R*

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Botswana

*Brethren, sisters,
and children from
Botswana Mission,
December, 2012.*



Canada

*Brethren, sisters,
and children from
Montreal, Quebec,
August 2013.*

Honduras

*Central American
Union workers'
seminar, September
2013 (bottom).*



Congo, DR

*Kongolo local church
in Tanganyika's
Mission (top)*



*Members and children
of Kalemie's local
church, September
2013 (middle).*

England

*London project
participants, July
2013 (bottom).*



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SOMEONE TO PLEAD FOR US

By B. Montrose

On a bright, sunny day, Johnny was enjoying some free time outdoors after school.

From the living room window, Mother called out: "Johnny, please don't play with that hard ball quite so close to the house."

"Okay," Johnny promised as he walked away toward the quiet dirt road, ready to play "fetch" with his dog.

Suddenly, Johnny's neighborhood friend, Bud, came strolling down the road.

"Hey, John—what do you have there?" Bud asked.

"It's a baseball. Try it!" Johnny was pleased with his new ball and grinned as he tossed it over to Bud.

"This is great!" called Bud, as he threw it back to Johnny with a bit more force.

All of a sudden, CRASH!

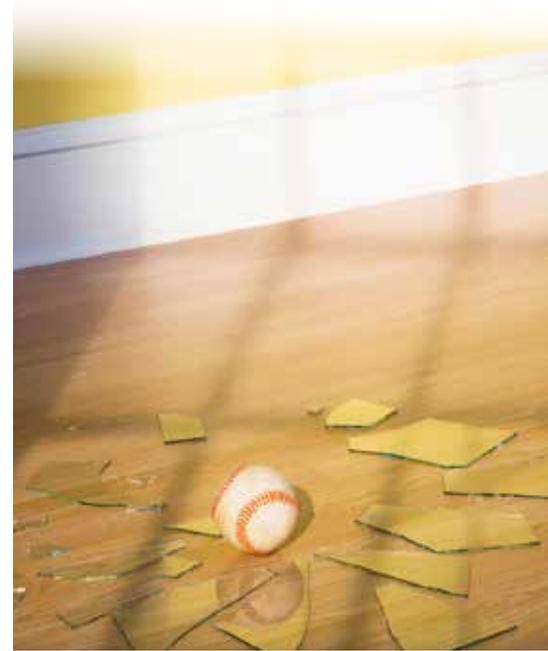
There it was . . . the broken glass from the window, shattered into the house. . . .

At that point, Johnny would have liked to have someone plead for him. Why? He knew he deserved to be punished.

Intercession. What a big word! What does it mean? It means to ask or plead for the benefit of someone else.

Johnny would have liked to have an intercessor to help him escape his punishment. If you were he, wouldn't you want the same?

Have you ever done something



wrong and were afraid of getting into trouble about it? Wouldn't you like someone to help you avoid the punishment that is supposed to come for that wrong action?

The Bible says that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" and "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

If we admit that we have done wrong, Jesus Christ is willing to forgive us. He is able to give us a fresh, new start. And right now He is pleading in heaven for all who desire His intercession.

Jesus doesn't just save part of the way. Actually, "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

What a wonderful Saviour! He's willing to do this full-time for us.

Why not ask for His help right now? *R*

