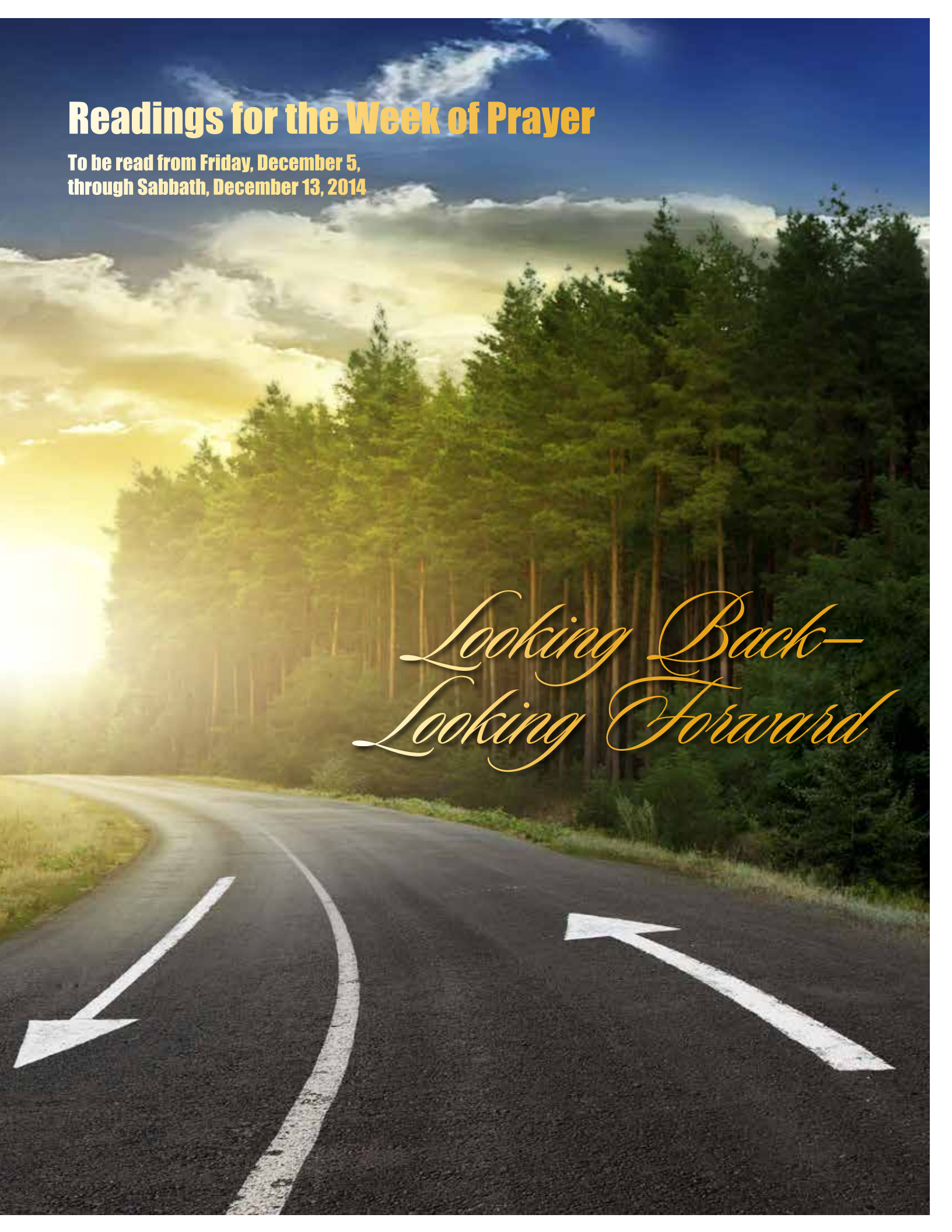


Readings for the Week of Prayer

To be read from Friday, December 5,
through Sabbath, December 13, 2014

*Looking Back—
Looking Forward*



Introduction

As we close the year 2014, this Week of Prayer is the final event of the year commemorating 100 years since the events of World War I propelled the International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, into existence.

While it is true that the war created very difficult situations and God's church faced a serious test, it is equally true that it was not its first test. There were opposing views and strong debates on various issues prior to this, especially in 1888. The Lord used Elders A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner to present the much-needed message of Christ Our Righteousness; but a large proportion of the delegates viewed things differently, leading to opposition and division in thinking and acting. The message of 1888 became a crisis because people thought in different ways and there was a lack of spirituality. In 1914-18, the test came from the outside, but that became a crisis for the same reason as before—because the church was divided and not spiritually prepared to face the emergency. These points and many others have been presented in different ways around the world in this commemorative year. They are also spelled out in the articles to be read this week.

Often people—and especially young people—ask why we talk so much about history. “What matters is now,” they say. But now is the summation of all that has gone before, and that is particularly true in religious matters. If we don't know where God's church has come from, we won't know how to assess where we are today. And if we are unable to assess what is happening today and make necessary corrections, we will never reach the destination. It isn't so difficult to look back and see where others made mistakes; it is much harder to see our own mistakes and even harder to correct them within the culture.

But there are red flags going up that should at least pull us up short and make us take a closer look at ourselves—at how we do things, at how we think, at how we handle the sacred oracles,

and at what decisions we are making. And “we” are the individuals, churches, leaders, and governing committees within the church organization. The leaders are especially accountable—and need to be held to account—as is seen in the events reviewed during this year.

God's people are sheep; Jesus Himself said so. He made people as social beings, so that is not a bad thing. But Jesus also said, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep.” John 10:12-15. Leaders may safely be followed when they follow the Good Shepherd. They should not be followed when they do not.

Events that happened before will happen again. Or, better said, the tests will come around again, only they will look different. Knowing what happened in the past is extremely important, but so is the faithful performance of today's responsibilities. “As each day comes we must in the strength of Jesus meet its trials and temptations. If we fail one day we add to the burdens of the next, and have less strength. We should not cloud the future by our carelessness in the present, but by thoughtful and careful performance of today's duties be preparing to meet the emergencies of tomorrow.” —(*Review and Herald*, February 3, 1885) *Our Father Cares*, p. 130.

How are we facing our daily challenges? What is our spiritual condition? Are we as faithful and determined as were Daniel and his friends in Babylon, or are we compromising with the world and lacking a clear vision of the future? How are we preparing for the upcoming crises? Are we united in one spirit of love, faithfulness, and consecration? Are we making experiences with the

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER

December 5-13, 2014

1. **Prophetic Foundation of the Reformation** 4
Parmenas Shirima
2. **Christ Our Righteousness—Basis of All Reformation** 8
Alfredo Fisicaro
3. **Historical Evidence of the Reform Movement's Existence Since 1914** . 11
Raquel Orce-Sotomayor
4. **The Ten Commandments and Military Service** 14
Francesco Caputo
5. **The Health Reform Message in the Reformation** 17
Roland De La Paz
6. **Pacifism, Nonviolence, and Conscientious Objection** 20
Woonsan Kang/Antonino Di Franca
7. **The Final Triumph of the Third Angel's Message** 23
Idel Suarez, Jr.

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Lord every day? Only if we are engaged in the battles of the Lord will we make spiritual progress, gain victories, and be prepared for the great tests ahead as well as for the greatest event in earth's history.

In Reading 7, Brother Idel Suarez, Jr., tells of a conversation that he had with an Adventist professor on May 15, during the Symposium held by the Seventh-day Adventists in Friedensau concerning the church's actions in World War I. He writes: "During a recess on the last day, an Adventist scholar presented some troubling predictions that, according to the Post-Modern Adventist philosophy, the Sunday law may never come and prophecy may fail. I asked another attending professor, 'Do you also believe at your American Adventist University that the Sunday law may never come?' He replied that the problem was that fourth generation Adventists were having trouble, since the second coming of Christ has not yet occurred."

So, here we are. Now the task is twofold. First, church members, young people, and the whole world need to be warned against becoming like the evil servant who says "in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken." Matthew 24:48. The gospel is about being the light of the world and the salt of the earth. While we wait for Jesus to come and establish His kingdom of peace in the place of a world headed for environmental ruin, filled with violence, and teetering on the brink of chaos, we are to live and teach the principles of holiness and righteousness portrayed in the Scriptures, which are life and blessing.

Secondly, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19. Let us encourage the investigation of the prophetic scriptures by everyone in the light of past and current events, particularly those in Daniel and the Revelation which have received little attention. We have a responsibility to teach the solid hermeneutic principles that give every searching soul the tools needed to put together the pieces of prophecy and to grasp its spiritual significance in the plan of di-

vine providence. To leave out either of these is to mishandle the sacred word.

May these Readings for the Week of Prayer serve to clarify our focus on where we have come from and where we are going. More than ever, we need to take extra special care of what we are supposed to do—whether it is considered small or large—and take our hands off of those things that are God's responsibility, cherishing the experiences He has given us and encouraging everyone in our circle of influence to make his or her own personal experiences with Him.

We urge the leaders and members to be in attendance at your meeting place for every Reading this week, except as

you have the opportunity to go and share the messages and pray with those who would otherwise be alone because of sickness or incapacity. The last day of the Week of Prayer, Sabbath, December 13, will be a day of fasting and prayer all around the world. Also, the annual Week of Prayer offerings, which are so critically important in supporting the General Conference's operations in new fields and dependent countries, will be gathered at the end of the last reading. The needs are particularly urgent, and the means God has given are not only limited, but also threatened.

*—The brothers and sisters
of the General Conference*

"Let none entertain the thought, however, that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study, and many prayers for wisdom that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of.

"In the name of the Lord, I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled. At God's command, 'Go forward,' we advanced when the difficulties to be surmounted made the advance seem impossible. We know how much it has cost to work out God's plans in the past, which has made us as a people what we are. Then let every one be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success.

"You must never, never seek to lift one pin, remove one landmark, that the Lord has given to His people as truth.

"There is to be no change in the features of our work. It is to stand as clear and distinct as prophecy has made it. We are to enter into no confederacy with the world, supposing that by so doing we could do more work.

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. We are now a strong people, if we will put our trust in the Lord; for we are handling the mighty truths of the word of God. We have everything to be thankful for. If we walk in the light as it shines upon us from the living oracles of God, we shall have large responsibilities, corresponding to the great light given us of God. We have many duties to perform, because we have been made the depositaries of sacred truth to be given to the world in all its beauty and glory. We are debtors to God to use every advantage he has entrusted to us to beautify the truth of holiness of character, and to send the message of warning and of comfort, of hope and of love, to those who are in the darkness of error and sin." —*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, February 20, 1899.

Prophetic Foundation of the Reformation

By Parmenas Shirima, Tanzania

The end of 2014 as the Centennial Year of the rise of the Reform Movement among Seventh-day Adventists is a good time to consider more closely the prophetic foundation of God's church. The objective here is to focus on the characteristics of a genuine reform movement. We will mention the fundamental principles of faith that were given to our first parents and succeeding generations. We refer to these principles as "divine institutions," for they were established by God Himself and have a direct bearing on man's spiritual and physical well being.

When God made a covenant with His people, Israel, He entrusted to them His divine principles. Because the Israelites as a nation were repeatedly unfaithful in keeping them and also rejected God's Son, the Messiah, Christ founded His church under the new covenant with people from all nations and languages. Beginning in 1844, the Adventist Church was called as God's remnant church upon the platform of truth. History shows, as prophesied in Revelation 12:17, that Satan waged an intensive war against this church to tempt it to be unfaithful to the divine principles.

Apostasy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church spread rapidly, and God found faithful Seventh-day Adventists to endure the crisis of World War I beginning in 1914 and maintain the purity and sanctity of His remnant church.

There are three basic criteria that characterize God's remnant church:

1. Doctrine: God's people uphold sound doctrine based on the present truth committed to them in the Bible and Spirit of prophecy. Doctrine determines the spirituality and faithfulness of the church to God.

"But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which

they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 595.

"No line of truth that has made the Seventh-day Adventist people what they are is to be weakened. We have the old landmarks of truth, experience, and duty, and we are to stand firmly in defense of our principles, in full view of the world." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 17.

2. Prophecy: The continued existence of God's church is prophesied in the Bible as well as in the Spirit of prophecy. According to Amos 3:7, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."

3. History: The continuous existence of God's church is confirmed by the chain of history, beginning in Eden. From the very beginning, the history of God's people has been marked by obedience and disobedience, apostasy, and separation. Again and again there was a "faithful remnant" that was then God's church in truth, if necessary breaking away and separating, as well as reorganizing when injustice prevailed and there was persistence in error. It was like this in the time of the Reformers in the Middle Ages, as well as with the Advent Movement and also in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the time of World War I. "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." Isaiah 1:9.

What about the frequently encountered idea that God accepts and leads all groups that keep the Sabbath?

"God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God....

"God has a church on earth who are lifting up the downtrodden law, and presenting to the world the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the

world. The church is the depository of the wealth of the riches of the grace of Christ, and through the church eventually will be made manifest the final and full display of the love of God to the world that is to be lightened with its glory." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 58, 50.

Today, as in the time of Ellen G. White, one finds various groups among Adventists:

- 1. Nominal Adventists** were Advent believers who rejected the sanctuary and Sabbath truths. Today this can apply to Adventists as individuals or groups that have given up the landmarks of Adventist truth. See *Early Writings*, p. 261.
- 2. False reformations.** Ellen G. White describes the emergence of false reformations that would not lead to true conversion from error to truth. These false revivals would even be led by supposed Adventists. See *Early Writings*, p. 45.
- 3. Independent groups or loners** that turn against the organization and church order and spread other false teachings. See *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, pp. 258, 259.
- 4. The remnant church** (true reformers). See *Early Writings*, p. 261:

Divine institutions in Eden

In the beginning, God created everything perfect. To guarantee the happiness of His creatures on earth, God created moral institutions which were the foundations of His loving rulership and entrusted them to man. In the succeeding generations, after sin's entrance, those foundations were broken down. According to the prophecy of Isaiah 58:12, God will call a people at the end of time to repair the broken principles: "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shall be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

Commenting on this verse, the Spirit of prophecy speaks about the reformation at the end of time: "God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to cooperate with Him in building up the waste places. They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 678.

We will now consider briefly the institutions God established and gave to man at the beginning.

1. The holy law of God

"The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service....

"Satan represented to the holy pair that they would be gainers by breaking the law of God. Do we not today hear similar reasoning? Many talk of the narrowness of those who obey God's commandments, while they themselves claim to have broader ideas and to enjoy greater liberty. What is this but an echo of the voice from Eden, 'In the day ye eat thereof'—transgress the divine requirement—'ye shall be as gods'?...

"Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 34, 55. Read also: Exodus 20:1-17; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Deuteronomy 11:26-28; 30:19; 20:17, 18.

2. The Sabbath

The wonderful works of creation were not left without a memorial. The psalmist says in Psalm 111:4: "He has made His wonderful works to be remembered...." The Sabbath, therefore, is the Lord's day of rest, which He committed to His people for their keeping and observance for the promotion of their spiritual and physical rest. The Sabbath

is also a sign between God and His people. Read also: Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Isaiah 58:13, 14; Hebrews 4:9-11.

3. Marriage—lifelong bond

"Man was not made to dwell in solitude; he was to be a social being. Without companionship the beautiful scenes and delightful employments of Eden would have failed to yield perfect happiness. Even communion with angels could not have satisfied his desire for sympathy and companionship. There was none of the same nature to love and to be loved.

"God himself gave Adam a companion. He provided 'an help meet for him'—a helper corresponding to him—one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be one with him in love and sympathy....

"God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe." —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 14.

See also: Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:18, 21-23; Matthew 19:3-6; Malachi 2:13-16; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11; Ephesians 5:22-31.

4. Way of life (lifestyle)

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." "And God said, see, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree whose fruit yield seed; to you it shall be for food." Genesis 2:8; 1:29, *New King James Version*.

When the Creator prescribed man's diet in paradise, He gave what is best for human nourishment—plant foods. At creation, He gave man a diet of fruit, nuts, vegetables, and legumes. The herbs of the field were added later. Genesis 3:18.

God created a perfect man. Body, soul, and spirit belong to the Lord. It is His will that mankind rejoice in spiritual, mental, and physical health. That is why He gave the principles of health.

"The health reform is one branch of the work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body." —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 9. Read further: Exodus 15:26; 16:1-4.

"If we move from principle in these things, if we observe strict rules of diet, if as Christians, we educate our tastes after

God's plan, we shall exert an influence which will meet the mind of God." —*Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods*, p. 69.

"Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 127.

"There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people to walk no more with them." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 575; *Maranatha*, p. 62.

5. Peace

The first violence which shed human blood was that of Cain, who killed his innocent brother Abel, and the crime of Lamech followed. Genesis 4:5-10, 23. Since that time, violence and war have multiplied as people and kingdoms rise up against each other and other nations. Matthew 24:6-11.

Anciently the Lord forbade His people to establish alliances with heathen nations. Deuteronomy 7:1-4. Nevertheless, Judah and Ephraim made alliances with Egypt, Syria, and Assyria. 2 Kings 18:21; Isaiah 36:6; 1 Kings 15:17-19; Hosea 12:1-2; 5:13. The Bible refers to such alliances as "fornication" (Revelation 17:2, 4), because they generate compromises and even war. The world today is infatuated by the spirit of politics and war. "In regard to the world, Christians will say, We will not dabble in politics. They will say decidedly, We are pilgrims and strangers; our citizenship is above." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 131.

"I was shown that God's people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing war [American Civil War, 1861-1865], for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 361.

6. Purity of faith

Organizational cooperation of the church of God with other religious communities is one of Satan's strategies for neutralizing the influence of God's church and the present truth. From the very beginning, after the rebellion of Cain, God's people were separate and

distinct from the rebellious ones. Genesis 4:16, 17, 25, 26. When the lines intermingled, violence increased manifold and God had to destroy all of mankind in the flood. Genesis 6:1-3.

Later, when the Israelites were chosen as God's people and church, the same principle of distinctness was applied to them. Exodus 19:3-6; Deuteronomy 7:1-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Revelation 18:1-5.

"The world must not be introduced into the church, and married to the church, forming a bond of unity. Through this means the church will become indeed corrupt, and as stated in Revelation, 'a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.' " —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 265.

7. Tithes and offerings

"The Lord created every tree in Eden pleasant to the eyes and good for food, and He bade Adam and Eve freely enjoy His bounties. But He made one exception. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This tree God reserved as a constant reminder of His ownership of all. Thus He gave them opportunity to demonstrate their faith and trust in Him by their perfect obedience to His requirements.

"So it is with God's claims upon us. He places His treasures in the hands of men, but requires that one tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for His work. He requires this portion to be placed in His treasury. It is to be rendered to Him as His own; it is sacred and is to be used for sacred purposes, for the support of those who carry the message of salvation to all parts of the world. He reserves this portion, that means may ever be flowing into His treasure house and that the light of truth may be carried to those who are nigh and those who are afar off. By faithfully obeying this requirement we acknowledge that all belongs to God." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 386.

Today our loyalty and faithfulness as well as our love for God are shown by our tithes and offerings.

Read also: Genesis 2:16, 17; Deuteronomy 12:6, 11; Malachi 3:8-12; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.

8. Righteousness by faith

"After their sin Adam and Eve were no longer to dwell in Eden. They earnestly entreated that they might remain in the home of their innocence and joy. They confessed that they had forfeited all

right to that happy abode, but pledged themselves for the future to yield strict obedience to God....

"The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 61, 63.

Read further: Genesis 3:15, 21; Isaiah 53:3-7, 11; Jeremiah 23:5, 6; Romans 3:22-26; Ephesians 2:5-8; Titus 2:11-14; Revelation 14:12.

Amazing parallels to Israel's history

When the prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which told of the end time, was fulfilled in October 1844, the Advent Movement was called to life. Later, the Seventh-day Adventist Church arose from this movement as a worldwide organization. To it was entrusted the three angels' messages and the gift of the Spirit of prophecy through Ellen G. White. Sadly, it did not take long for the church to start backsliding, and eventually there was open apostasy. As written in Jeremiah 6:16, the people refused to walk in the old paths; and Revelation 3:14-18 described the people as becoming spiritually lukewarm. The clear testimonies of the Spirit of prophecy warn God's church against leaving the path of righteousness and truth.

"Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to walk in the light that God has given." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 67.

"Like ancient Israel the church has dishonored her God by departing from the light, neglecting her duties, and abusing her high and exalted privilege of being peculiar and holy in character.

Her members have violated their covenant to live for God and Him only. They have joined with the selfish and world-loving. Pride, the love of pleasure, and sin have been cherished, and Christ has departed. His Spirit has been quenched in the church. Satan works side by side with professed Christians; yet they are so destitute of spiritual discernment that they do not detect him." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 441, 442.

"In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced a sentence: 'Found wanting.' By the light bestowed, the opportunity given, will she be judged." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 247.

The Christ Our Righteousness message rejected

Sister White commented in support of the message presented at the 1888 General Conference: "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people.... This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 91, 92.

It is sad that the majority of the delegates at the conference rejected the message. Sister White later wrote, "May the Lord have mercy upon you; for if you

go on in this way, nothing but evil can be prophesied concerning you.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 77.

Calls for reformation unheeded

Many calls for reformation were given from the Bible and through the Spirit of prophecy, but they were not heeded. Here are a few of many lamentations from God’s servant: “We need a thorough reformation in all our churches. The converting power of God must come into the church. Seek the Lord most earnestly, put away your sins, and tarry in Jerusalem till ye be endowed with power from on high.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 443.

“God’s people will not endure the test unless there is a revival and a reformation.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 285.

“Unless there is a decided reformation among the people of God, He will turn His face from them.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 146.

“Men of clear understanding are needed now. God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for His laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed....” –*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 400.

“Who can truthfully say: ‘Our gold is tried in the fire; our garments are unspotted by the world?’ I saw our Instructor pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: ‘Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? “How is the faithful city become an harlot.” My Father’s house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed.’ ” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 250.

A Reformation brought about by God

After many calls for reformation failed, God in His wisdom took a different and unexpected measure to reform His people. He allowed the church to enter the fiercest tests during World War I.

“Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very

much out of the order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 300.

“The reason why He does not oftener choose men of learning and high position to lead out in reform movements is that they trust to their creeds, theories, and theological systems, and feel no need to be taught of God.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 456.

“Soon God’s people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 136.

“Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 17.

“I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God’s call.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 514, 515.

The message of 1888—beginning of the loud cry

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.” (*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892) *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 362.

This was the fulfillment of Revelation 18:1-3: “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

Sister White told how this angel of Revelation 18 would work. Early in the 1850s, she wrote about the test or temptation that the church would pass through: “The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The

work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel’s message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet....

“This message seemed to be an addition to the third message, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel’s message in 1844.” –*Early Writings*, p. 277.

The Reform Movement and continuation of the loud cry

In the above quotations, we recognize a sequence of what will happen. The loud cry message will join the third angel’s message as the midnight cry joined the second angel’s message in 1844. If we analyze this statement, we will note that when the midnight cry joined the second angel’s message in 1844, the Advent Movement, which had grown to over 50,000 in number, was sifted to only about 50 who remained faithful. Could it be that this experience is repeated during the development of the loud cry? We may analyze this further as follows:

1. The message of the loud cry is directed primarily to Seventh-day Adventists but also to the churches in the whole world. About forty years later, in 1892, she qualified her former statement, saying, “The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.” –*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.

2. The loud cry message was intended to prepare God’s people to stand in the test that they were soon to meet in World War I.

3. As already mentioned, Sister White says that the loud cry will continue because apostasy in the churches will increase. When during World War I the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventists officially recommended that their members participate in the war and thus decided to transgress God’s commandments in times of war, a “loud cry” became necessary to warn God’s people in this regard.

The loud cry will come to a close when apostasy from God’s law is at its worst. Consider this statement, “One thing it is certain is soon to be realized—

the great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout." —*Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, p. 57, December 4, 1905.

Therefore, the message given in Minneapolis in 1888 by Elders A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner was just the beginning of the loud cry, but the message could not swell to its full glory because the church was going downward spiritually, as became evident in 1914. With its militaristic attitude and the clear statement of participation in the war, the Seventh-day Adventist Church openly transgressed the fourth and sixth commandments by urging its members to take up weapons and fight, even on the Sabbath day. This decision was never changed up until today. The church thus did not pass the test.

It was reported at that time that 98 percent of the church's members supported the decision of the church leadership, while 2 percent—a faithful remnant—stood firm to the church's original stand in favor of obedience to the commandments of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, in this Week of Prayer, we should be aware of the fact that we as the Reform Movement have a high calling as well as a high responsibility. As individuals and as a church, do we live according to our calling? How do we fulfill our responsibility to Adventists of other organizations and to the world?

To all Adventists and to everyone in all churches today the call is, "Come out of her, My people, that that ye be not partakers of her sins,..." Revelation 18:4. Yet this testimony will be seen in its glorious effect only when we as the Reform Movement reveal God's love to the world. "The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to 'the principalities and powers in heavenly places,' the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9.

May God give us the heavenly understanding and courage to take our place in the proclamation of the three angels' messages and the loud cry to the fallen world. Amen.

Christ Our Righteousness— Basis of All Reformation

By Alfredo Fisicaro, Chile

This subject is the most precious jewel that God has committed to men. It is a privilege to be able to know it, accept it, and live it. It is the center of the plan of redemption as are the three angels' messages. Revelation 14:6-12.

What is righteousness?

The Royal Spanish Academy provides several definitions for the Spanish word *justicia*—translated as "righteousness" in English—including "law, reason, equity"; "that which is done according to right or reason"; attribute of God by which all things are numbered, weighed, or measured. "Ordinarily understood as the divine provision that punishes or rewards as each one deserves."

The word of God tells us that God is the source of righteousness and that Jehovah reveals Himself as righteous: "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee,..." Daniel 9:7. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways,..." Psalm 145:17. But perhaps the most beautiful expression referring to the righteousness embodied in Christ is what is recorded in Hebrews 1:9: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." As Jeremiah presents it: "... And this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jeremiah 23:6.

"I have a Saviour. In Him I trust, and He will never suffer me to be confounded. In His name I triumph. He is my righteousness, and my crown of rejoicing." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 112.

Condition of the church before 1888

In the years before 1888, the condition the church demonstrated by experience can be seen in the messages sent from heaven through the Lord's messenger. She presented the great danger and the

fatal errors into which the church had fallen. Here are a few quotations in chronological order.

1856: "Oh, the pride that was shown me of God's professed people! It has increased every year, until it is now impossible to designate professed advent Sabbath keepers from all the world around them." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 135.

1860: "I was shown the low state of God's people; that God had not departed from them, but that they had departed from Him, and had become lukewarm." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 210.

1865: "The people are overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life. They are entering deeper and deeper into a spirit of worldly enterprise. They are ambitious to get gain. Spirituality and devotion are rare." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 469.

1882: "As Jesus views the state of His professed followers today, He sees base ingratitude, hollow formalism, hypocritical insincerity, pharisaical pride, and apostasy...."

"The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 72, 217.

1887: "What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy! All these sins have clouded the mind, so that eternal things have not been discerned." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 125.

Condition of the church in 1888

The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church held two major events that year in Minneapolis, Minne-

sota, in the north central United States. From October 10 to 16, a Ministerial Institute (Seminar) was held for workers. The General Conference was held from October 17 to November 4 with approximately ninety delegates from around the world.

But before this conference, God sent a very strong message concerning the condition of the sleeping church and its great need of Christ Our Righteousness.

"The facts concerning the real condition of the professed people of God speak more loudly than their profession, and make it evident that some power has cut the cable that anchored them to the Eternal Rock, and that they are drifting away to sea without chart or compass." —*Review and Herald*, July 24, 1888.

It is evident that God was saying directly: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:15, 17.

Divine message

"It is not enough to be familiar with the arguments of the truth alone. You must meet the people through the life that is in Jesus. Your work will be made wholly successful, if Jesus is abiding with you; for He has said, 'Without Me, ye can do nothing.'

"Jesus stands knocking-knocking at the door of your hearts—and yet, for all this, some say continually, 'I cannot find Him.' Why not? He says, 'I stand here knocking. Why do you not open the door, and say, Come in, dear Lord'? I am so glad for these simple directions as to the way to find Jesus. If it were not for them, I should not know how to find Him whose presence I desire so much. Open the door now, and empty the soul-temple of the buyers and sellers, and invite the Lord to come in. Say to Him, 'I will love Thee with all my soul. I will work the works of righteousness. I will obey the law of God.' Then you will feel the peaceful presence of Jesus." —*Review and Herald*, August 28, 1888.

Although the Lord sent messages to the leadership and the church in general through various articles in the *Review*

and *Herald* for many years, and especially in 1887, this message at the General Conference held in Minneapolis in 1888 was much more direct and forceful.

The message presented by these two servants invited the attendees to recognize:

- a) the functions of God's law, such as to reveal sin: "... I had not known sin, but by the law:..." (Romans 7:7) as well as to lead man to Christ: "... For Christ is the end [purpose] of the law..." (Romans 10:4);
- b) that they were sinners: "There is none righteous, no, not one:" "For all have ... come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10, 23), and "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12);
- c) that man cannot obey the divine law by himself;
- d) that therefore he needs to seek perfect imputed righteousness in the person of Christ in "sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3, or "as a human being with a nature like our own sinful one," *Contemporary Jewish Bible*), who lived a perfect life and perfectly fulfilled God's law;
- e) and that that obedience and righteousness achieved throughout His life and culminating in the words, "It is finished" (John 19:30), is the only basis for man's acceptance before God. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family.

All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 91, 92.

"Christ has become our sacrifice and surety. He has become sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Through faith in His name He imputes unto us His righteousness, and it becomes a living principle in our life.... Christ imputes to us His sinless character and presents us to the Father in His own purity." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 302.

The message rejected

Unfortunately only a few of the assembled delegates accepted the heavenly message, such as E.G. White, W. White, and S.N. Haskell. Others rejected the message, such as Uriah Smith, J. Morrison, L.R. Conradi, etc. One substantial group was undecided. During the conference, the Lord's messenger supported the proclamation of the message. Afterward she did this not only with great energy in speaking but also in writing (together with her team) *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, *The Desire of Ages*, and other works.

"Today there are few who are heartily serving God. The most of those who compose our congregations are spiritually dead in trespasses and sins.... The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips—justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ—do not bring forth from them a response of love and gratitude.... They steel their hearts against Him.... If they continue in this state, God will reject them with abhorrence." —*Review and Herald*, April 4, 1893.

Consequences

Concerning the General Conference session held in 1901, she wrote: "What a wonderful work could have been done for the vast company gathered in Battle Creek at the General Conference of 1901, if the leaders of our work

had taken themselves in hand. But the work that all heaven was waiting to do as soon as men prepared the way, was not done; for the leaders closed and bolted the door against the Spirit's entrance. There was a stopping short of entire surrender to God. And hearts that might have been purified from all error were strengthened in wrong doing. The doors were barred against the heavenly current that would have swept away all evil. Men left their sins unconfessed. They built themselves up in wrong doing, and said to the Spirit of God, 'Go Thy way for this time; when I have a more convenient season, I will call for Thee.' " -(Letter, August 5, 1902) *Battle Creek Letters*, pp. 55, 56.

"No more tender calls, no better opportunities, could be given them in order that they might do that which they ought to have done at Minneapolis....

"The time will come when many will be willing to do anything and everything possible in order to have a chance of hearing the call which they rejected at Minneapolis.... Better opportunities will never come, deeper feelings they will not have." -*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 1030, 1031.

"The Spirit of God is departing from many among His people. Many have entered into dark, secret paths, and some will never return. They will continue to stumble to their ruin. They have tempted God, they have rejected light." -*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 90.

"And thou, Capernaum [Seventh-day Adventists, who have had great light], which art exalted unto heaven [in point of privilege], shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." -*Review and Herald*, August 1, 1893.

Basis of all reformation

"The foundation of all enduring reform is the law of God. We are to present in clear, distinct lines the need of obeying this law." -*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 129.

But just as man cannot change himself (Jeremiah 13:23), nor give accept-

able obedience to God through his own strength, it is necessary to accept the perfect righteousness of Christ in place of our failure to be accepted before God and considered His children. Romans 8:1, 16.

" 'Ye cannot serve the Lord,' said Joshua: 'for He is a holy God;... He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.' Before there could be any permanent reformation the people must be led to feel their utter inability in themselves to render obedience to God. They had broken His law, it condemned them as transgressors, and it provided no way of escape. While they trusted in their own strength and righteousness, it was impossible for them to secure the pardon of their sins; they could not meet the claims of God's perfect law, and it was in vain that they pledged themselves to serve God. It was only by faith in Christ that they could secure pardon of sin and receive strength to obey God's law. They must cease to rely upon their own efforts for salvation, they must trust wholly in the merits of the promised Saviour, if they would be accepted of God." -*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 524.

But we cannot go to the other extreme, saying that we cannot keep God's commandments with Christ. "Since 'the law of the Lord is perfect,' every variation from it must be evil. Those who disobey the commandments of God, and teach others to do so, are condemned by Christ. The Saviour's life of obedience maintained the claims of the law; it proved that the law could be kept in humanity, and showed the excellence of character that obedience would develop. All who obey as He did are likewise declaring that the law is 'holy, and just, and good.' Romans 7:12. On the other hand, all who break God's commandments are sustaining Satan's claim that the law is unjust, and cannot be obeyed. Thus they second the deceptions of the great adversary, and cast dishonor upon God. They are the children of the wicked one, who was the first rebel against God's law. To admit them into heaven would again bring in the elements of discord and rebellion, and imperil the well-being of the universe. No man who willfully disregards one principle of the law shall enter the kingdom of heaven." -*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 308, 309.

" 'Till heaven and earth pass,' said Jesus, 'one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' Matthew 5:18. By His own obedience to the law, Christ testified to its immutable character and proved that through His grace it could be perfectly obeyed by every son and daughter of Adam." -*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 49.

Called

The remedy was available to the church: "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Revelation 3:18. This robe is the righteousness of Christ. -*The Adventist Home*, p. 518.

"Our first work is with our own hearts. The true principles of reform should be practiced. The heart must be converted and sanctified else we have no connection with Christ. While our hearts are divided, we shall never, never be fitted for usefulness in this life or for the future life. As intelligent beings, we need to sit down and think whether we are really seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The very best thing we can do is to think soberly and candidly whether we desire to put forth the effort necessary to obtain the Christian hope and secure the Christian's heaven. If through the grace of Christ we decide that we do, the next question is: What is there that I must cut away from my life in order that I shall not stumble?" -(Manuscript 14, February 9, 1898) *This Day with God*, p. 48.

"The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer, doing right because it is right." -*Our Father Cares*, pp. 123, 124.

Collectively and individually we need to learn not to fall into the same mistake made by our brethren in the past.

May God help us to open the doors of our hearts to this message, "because the righteousness of Christ is the white robe of His saints, because we have the blessed hope of the soon coming of our Saviour." -*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 299. Amen!

Historical Evidence of the Reform Movement's Existence since 1914

By Raquel Orce-Sotomayor, Spain/U.S.A.

“... Then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” Matthew 18:16.

We have the holy Scriptures as the immovable foundation of our faith and history; and as the inspired counsel, the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. The Scriptures themselves urge the necessity of referring to testimony to confirm facts, statements, or events. In the search for and identification of evidence related to the existence of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, beginning in 1914, it is essential to consider the available sources of information—historical facts recorded in books, magazines, and newspapers. Valuable elements are found in legal documents, such as registrations and government bulletins and notices. Added to all of this are important personal memoirs, obituaries, and biographies.

The historical references presented in this article are from a previous selection of evidence in available documents. To facilitate understanding and put everything in proper context, the chronological order of events and their immediate consequences are especially considered, particularly in relation to the first week of World War I in Germany.

Precedents

The definitive event that triggered the war was the attack that took the lives of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary) and his wife on June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo (Bosnia); thus a terrible conflict raged between 1914 and 1918 that would later be called World War I. There were many factors that led to this conflict that occurred basically because of the economic and military rivalries among the different

powers of continental Europe and colonialists, the process of militarization going on among them, and the continuing crises that were increasingly difficult to solve without the conflicts and nationalism of the time clashing with the totalitarian and imperialist powers. World War I lasted four years, three months, and fourteen days; but here we will analyze just the first year, 1914, for the purpose of showing the pacifist position and Christianity of a minority of faithful Adventists and the consequences they suffered in refusing military service and participation in the war.

Adventist European Division

The annual *Adventist Yearbook* for 1914 showed the organizational structure of the continents and countries which made up the European Division.¹ Pages 93-125 describe in detail the countries in the geographical regions and the officers making up the European Division organized in 1913 (approximately 52 countries on three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa). The territories covered are Europe; the Russian and Turkish possessions in Asia; Persia, Arabia, and Afghanistan; and parts of Africa, not including Rhodesia, British Central Africa, and the Union of South Africa. The headquarters of the Division were located in Hamburg, Germany, under the presidency of L.R. Conradi,² who was also the vice president of the General Conference for the European Division and a member of the General Conference Plenary Committee. Considering this information is very important, particularly the relevance and extension of the jurisdiction administered by the European Division, which was never limited to the German Unions, nor just to certain countries of Europe, but exceeded national and continental borders.

Sabbath, August 1, 1914

Germany declared war on Russia, starting World War I. In August 1914, the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary) confronted the Allies (Serbia, Belgium, Russia, France, and England).

The declaration mobilizing the German army on that date³ is of great importance in the fact that the military summons of the male population at the beginning of the war resulted in an army of approximately 800,000 men. After publication of the military call-up on August 2, 1914, the army reached the remarkable number of 3,820,000 men.⁴

In a pamphlet, “Wake-up Call to the Last Church,” Ordained Elder A. Stobbe presented clearly what happened among Adventists in the first days of August 1914 and afterward:⁵ “On Sabbath, August 1, [1914,] in many places a unanimous decision was made not to go with Babylon.”⁶

It is very significant to consider that the reaction of the Adventist membership before the communication of Germany's entrance into the war and the military call-up was overwhelming and a complete rejection of cooperation, for they considered participation in the war as “going to Babylon.”

Sunday, August 2, 1914

The second day after the declaration of war, the Secretary of the Adventist European Division, Guy Dail, sent a circular letter from the headquarters to the people containing four points, which are summarized in the following verbatim quotes: “While we are in the military or have to enlist in the military, [we should] carry out our military obligations cheerfully and from the heart.” “In Joshua 6, we see that the children of God made use of weapons of war and also on the Sabbath rendered service in the war.”⁷

This communication sent to all the churches in Germany unleashed actions and reactions: "In our country," wrote Brother Otto Welp, "the confusion and division in the Adventist Church began in 1914, when war broke out. This was the consequence of the error proclaimed by the leading brethren in Hamburg with respect to observance of the Sabbath during the war and our position with respect to military service.... A circular letter of Brother G. Dail [Secretary of the European Division] sent from Hamburg on August 2, 1914, contained a call to participation in military service and the violation of the Sabbath. Our conviction of conscience and that of other sincere brethren was the reason why in many localities a protest arose against the distortion of the holy law and the rejection of the message of the third angel."⁸

Another brother, giving a similar testimony, affirmed: "But when, in the course of the first week of the war, the writing came from Hamburg, the churches were confused, God's holy law was trampled on, and the present truth was put under a bushel."⁹

To this can be added the news of the day: "A division occurred among the Adventist followers after the war broke out. The majority wanted to invalidate the fundamental teachings during the war. The other part, however, desired the sanctification of the Sabbath even during these difficult times. These differences of opinion finally led to the exclusion from the church of the followers of the ancient faith. The position taken toward military service and in general was the cause of the division."¹⁰

The above statements indicate without doubt that the positions taken were what led to the exclusion of those who decided to remain faithful to God and His law always and under all circumstances.

Tuesday, August 4, 1914

Under governmental and military pressure, the President of the East German Union with its headquarters in Berlin, Franz Schubert, proceeded to address a declaration to the Minister of War, the first part of which stated: "Most honorable Lord General and Minister of War: ... In these times of stress, we have bound ourselves together in defense of

the 'Fatherland,' and under these circumstances we will also bear arms on Saturday (Sabbath). On this point we take our stand on the Scripture found in 1 Peter 2:13-17...."¹¹

After the repetition of the official communications sent to the German government on the part of the Adventist leadership in the area, one author observed: "... It is natural to locate the roots and beginnings of the Reform Movement in August 1914,"¹² because decisions had already been made and reactions had already occurred, as an eyewitness, Brother O. Kramer, stated: "Then we realized that this new position of our ministers was the result of the official letter sent to the German government by the German Adventist leaders."¹³

Wednesday to Friday, August 5-7, 1914

"When the war began, the Germany leadership of the Adventist Church presented 'recruitment as the duty of the brethren' in a circular letter and described as 'brave, loyal soldiers those who take up arms' and 'perform military service on the Sabbath.' Of the 15,000 members in the church at that time, a minority did not follow this position. Those who refused military service and recruitment or deserted were disfellowshipped, as were those who supported such objectors...."¹⁴ It is important to consider how they ranked the members, according to their approval or rejection of the position taken by the leaders; namely, brave, loyal soldiers on one side and objectors, deserters, and traitors on the other, the latter being an excluded minority.

Sabbath, August 8, 1914

Relating what happened the following Sabbath, Brother Kramer continues: "The following Sabbath, the church met as usual. Brother Staubert shared the word.... Again he used the same Bible text as the previous Sabbath. But this time he mentioned texts telling us to be obedient to the government, because there is no government that is not ordained by God; that we should submit to the authorities; and that we should not resist, because otherwise we would be resisting God's order; that we have

the legitimate right to participate in the military, since Germany was fighting a defensive war, etc.

"For a moment, the members remained seated, mute and astonished. But then there arose a storm of protest: 'No! No! It is apostasy from the faith. We cannot go to war!'"¹⁵

"... In a circular letter entitled *The European Situation*, Elder C.H. Watson [President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference, 1930-1936] gave the following explanation:

"'There was in Germany and those other countries concerned a minority of our believers who refused to follow the leadership of Conradi and others into combatant participation in the war.

"'These were subjected to much suffering at the hands of their governments because of their stand.

"'In Germany, those who took their stand against Conradi's wicked action in thus committing them to war were treated with great harshness by Conradi and his associates. The resistance of the minority to military service threatened to compromise the whole body of Adventists in the eyes of the German government; and, to avoid this, Conradi had the minority disfellowshipped from the church.

"'Thus the noncombatant minority was forced out of the church in that country, and this separation continued throughout the war years."¹⁶

The official statements continued: "At the beginning of the war, our denomination divided into two parts. While ninety-eight percent of our membership took the position on Bible grounds that it was their conscientious duty to defend the Fatherland with weapons, and that also on the Sabbath, and this united position of the leaders was at once forwarded to the War Department, two percent, however, did not submit themselves to this united resolution and therefore had to be disfellowshipped because of their unchristian conduct...."¹⁷

Considering only these statements among many others, it is important to emphasize the institutional and church rejection that occurred, which brought about the declaration in verifiable legal documents, such as the statutes of the Germany Union of the Missionary Society of December 23, 1919, confirming

that the members began meeting separately and independently as the International Tract Society in 1914, to which they previously belonged and as a consequence incorporated this society in 1914.¹⁸

In an eyewitness report, Brother Otto Welp described the situation at that time in the following manner: "Thus we fulfill the Saviour's words: 'All ye are brethren.' Matthew 23:8. So, beginning in 1914-15, there arose a force of Reform believers. The Spirit and love of God impelled us then, and the testimony of the Faithful Witness was preached to the church of Laodicea. The Spirit of God accompanied us and convinced many souls in Laodicea; and the sincere, faithful souls decided for Christ and the truth of the Reform. They stood with those who were willing to keep the commandments of God in the war and amid difficulties and thus reveal the strong faith which works by the love of God.... The work was conducted under great persecution from 1914 on. Some brothers and sisters were imprisoned; also many brethren died. At the end of the war in 1918, this stopped."¹⁹

The identification of the faithful minority group at the beginning of World War I and throughout with a specific name that confirms the present historical heritage was reconfirmed during the meetings held in Friedensau, Germany, in 1920:

"E. Dörschler: As the International Missionary Society and people, we have elected a spokesperson; namely, myself on this occasion, while Brother Welp answers questions related to Germany."²⁰

At this same meeting, which took place July 21-23, 1920, L.R. Conradi presented a series of questions, and the sixth was related to the name of the organization that represented the minority who preserved the fidelity to the law of God during World War I.

He mentioned the name exactly: "6. Question:... And you are called International Missionary Society of Seventh-day Adventists?"²¹

In the final sessions of the meeting in Friedensau in 1920, the President of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, A.G. Daniells, joins the questioning; his statements allow us to confirm that the representatives of

1920 were members of the same organization registered in 1919, with its origin and name assumed since 1914.

"L.R. Conradi: Your letterheads and documents confirm that you are the denomination that has existed since 1844."

"A.G. Daniells: Do you want to keep this name?"

"E. Dörschler: It will depend on the answers to the questions presented."²²

This brief collection of statements and documentation of the historical proofs for the existence of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, as a result of the position taken in harmony with the ten commandments and the fundamental truths of Scripture and the Spirit of prophecy is really short and selective. Nevertheless it is sufficient to inspire us to unite our voices with the words of Isaiah 43:9: "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth." Amen!

¹ 1914 SDA Yearbook http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/YB/YB1914__B.pdf#view=fit.

² 1914 SDA Yearbook, pp. 93-125. http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/YB/YB1914__B.pdf#view=fit.

³ Mobilmachung, August 1914. Source: BArch PH 6 I / 213.

⁴ https://www.bundesarchiv.de/oeffentlichkeit-sarbeitsbilder_dokumente/00857/index-25.html.de.

⁵ A. Stobbe, *Weckruf für die letzte Gemeinde*.

⁶ W. Egerter, *El Camino de los Adventistas* (2006), p. 218.

⁷ <http://www.adventisten.de/news/news/datum/2014/05/21/auswirkungen-des-ersten-weltkriegs-auf-die-adventisten-in-deutschland-1>.

⁸ Excerpts from the Report of Otto Welp at the International Conference, Würzburg, Germany, November 1921, cf. *Der Sabbat-Wächter*, 1921, Special Edition.

⁹ W. Egerter, *El Camino de los Adventistas* (2006), p. 218, de *Llamado al Despertamiento Para la Última Iglesia* (May 1915), A. Stobbe.

¹⁰ *Kölnische Zeitung*, September 21, 1915.

¹¹ *Reformation Study Course*, Lesson 12, International Missionary Society of the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement, American Union, 1982, <https://www.sda1888.org:9443/cgi/live.cgi/page/ReformationStudyCour>.

¹² Ruttman, H. (2002), *Die adventistische Reformationsbewegung, 1914-2001: Die Internationale Missionsgesellschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten, Reformationsbewegung in Deutschland*. Köln: Teiresias.

¹³ O. Kramer, *Rise and Progress of the Reform Movement*, pp. 5-9.

¹⁴ <http://www.apd.info/index.cgi?j=2002&m=11&r=7&a=0>.

¹⁵ O. Kramer, *Rise and Progress of the Reform Movement*, pp. 5-9.

¹⁶ http://theadventistforum.yourlivecommunity.com/l-r-conradi-and-his-rejection-of-the-sop_topic2909.html.

¹⁷ *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten*, April 12, 1918, p. 3.

¹⁸ Satzungen der Deutschen Union, Internationale Missionsgesellschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten-Alte seit 1844 stehengebliebene Richtung Deutsche Union, December 23, 1919.

¹⁹ O. Welp, *Abfall in Laodizea*, p. 6.

²⁰ Protokoll [Minutes] of the Negotiations with the Opposition Movement from July 21 to 23, 1920, in Friedensau, p. 25.

²¹ Protokoll [Minutes] of the Negotiations with the Opposition Movement from July 21 to 23, 1920, in Friedensau, p. 40.

²² Ibid.

"The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony; but if they have the love of Christ glowing in their hearts, and are looking forward to the same heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful. There are scarcely two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one may not be the trials of another, and our hearts should ever be open to kindly sympathy, and all aglow with the love that Jesus had for all His brethren." –*Gospel Workers*, p. 400.

The Ten Commandments and Military Service

By Francesco Caputo, Italy

Dear brothers and sisters, dear friends, and dear readers, in this Week of Prayer, I would like to share with you a subject that is very important for all of us: The law of God in connection with military service and war. As believers, we have a solid and stable foundation for spiritual growth—the faith of Jesus and unconditional obedience to His Ten Commandments. Revelation 14:12. We also have privileges and responsibilities before God and men.

Wonderful privileges have been granted to us, including God's love expressed in the immeasurable gift of His Son on the cross of Calvary. John 3:16. This undeserved love enables us to love, as the apostle John says in his first epistle: "We love Him, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19. This divine love permits us to love even our enemies; we will return to this point again in this Reading.

Our sacred duties are expressed unequivocally in the letter of the apostle Paul to the Hebrews: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14. When we speak of sanctification, we are referring to wearing the divine nature or, if you prefer, the holy and perfect character of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Followers of the Prince of Peace

In prophecy, He is called "the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:5), and it is quite logical that His followers have the same characteristics, purposes, and virtues as He does. In the sermon on the mount, He spoke of those who are considered "blessed" and said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9.

Today, when bombs are dropped, the consciences of the people are appeased with the assertion that such things are necessary to maintain peace among nations, as if to say that "the end justifies the means." The truth is that bombs are dropped to defend the interests of the few at the expense of

the many. Thousands and thousands of people lose their lives every year on our planet through such things, and the excuse is given that soldiers are sent to those places on a "mission of peace." It is a peace of terror and fear, peace obtained by terrifying miserable people.

I wonder, How can one who calls himself a Christian take up arms—launching bombs, killing his own kind, disabling people for life?

Not included in the census

Every person who accepts Jesus as his personal Saviour and Lord belongs to a special group: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9. The Levites and priests in the Old Testament were not to be involved with ordinary secular matters; they did not participate in war, because they were wholly consecrated to the service of God.

In the book of Numbers, a census was taken of those who were twenty years old and upward and able to go to war. But God's command was to exclude the Levites from this count: "But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them. For the Lord had spoken unto Moses, saying, Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel: But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle." Numbers 1:47-50.

My dear brethren, my dear friends, we know very well that each of us is part of a royal priesthood, therefore we have a sacred duty to instruct the people according to God's law, just as the Levites in the Old Testament did. Therefore, we cannot take part in preparations for war

or go to the battlefield. In such places, under such circumstances, it is impossible to obey God's law.

God's children are to love their enemies

How can one be willing to kill people he has never known—human beings who have never mistreated him? This is contrary to Jesus' instructions: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:43-48.

Anger should not be indulged

In the same chapter, the Master clearly explains the meaning and spiritual depth of the sixth commandment; the precept is broken when one expresses hatred or bad thoughts. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Matthew 5:21, 22.

The Spirit of prophecy writes the following: "The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan, and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkind-

ness is cherishing the same spirit, and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in the seed. 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.' 1 John 3:15." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 56.

If God's law is violated when one does these things, how can we even think of going to war or of giving freedom to our members to participate in such things by following the dictates of their own consciences?

Jesus clearly said: "That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:39. The servant of the Lord writes: "The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour, who surrounds him with His presence. Whatever comes to him comes from Christ. He has no need to resist evil, for Christ is his defense. Nothing can touch him except by our Lord's permission, and 'all things' that are permitted 'work together for good to them that love God.' Romans 8:28." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 71.

No part in carnal conflict

Before his conversion, Saul persecuted the church of Christ unmercifully; that means that he used violence. But when he was converted and became the apostle Paul, his thinking changed completely on this issue, and he wrote: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)." 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4. A Christian has a spiritual armor that protects him from attack, and he does not attack anyone, because he is a servant of the living God, a "Levite" of our day.

Taking the armor of God

A Christian is one who wants to dress according to the Pauline counsel, bearing the "armor of God." A true believer is one who wants to obey just one Leader, the One who guides the angelic courts,

the King of kings and Lord of lords. In the letter to the Ephesians, we are given the following counsel: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Ephesians 6:10-18.

The Saviour was opposed and slandered

Psalm 119 is known as the Psalm which extols the law of God, but it also contains prophetic teachings portraying the life and sufferings of the Messiah because of His loyalty to the divine precepts. The following verse describes the Saviour's suffering: "Consider Mine affliction, and deliver Me: for I do not forget Thy law." "Princes have persecuted Me without a cause: but My heart standeth in awe of Thy word." Psalm 119:153, 161.

The mission and testimony of Jesus on this earth were wonderful; fidelity to the law of God was His daily bread. All this increased Satan's hatred of Him, and he used the power of Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, to persecute the Son of God. The Saviour learned obedience through the things that He suffered, and God's children have been treated that same way for centuries. They also, like their Master, will be sanctified by their trials and difficulties, and their obedience will be obvious to the whole universe.

Seeing what His disciples would suffer in the future, Jesus said: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your

reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matthew 5:12. Sister Ellen G. White, commenting on this verse, writes: "Ever since his fall, Satan has worked by means of deception. As he has misrepresented God, so, through his agents, he misrepresents the children of God. The Saviour says, 'The reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me.' Psalm 69:9. In like manner they fall upon His disciples. There was never one who walked among men more cruelly slandered than the Son of man. He was derided and mocked because of His unswerving obedience to the principles of God's holy law. They hated Him without a cause. Yet He stood calmly before His enemies, declaring that reproach is a part of the Christian's legacy, counseling His followers how to meet the arrows of malice, bidding them not to faint under persecution. While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 31, 32.

His people were opposed, slandered, and disfellowshipped

During World War I (1914-1918), those who were faithful to God's law were opposed, slandered, and finally disfellowshipped from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This can be confirmed from an internal organ of dialogue of the association of Italian university graduates (August 16, 1982, p. 8): "The movement that we call Adventist Reform or Reformists—I will not here enter into the merits of the controversy between it and the official Adventist Movement—is a movement with which I hope we can hold a fraternal dialogue, but it is certain—and this is historically accurate—that the split was produced around the problem of 'military policy' of the Adventist Church; and if I am well informed, the Reform Movement, which has its General Conference in Germany, originated from a controversy during the First World War and because of the rejection, within the official Adventist Church, of those who chose conscientious objection."

During World War II (1939-1945), some brothers were executed by the

Nazis, who were incited by Satan. Other believers were jailed under various totalitarian regimes in different countries around the world, but their testimony was an encouragement to others to be faithful to the principles of heaven.

Not free to depart from God's requirements

The prophecies of Revelation describe a time when there will be persecution of God's church everywhere in the world, and the central point will be His holy law. "No man might buy or sell" unless he bends to the will of political and religious authorities. Revelation 13:15-17. Will we at that time act according to our consciences or according to the consciousness of Jesus within us, in complete adherence to His sacred law?

Concerning the question of conscience, we read: "Were men free to depart from the Lord's requirements and to set up a standard of duty for themselves, there would be a variety of standards to suit different minds and the government would be taken out of the Lord's hands. The will of man would be made supreme, and the high and holy will of God—His purpose of love toward His creatures—would be dishonored, disrespected.

"Whenever men choose their own way, they place themselves in controversy with God. They will have no place in the kingdom of heaven, for they are at war with the very principles of heaven. In disregarding the will of God, they are placing themselves on the side of Satan, the enemy of God and man. Not by one word, not by many words, but by every word that God has spoken, shall man live. We cannot disregard one word, however trifling it may seem to us, and be safe. There is not a commandment of the law that is not for the good and happiness of man, both in this life and in the life to come. In obedience to God's law, man is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil. He who breaks down this divinely erected barrier at one point has destroyed its power to protect him; for he has opened a way by which the enemy can enter to waste and ruin.

"By venturing to disregard the will of God upon one point, our first parents opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. And every individual who follows their example will reap a similar

result. The love of God underlies every precept of His law, and he who departs from the commandment is working his own unhappiness and ruin." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 51, 52.

The battle is very difficult—beyond our own strength—but we are not left to fight it alone. Even if an army should encamp against us, an innumerable host of majestic angels will be with us. We must have the courage and faith of the many reformers of every age who were able to face every difficulty, every danger, due to the fact that they trusted God; their faith did not waver, because they relied fully on God's promises.

My dear brothers and sisters, we do not have much time; our life is short. We must prepare today; today we need to show that we are the remnant people, who defend the principles of heaven. At this time, we have to give the right sound to the trumpet. The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, explained how to live in the church of God: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:15.

On the Lord's side

And, writing to the Romans, he said: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 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. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:31-39.

A special kingdom

My dear brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of a passage spoken by our beloved Saviour and recorded by the "apostle of love": "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence." John 18:36.

It is wonderful to read that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world—especially that it is not similar to the kingdoms of this world. It is the kingdom of love, peace, understanding, health, joy, and harmony, which we will truly understand only when we are in the Father's house. In that kingdom, there is no place for weapons, war, or death, but only supreme life. Who can live in that realm?

Note this important testimony: "The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God's Spirit will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 75.

Live this way, and you will be in the kingdom of heaven!

Dear brothers and sisters, dear young people, dear children, another year has passed, but we still have a little time of grace. Let us live it in full harmony with God and His holy will, because nothing can separate us from Him and His love except sin. Isaiah 59:2. Let us make this week a special time of prayer and consecration; let us renew our covenant with God and overcome every sin through the power of the Holy Spirit so that our unity with Jesus will be perfect and we can hear the beautiful words: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8. This is my desire and prayer for everyone. God bless you and grant you a happy 2015, full of spiritual blessings! Amen.

The Health Reform Message in the Reformation

By Roland De La Paz, Philippines

One hundred years ago, a crisis in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe occurred. It was during the time of war that God's people were tested and the church was severely shaken. When the leaders and members of the Seventh-day Adventists in Europe decided to defend the fatherland in war and bear arms on the Sabbath, the two percent who refused were summarily disfellowshipped. After the war, the leaders of the General Conference visited the European Division offices; and in 1920, during the meeting in Friedensau, Germany, they stated that they had given their members full liberty to follow their individual consciences in such matters. This communication revealed the position of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference and the need for the Reform Movement.

As this year, 2014, has been dedicated to remembering the beginning of the Reform Movement and its development, let us look at the relevant facts which led to its separation from the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

During the meetings of the representatives of the Reform Movement with the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference leaders and the European Division on July 21-23, 1920, in Friedensau, Germany—for the purpose of clarifying positions and possibly restoring the previous Adventist principles of nonviolence—the following questions were asked by the Reform Movement brethren:

- "1. How does the General Conference stand with reference to the position taken by the leaders of Germany in the year 1914 toward the fourth and the sixth commandments?
- "2. What proofs are brought to us that we have not, from the beginning, taken the Biblical path?
- "3. What is the position of the General Conference toward the Testimonies of Sister White? Are they inspired? Yes or No? Is health reform still the right arm of the message?
- "4. Are our message and people, according to Revelation 14:6-12, national or international?"

We notice immediately that one of the main points presented for discussion was health reform, concerning which the Scriptures teach: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 7:1. Ever since those days, up to this present time, matters of health reform have revealed a difference between Seventh-day Adventists and the Reform Movement.

First, let us review the testimonies on this subject, some of which were given before the American Civil War. Early visions on the subject were given to Sister White in 1848, 1854, and 1863, and they were recorded in the *Review and Herald*, November 8, 1870, where James White declares: "It was twenty-two years ago the present autumn, that our minds were called to the injurious effects of tobacco, tea, and coffee, through the testimony of Mrs. White....

"When we had gained a good victory over these things, and when the Lord saw that we were able to bear it, light was given relative to food and dress." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 272.

Important principles revealed in 1854

"I then saw a lack of cleanliness among Sabbath keepers.... I saw that God was purifying unto Himself a peculiar people. He will have a clean and a holy people in whom He can delight. I saw that the camp must be cleansed, or God would pass by and see the uncleanness of Israel and would not go forth with their armies to battle. He would turn from them in displeasure, and our enemies would triumph over us and we be left weak, in shame and disgrace.

"I saw that God would not acknowledge an untidy, unclean person as a Christian. His frown was upon such. Our souls, bodies, and spirits are to be

presented blameless by Jesus to His Father, and unless we are clean in person, and pure, we cannot be presented blameless to God....

Appetite and proper food

"Pride and idols must be laid aside. I saw that rich food was destroying the health of bodies, was ruining constitutions, destroying minds, and was a great waste of means." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 273, 274.

As disease crept into the church, a warning was given: "I saw that many were sickly among the remnant who have made themselves so by indulging their appetites....

"There are some Sabbath keepers who made a god of their bellies. They waste their means in obtaining rich food. Such, I saw, if saved at all, will know what pinching want is unless they deny their appetites and eat to the glory of God. There are but few who eat to the glory of God." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 274, 275.

Sixteen days after the General Conference was organized on May 21, 1863, as the Civil War was raging, Sister White had a major vision on health reform on June 6, 1863, at the house of Aaron Hilliard in Otsego, Michigan. The vision gave significant counsel on clothing and preserving one's strength through proper labor and a cheerful, peaceful frame of mind. It presents our "duty to speak, to come out against intemperance of every kind—intemperance in working, in eating, in drinking, and in drugging—and then point them to God's great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases, for health, for cleanliness, and for a luxury." —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 280.

On December 25, 1865, another vision was given to her in Rochester, New York. As a consequence, she made the following appeal: "I was shown that our Sabbath keeping people have been negligent in acting upon the light which God has given in regard to the health

reform, that there is yet a great work before us, and that as a people we have been too backward to follow in God's opening providence as He has chosen to lead us....

"They have other gods before the Lord. Their taste, their appetite, is their god;... Those who have indulged their depraved appetites at the expense of health are touched, their sin pointed out,... They do not wish to be convinced; and although God's voice should speak directly to them to put away those health-destroying indulgences, some would still cling to the hurtful things which they love. They seem joined to their idols, and God will soon say to His angels: Let them alone...."

Also the call to construct a health institution was declared as she wrote "that Seventh-day Adventists should have a home for the sick where they could be treated for their diseases and also learn how to take care of themselves so as to prevent sickness." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 484-486, 553.

And on December 10, 1871, she emphasized: "I was again shown that the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body. The law of ten commandments has been lightly regarded by man; but the Lord would not come to punish the transgressors of that law without first sending them a message of warning. The third angel proclaims that message. Had men ever been obedient to the law of Ten Commandments, carrying out in their lives the principles of those precepts, the curse of disease now flooding the world would not be." —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 69.

Trying to convey the importance of health reform, she added: "... Transgression of the laws of nature is transgression of the laws of God." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 206.

One important subject for Seventh-day Adventists today is vegetarianism. Sister White, after receiving the vision in 1863, wrote: "But since the Lord presented before me, in June 1863, the subject of meat-eating in relation to health, I have left the use of meat." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4A, p. 153.

In 1868 she wrote: "Yet we do not hesitate to say that flesh meat is not necessary for health or strength...."

"The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating. The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the habitual use of flesh meats. Meat eating deranges the system, beclouds the intellect, and blunts the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to let meat alone." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 63, 64.

Looking back at the experience of ancient Israel as they traveled from Egypt to Canaan, one of their tests was on the point of appetite. "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a *certain rate* every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no."

"And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost, on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna; for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

"This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man, according to his eating, an omer for every man according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack. They gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating, and when the sun waxed hot, it melted." Exodus 16:4, 14-21.

The Israelites were tested on the point of appetite, for, although God gave them "a certain rate," some still gathered more than they needed. Gluttony is a sin. The inspired pen writes: "The word of God places the sin of gluttony in the same catalogue with drunkenness. So offensive was this sin in the sight of God that He gave directions to Moses that a child who would not be restrained on the point of appetite, but

would gorge himself with anything his taste might crave, should be brought by his parents before the rulers of Israel, and should be stoned to death. The condition of the glutton was considered hopeless. He would be of no use to others, and was a curse to himself."

Referring to the present, the messenger of the Lord observes the same tendency: "Gluttony is the prevailing sin of this age. Lustful appetite makes slaves of men and women, and beclouds their intellects and stupefies their moral sensibilities to such a degree that the sacred, elevated truths of God's word are not appreciated. The lower propensities have ruled men and women." —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 133, 32.

Here it is good to note that the manna melted when the sun got hot. This shows that God is a God of order. He wants man to follow His directions precisely for his own good. The Israelites needed to wake up early, gather their food, prepare it, and then eat it at a regular time.

The instructions for the preparation day were also definite. "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that today; for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord. Today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." Exodus 16:22-26.

The same principle applies now. On Friday, we to prepare everything for the Sabbath—our minds, clothing, and food—so that when the holy day begins, everything will be ready and our minds will be centered on heavenly things. Let professed Sabbath keepers today not follow their own desires, for the heavenly instruction is: "The Lord is no less particular now in regard to His Sabbath, than when He gave the foregoing special directions to the children of Israel. He required them to bake that which they

would bake, and seethe that which they would seethe, on the sixth day, preparatory to the rest of the Sabbath. Those who neglect to prepare for the Sabbath on the sixth day, and who cook food upon the Sabbath, violate the fourth commandment, and are transgressors of God's law. All who are really anxious to observe the Sabbath according to the commandment will not cook any food upon the Sabbath. They will, in the fear of that God who gave His law from Sinai, deny themselves, and eat food prepared upon the sixth day, even if it is not so palatable. God forbade the children of Israel's baking and boiling upon the Sabbath. That prohibition should be regarded by every Sabbath-keeper, as a solemn injunction from Jehovah to them. The Lord would guard His people from indulging in gluttony upon the Sabbath, which He has set apart for sacred meditation and worship." —*Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 225, 226.

The faithful children of God will heed these instructions, knowing that "Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 53.

Let us remember that "Sins of the greatest magnitude are committed through the indulgence of perverted appetite." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 30.

"Self-denial is considered by some to be real suffering. Depraved appetites are indulged. And a restraint upon the unhealthy appetites would lead even many professed Christians to now start back, as though actual starvation would be the consequence of a plain diet. And, like the children of Israel, they would prefer slavery, diseased bodies, and even death, rather than to be deprived of the flesh pots. Bread and water is all that is promised to the remnant in the time of trouble." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 129.

Let us thank God for health reform, for "The light God has given on health reform is for our salvation and the salvation of the world." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 446.

Healthful clothing

Appropriate clothing is a blessing of God to His people. He patterned the garments of the Israelites to differentiate them from other nations and iden-

tify them as His special people. A blue ribbon and fringes were two distinguishing features of their garments. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: That ye may remember, and do all My commandments, and be holy unto your God." Numbers 15:38-40.

For Christians, the following recommendation should be a permanent guideline: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." 1 Timothy 2:9.

Emphasizing what is revealed in the inspired word, the Spirit of prophecy adds: "Our words, our actions, and our dress are daily, living preachers, gathering with Christ or scattering abroad. This is no trivial matter to be passed off with a jest....

"We would not by any means encourage carelessness in dress. Let the attire be appropriate and becoming."

In other serious quotations, Sister White writes: "All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. If there is a continuance, in face of warnings and appeals and entreaties, to still follow the perverse will, it may be regarded as proof that the heart is in no way assimilated to Christ. Self, and only self, is the object of adoration, and one such professed Christian will lead many away from God.

"There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith. We must arise at once and close the door against the allurements of fashion. Unless we do this, our churches will become demoralized." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 641, 642, 647, 648.

According to the word of God, a clear distinction should exist between the ways men and women dress. "The woman shall not wear that which per-

taineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deuteronomy 22:5. "God designed that there should be a plain distinction between the dress of men and women, and has considered the matter of sufficient importance to give explicit directions in regard to it; for the same dress worn by both sexes would cause confusion and great increase in crime." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 460.

"In this style of dress God's order has been reversed, and His special direction disregarded. 'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.' Deuteronomy 22:5." —*Review and Herald*, February 6, 1900, Art. B, par. 8; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 459, 460.

"So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty and purity." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 96.

"In dress, as in all things else, it is our privilege to honor our Creator. He desires our clothing to be not only neat and healthful, but appropriate and becoming.... Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty and purity." —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 243.

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

A natural, healthful hair style

The New Testament presents the position of the Christian church regarding hairstyle. In 1 Corinthians 11:14, 15 we read: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." Also, regarding the color of one's hair, it is wise, honoring to the Lord who made us, and a blessing to our spiritual well being to avoid chemicals and have the color of one's hair remain natural.

In ancient times, there was a temptation to worship and serve the idols that men made with their own hands, despite the sacred prohibitions for the people's blessing. Such idol worship was forbidden not only at that time but also today. Furthermore, idolatry is not confined to the worship of statues and images; the modern form can be seen in following fashion, indulging oneself by eating unhealthful foods and substances, and accepting the world's ideas and practices. May the Lord preserve His people from every form of modern idolatry.

The following inspired counsel shows the high ideal and holy principles that God has for His people. "We need to understand that God is in the health-reform movement. When we put Christ in it, it is right for us to grasp every probability and possibility." —*Counsels on Health*, p. 495.

"All men are weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and God would have all realize this fact." —*Our High Calling*, p. 139. May God help us to live according to the light He has given us, working in every possible way to maintain the strength of body, mind, and spirit by eating, drinking, and clothing ourselves for God's honor and our blessing. Amen.

"If Christ is abiding in the heart, He will be in all our thoughts. Our deepest thoughts will be of Him, His love, His purity. He will fill all the chambers of the mind. Our affections will center about Jesus. All our hopes and expectations will be associated with Him. To live the life we now live by faith in the Son of God, looking forward to and loving His appearing, will be the soul's highest joy. He will be the crown of our rejoicing." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 163.

Pacifism, Nonviolence, and Conscientious Objection

By Woonsan Kang, South Korea/U.S.A., and Antonino Di Franca, Italy

Norman Cousins, a famous journalist in the U.S.A., insisted in his column in 1953 that there were 14,500 wars on earth from B.C. 3600 to A.D. 1950, and approximately 3.5 billion people died by the direct and indirect impact of wars. These wars and conflicts continue today.

How does the believer act amid this dreadful spiral of violence? How do God's people respond when even and especially governments order their citizens to take up arms and go to battle? Must we adapt and surrender to their demands, or is it our duty to respond with conscientious objection to war, based on the principle of nonviolence and pacifism? What did our Lord teach, and what example did He give?

God's people will not take up weapons

The Bible clearly teaches that Christians should not participate in war. Zechariah affirms that the Messiah "will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken." Zechariah 9:10, *New International Version*. "Ephraim" and "Jerusalem" here represent the people of God, in whose hands no instruments of violence will be found, because Jesus in His teaching and example removed them. Referring to the gospel dispensation, prophecy declares that "in the latter days" when "many peoples shall come" to the Lord, believers of one nation will "not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2:1-4, *English Standard Version*; see also Micah 4:1-3. The latter days when many people will come to the Lord cannot be any other than the present day, therefore it is today when we must learn no more to "lift up sword," or to "learn war anymore."

Jesus' example and blessing for the peacemakers

If we desire to have peace, we are urged to imitate the gentleness and humility

of Jesus, who said: "... Learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:29, *New International Version (NIV)*. We are called to follow the One who sacrificed Himself on the cross: "Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me." Luke 9:23, *NIV*.

Jesus' promise is: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9, *NIV*. This does not mean just to wish or to have peace in the face of evil, but to act as peacemakers when there is conflict: "Strive for peace with everyone" (Hebrews 12:14, *English Standard Version*), is the appeal of the Scriptures. If we strive for peace, it is not possible for us to participate in war.

Avoid even anger

Another divine teaching of Jesus is: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council,..." Matthew 5:21, 22, *Revised Standard Version*. Sometimes we think that anger is a very small thing, but avoiding anger is more important than we think. Thus, according to Jesus, not just killing, but even anger, the underlying emotion that produces such a crime, is forbidden, for it will have serious consequences.

Christian conscientious objection

Christian "conscientious objection" in reference to military service is the position that refuses to perform military service, based on specific Biblical principles. Romans 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:15, 22. The position is strictly connected to "nonviolence," which includes abstaining from all violent methods or means that injure others and is based on the

teaching of the Lord Jesus as reported in the gospels, from which the term “non-resistance” comes. Matthew 5:39. “Non-violence” and “conscientious objection” are related to “pacifism,” the principle of non-participation in war (1 Corinthians 10:3, 4), even in self-defense. Biblical pacifism is based on the high value of human life (Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:21, 22) and on the blessing pronounced by Jesus on the peacemakers. Matthew 5:9. In addition, pacifism is the natural outgrowth of the principle that God is the Giver of life, and hence He alone can take it. As Christians, we believe that human beings should not oppose God’s work and may not turn off the flame that He turned on. These same principles were held by the early Christians.

The apostles and early Christians

When He was on earth, what did Jesus teach about the approaching conflict? He said the believers were to “flee”—to “depart” from the place of conflict. Luke 21:21. What did the Christians of the apostolic time do during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70? A Jewish historian wrote that the Christians “left Jerusalem.” They fled to a city “beyond the Jordan.”¹ During the second Jewish war, A.D. 132-135, the Christians kept away from the army and fighting, and for their nonviolent position they suffered the attacks and mistreatment of Bar-Kosiba, a false messiah. Concerning the position of the Christians against military service and bearing arms during the second and third centuries, the testimony of the martyr Maximilian shows the principled position they maintained. To the inquiring officer he answered: “*Christianus sum, non possum militare*”—“I am a Christian; I cannot serve in the military.”²

The position of the Adventist pioneers toward war and military service

The first time Adventists had to face a conflict relating to military service was during the Civil War in North America (1861-1865). During the first two years, 1861-1863, there was no draft, and the army was composed solely of volunteers, so Adventists did not participate in the war.

“The attention of many”—wrote Ellen White—“was turned to Sabbathkeepers because they manifested no greater

interest in the war and did not volunteer.”³

As the possibility of a draft loomed, there was a risk of “imprisonment, torture, or death” for refusing to obey the law. Adventists then stated that they could not “conscientiously engage in this war,” and Sister White affirmed this after having received a vision.

“I was shown that God’s people, who are His peculiar treasure, *cannot engage* in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they *cannot obey* the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a *continual violation of conscience*.... Those who love God’s commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man?”⁴

The Reform Movement’s position

The Advent Movement was called by the Lord to herald the second coming of Jesus and to restore the commandment that the powers of darkness have attempted to change (Daniel 7:25), the command to keep holy the Sabbath day. From the early years of the Movement’s existence, it was distinguished as defending God’s holy law—all Ten Commandments. As the believers preached the message, the pioneers saw God’s hand guiding them, showing that they were carrying the light; therefore they trusted that the Lord would guide them through the storm of the war as well. Because pacifism had been their message in time of peace, it was obvious to them that the Lord expected them to live what they had preached—to be faithful as supporters, restorers, and defenders of God’s law also in time of war.

Therefore, what were they to do when World War I broke out? There is only one answer: Steadfastly, faithfully respect by faith and with all their hearts the holy will of God as they had preached it to others in times of peace. In various countries involved in war, this principle was followed by a number of faithful brethren, a minority who were unwilling to yield and surrender to the demands of the European governments when military-age men were drafted for military service from 1914 to 1918. The gospel pronounces blessed (Mat-

thew 5:5, 9) the “meek” and the “peacemakers,” not those who obey the state when it requires one to compromise his faithfulness to God’s law. Those brethren refused to violate God’s holy law by surrendering to the state and stood up against the majority of the church leaders and members who insisted that all must comply with the demands of the circumstances as they perceived them.

The beginning of the Reform Movement

The German brethren who defended firmness to principle and expected faithfulness on the part of the church began to raise their voices as soon as the emergency arose; the testimonies of eyewitnesses tell what happened in August 1914, right after the circular of August 2 reached the churches.

According to Brother Otto Welp: “In our country [Germany], confusion and division in the Adventist Church began in 1914 when the war broke out. This was the consequence of the error proclaimed from Hamburg by our leading brethren in the matter of Sabbath keeping during the war and our position toward military service.

“A circular letter by Brother G. Dail [secretary of the European Division], dated August 2, 1914, sent out from Hamburg, [Germany], contained an appeal for participation in the military and for Sabbath breaking. Our conscientious conviction as well as that of other sincere brethren was the cause that provoked a protest in many places against the distortion of the holy law and rejection of the third angel’s message.”⁵

Another brother who was present on the following Sabbath in the church of Bremen when the officiating minister announced the combatant position, adds: “For a moment, the members sat there speechless and dumbfounded. Then a storm of protest arose—‘No! No! This is wrong; this is apostasy from the faith. We cannot go into war!’ It was total confusion and a clash of opinions—no one can imagine what it was like.”⁶

In October 1914, the writer of the circular letter mentioned the disagreement that had been generated by it, but he still defended his position: “This position of the Hamburg church, I drew up, had it printed, and sent it out to our brethren. Most of the churches were sat-

ified with it, and yet some felt that we had done wrong—that it would be better for all the hundreds and perhaps thousands of our brethren in the armies of Europe simply to decline to carry arms at all, and especially to decline to do any service on the Sabbath, even though they might be shot.”⁷

Not so the leader of the Scandinavian Union. Writing to the author of the circular, he expressed his dismay, fearing that this had “started a discussion which threatens to divide our whole denomination.”⁸

Thus, in 1914 in Germany the membership was divided into two. The majority was in favor of the church’s involvement in war, and the minority was absolutely against it!

Tension, discussion, and disfellowshipment

The first weeks after receiving the circular letter, there were intense discussions in some churches, revealing strong contrasts between the few who defended the position of nonviolence and the majority who were inclined to give in to the demands of the authorities. The situation varied from place to place, and in some churches the tension escalated quickly. It did not take long for people to make a decision, and those who did not agree with the majority had to bear the consequences and were disfellowshipped.

As the confrontations continued, disfellowshipments seem to have been very prevalent in Germany and other countries. Members were disfellowshipped from churches like Bremen, Bremen Neustadt, Essen, and Stuttgart. In other places, such as Coblenz, Wermelskirchen, and Kray, in the Rhineland, entire churches were dissolved.

Persecution and martyrdom

Some brethren were drafted and stood faithful in honoring the Sabbath and heeding the sixth commandment. Included were Brothers Wilhelm Richter, Hollman, Geselle, Julius Wolz, Johannes Rauser, and initially Crestfallen. Two brethren whom Brother Richter knew died in the army as the result of torture.⁹ It is reported that fifty brethren who answered the draft and refused to take up arms or work on the Sabbath were repeatedly punished, beaten, tortured,

and sent from one prison to another. But, no matter what happened, they remained faithful to the glory of the Lord. About twenty of them lost their lives as martyrs, including Eugene Geselle.¹⁰ Of these faithful ones it can be said that, through their faith, even though they died, they still speak to us.

It is told that five others survived the incarceration and beatings; but their health was severely affected, and they died after being released. With their life and death they left behind a testimony of faithfulness for us all. Of those who were drafted, about twenty five survived the cruelties; one of them was Brother Richter, who afterward told his experiences and praised God for the way He helped him.

Activities and progress

In Germany, a historical meeting took place in July 1915 in Wermelskirchen, Rhineland, where about one hundred believers were present. There the brethren expressed their firm faith and found that the message had united them in spirit and principle. Another meeting came about in Gelsenkirchen, Rhineland, in December 1915, where about two hundred fifty people were present.

Brother Otto Welp testifies that in the early years special power radiated out from the believers of the Reform Movement. The Holy Spirit and the love of God gave them power to witness to simple people as well as to leaders and government officials. The brethren received power from Heaven to be faithful despite threats, torture, and death. Now, a century later, although their names and deeds are not known, their testimony inspires our minds and hearts.

The Spirit of the Lord urged the faithful believers to give testimony of their faith. They presented the message of the Faithful and True Witness to former Adventist brethren. Souls were convinced, and sincere people took their stand for the Lord, supporting the message and work of the early Reform Movement. New believers also were ready to stand for the Lord and fought the fight of faith beside those who, even amid such a terrible storm, wanted above all to be faithful to the commandments of God and live according to the faith and love of Jesus.¹¹

All during the years of World War I, the heavenly message advanced under great sacrifice and persecution; and

in 1916, in Germany alone, there were more than a thousand believers.

They loved the Adventist Church and their former brethren, but they would not compromise Heaven’s principles. They sought for unity with their former church on the basis of spiritual harmony—one belief and one faith—but they found this impossible at the local church or conference level. The fact that a good number of Reform Movement representatives were present at the Friedensau meetings in 1920—almost a century ago—showed how great their interest was in defending the divine inheritance that the Lord entrusted to the Advent Movement. They were also willing and eager to present the message of nonviolence and pacifism to the assembled delegates at the next General Conference session in 1922. These were their last chances. Unfortunately, they were not permitted to make a presentation. Can it be said that the Adventist Church has made progress since that time on these fundamental truths?

Today, one hundred years after the crisis that saw faithful people cast out of the church, we stand here to ask the leaders and members of the Adventist Church to reconsider their position regarding nonviolence and pacifism in the light of the gospel and the experiences of the church’s pioneers. Our greatest desire is to uplift the word of the Lord so that His name will be honored. May His faithful people be blessed everywhere in the world and be prepared for His soon return. John 17:17; Ephesians 4:5; Isaiah 25:9. Amen!

¹ Heinrich Graetz, *Histoire des Juifs*, University of Michigan Library, 1882, vol. 2, p. 358.

² *Acta Maximiliani* in Thierry Ruinart, *Acta sincera martyrum*, Ratisbonae, 1859, p. 340ff; *Acti dei martiri*, tr. Giuliana Caldarelli, Edizioni Paoline, Milano 1985, p. 603. See also Adolf Harnack, *Militia Christi*, Fortress Press, 1981.

³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 356.

⁴ *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 361, 362, statement published in January 1863, emphases added.

⁵ Otto Welp, report given at the international conference of 1921 in Würzburg, Germany, *Der Sabbat-Wächter*, 1921, special edition, p. 5.

⁶ Oscar Kramer, *Rise and Progress of the Reform Movement*, Religious Liberty Publishing Association, Denver, Colorado, 1987, p. 6.

⁷ Letter of Guy Dail to O.A. Tait, October 6, 1914, p. 2, *Excerpts from the Letters of Elder Guy Dail*, p. 4, available at <http://drc.whiteestate.org/files/301.pdf>, accessed December 5, 2013.

(Continued on page 23)

The Final Triumph of the Third Angel's Message

By Idel Suarez, Jr., U.S.A.

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place." 2 Corinthians 2:14.

Liberation of Auschwitz

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau, two Nazi concentration camps in Poland. Hundreds of thousands of people were starved, gassed, shot, or hanged at this place because they were considered asocial elements in Hitler's Third Reich. Evil medical experiments were performed on pregnant women and children. I saw the undeniable evidence at the camp. There was one room full of human hair used to make fabric. There was another room containing suitcases with names written on them. These had been brought by the prisoners, who thought they were just being moved from one ghetto to another. Another room was full of women's shoes—thousands of them. The room that struck me the most contained children's shoes. There were so many little shoes of innocent children who perished like the infants and toddlers in Bethlehem because of King Herod's jealousy, evil surmising, and rage.

I passed through the gates with the infamous writing overhead in German: *Arbeit macht frei* (Work makes free). I saw

the bunkers where people were forced to sleep crowded and nearly naked on wooden planks during brutally cold winters. I stood at the "death wall" where Jews, Roma, Poles, Soviets, and perhaps some believers in the third angel's message were shot by a firing squad. Down in the basement of one of the block buildings, prisoners were locked up in solitary confinement without sunlight or food and left to perish as did John the Baptist at the command of another Herod, the tetrarch known as Antipas who governed Perea and Galilee.

It was not just the Jews and other asocial elements who were prisoners at Auschwitz. The Nazi guards were themselves imprisoned as they cooperated in inflicting horrible suffering on others. They were slaves to their ideas of narcissism, brutality, and self-deception. It was a living hell for all.

Victor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist who survived the concentration camp at Auschwitz, writes that the most physically fit were not the ones who survived; those who were emotionally fit endured. Only those who held on to their loved ones in their memories and hopes endured the torture and overcame.¹

The Bible maintains that only two elements can overcome the world. One is love, and the other is faith. The apostle Paul agrees with Frankl that love can overcome the world. The apostle John adds that faith overcomes the world and its worldly traps and entanglements.

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh

the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Romans 8:36-39; 1 John 5:4, 5.

When the Allies finally arrived to liberate the remaining prisoners at Auschwitz, some prisoners were unable to savor their newly gained liberty. They were too weak to eat and live on. They had lost the hope to live; and when hope arrived, it was too late.

The prophet Jeremiah shares his reflections about the final day of liberation when Jesus returns to take His saints from this earthly Auschwitz to the heavenly land of freedom. Many will not be saved. Many will not be able to overcome their hurt. Their spiritual health will not recover. Why? They will not be saved, because they did not gather a spiritual harvest in the summer so they would be prepared for the long winter of suffering and persecution in the midst of evil.

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" Jeremiah 8:20-22.

Do you have that love and faith of Jesus that makes it possible to endure through suffering, failure, and even death? If such a time of suffering were to be repeated in your lifetime, would you be able to withstand the vials of evil as did Paul and John in their day through love and faith?

The slide to Auschwitz

In 1977, C. Everett Koop, M.D., the celebrated Surgeon General of the United States during the presidency of Ronald Reagan, wrote an article and gave a talk titled "The Slide to Auschwitz."² He compared the United States to Germany in the late 1930s. Both nations were technologically advanced. Both nations

(Continued from page 22)

⁸ Letter of Guy Dail to a "Dear Brother," November 13, 1914, *Excerpts from the Letters of Elder Guy Dail*, p. 4, available at <http://drc.whiteestate.org/files/301.pdf>, accessed December 5, 2013.

⁹ *The Truth about the Reform Movement in the Adventist Church*, International Missionary Society, S.D.A. Reform Movement, Kalamazoo, MI, pp. 24-28.

¹⁰ *Der Sabbat-Wächter*, Year 1 [1920], No. 2, p. 33.

¹¹ For other historical information and experiences of the origin we recommend among others: Antonino Di Franca, *Los orígenes del Movimiento de Reforma*, and Oscar Kramer, *Rise and Progress of the Reform Movement*, both by International Missionary Society, Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Reform Movement, General Conference Publishing Department.

had numerous universities and philosophers. Both nations were professedly Christian. Both had strong and powerful militaries. Both were following the same economic and political path. The Germans advocated abortion. They made war on the unborn. Then they made war on the terminally ill and supported euthanasia—mercy killing of sick adults. Then it was natural to do the same to the mentally deprived or handicapped. These people were murdered because they did not think like other people. Then the society made war on the asocial elements—people who were considered different, such as the Jews, the Roma or gypsies, and the Jehovah's Witnesses. They also sent to the gas chamber other ethnic groups, such as the Polish and Soviets. Dr. Koop makes the comment that if it happened in Germany in the 1930s without physicians protesting, it can also happen in America today. Ironically, religious leaders were swept onto the propaganda bandwagon of the Third Reich, which was promised to be a third millennium of rule and peace. What composed the first two? Pagan Rome ruled for 1,000 years, and Papal Rome ruled for 1,000 years. Why not Germany? Why not America? Does not the Bible foretell a millennial kingdom? How could it be that millions remained silent before so many atrocities? How could it be that nominal Axis-power and conquered churches espoused the Nazi regime with pride?

For example, a worker living in Nazi-occupied Holland, remarked: "The only thing they [Jews] are still allowed to do is breathe. Now more have been rounded up.... And we Dutch are just accepting it."³

Visiting a holocaust museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, I read the following statement attributed to Martin Niemöller which reflects the mindset of many millions during the Nazi era across most of occupied Europe. "First, they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Socialist. Then, they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then, they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then, they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."⁴

Silence is consent. Ezekiel wrote not only to his generation of believers in

Babylonian captivity, but also to the final generation of spiritual Israel amid spiritual Babylon. He called on all to regard their responsibility before God as spiritual watchmen over God's present truth. If we do not protest, if we do not share the message of life, we become partakers of the sins, atrocities, and wicked deeds committed by others. If we do not speak to allow the Spirit to take people from darkness to light, then we who remain silent will be converted to them in darkness. Complacency, apathy, and procrastination are immoral steps on the path that slides toward Auschwitz.

"So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." Ezekiel 33:7-9.

Watchman, are you watching over your own soul? Are you your brother's keeper? Do you not see the final struggle and final triumph in sight?

Recollections from Friedensau

After nearly 100 years, members of the Reform Movement, unlike the Reform pioneers in 1920, were allowed to present their stand on pacifism at a Symposium at Friedensau Adventist University on May 14, 2014. Two lectures based on the Bible, Spirit of prophecy, and irrefutable evidence from the Civil War and the Great War were presented by myself and Brother Woonsan Kang to an Adventist audience that included scholars, students, and laypersons. Questions were answered in the spirit of Christ. We stated that Reformers do not consider themselves better or holier than others, yet we strive to live according to the teachings of the Lamb of God.

During a recess on the last day, an Adventist scholar presented some troubling predictions that, according to the Post-Modern Adventist philosophy, the Sunday law may never come and prophecy may fail. I asked another attending professor, "Do you also believe at your American Adventist University

that the Sunday law may never come?" He replied that the problem was that fourth generation Adventists were having trouble, since the second coming of Christ has not yet occurred.

How many believers in the third angel's message are also having trouble grasping the fact that about 170 years after 1844—longer than the 120 years of Noah's preaching—Jesus has not yet returned? Peter also met Christians and unbelievers in his day who doubted that Christ would return. He wrote: "... Beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:1-6, 9, 10.

Although there are more reasons that could be cited, the apostle Peter cites three evidences for the coming of Christ. First, we have the messages of the prophets and the promises of Jesus Himself that the event of His return will happen. Second, to demonstrate that "all things" don't ever "continue" in the same way, we have the testimony of the flood record with its fossils showing the death of millions of creatures, as well as the flood stories which abound among aborigines and different cultures around the world. Just as God put an end to the wickedness of the ancient world with a worldwide flood, so He will set a limit to this planet and then create a new

one with a new holy race. And, third, God is longsuffering, as attested to by thousands of believers throughout history. He has providentially waited and intervened according to His own clock and timing, which is beyond human reckoning. God waits as sinners become saints. This is the greatest argument for Christianity. Sinners do change by grace and by the working of the Spirit, which scoffers cannot deny. Every conversion is a testimony of God's longsuffering and His desire that all men be saved if they are so willed.

"The mercy of God is shown by His long forbearance. He is holding back His judgments, waiting for the message of warning to be sounded to all. There are many who have not yet heard the testing truths for this time. The last call of mercy is to be given more fully to our world. The word of God portrays the wickedness and corruption that will exist in the world in the last days. As we see the fulfillment of prophecy, our faith in the final triumph of Christ's kingdom should be increased."⁵

Perhaps Jesus has delayed His coming and the event so long expected because He is waiting for you to change your mind, heart, and spirit by His saving grace. Will you hearken to the voice of mercy before it ceases and the angel flies down to close the door of grace?

The Great War and fallen heroes

Considering the buildup of armies before World War I, some individuals had premonitions that it was impending. Writers and religious leaders saw the onset of a terrible struggle emerging between the royal houses of Europe. There was a significant increase in weaponry and colonialist sentiments. The terrible conflict brought an end to the old world order of warfare. Aircraft, tanks, machine guns, submarines, chemical warfare, and other technological killing methods were conceived during World War I. They were fast, effective, and lethal in producing mass murder of both military personnel and innocent civilians. Ironically, as some men seek to increase longevity, others study how to end it.

It was right at the outbreak of this Great War that spiritual conflict and division came to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. On July 21, 1914, before the other letters were issued, L.R. Conradi,

Hans F. Schubert, and Guy Dail wrote to the War Ministry in Germany requesting that all Adventists be excused from military service on Saturdays (Sabbath). Kaiser Wilhelm, the emperor of Germany, wrote on that letter—"No pardon [exception] for Adventists."⁶ Regrettably the European Adventist leadership yielded to the demands of the state and engaged in war, and did so even on the Sabbath. "About ten percent of the total Adventist membership in Germany" or "2,000 German Adventists engaged in the war effort." Of these, "257 were killed in action."⁷

Beginning in August 1914, members who maintained the original position of the church on conscientious objection to bearing arms and engaging in war were disfellowshipped. Those who espoused the peaceful teachings of Christ when drafted went into hiding. One of the pacifist Adventists who took the words of Jesus to heart, that is, to flee, was Wilhelm Richter, the church elder in Bremen, Germany. He was eventually caught and imprisoned. He was tortured and saw others martyred for their faith and their nonviolence position. By the grace of God, he survived and became a preacher in the Reform Movement.

He withstood the times of peril. He gave witness to the power of God to endure when persecuted and harassed. But did he remain faithful to the faith? No; apparently he had differences with some of the Reform Movement leaders, and because of personal hurt among brethren, he separated and left the present truth. Brother Oscar Kramer recalls that some of his descendants did remain with the Reform Movement.

How ironic that some who persevere in times of war throw in the towel in times of peace. Are you, too, grieved because of some personal difference with your brethren? Are you willing to forgive but not to forget? Does not God want us to forgive and forget like He does? He says, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 10:17.

Jesus wants us to live like a living sacrifice for His spiritual kingdom of grace. In the current time of peace, it is important not to be caught or deceived by personal grievances. Like children, Jesus admonishes us to be forbearing with one another, to forgive one another, and to be busy about the Lord's busi-

ness of announcing the final triumph of the third angel's message.

Off the coast of the United States on both the Eastern and Western shores, there are some little aquatic snails called "limpets." They have a nice turtle-like shell to cover themselves and be protected from the pounding waves. They live on the seaside rocks.⁸ When they see one of their fellows swept away by the force of the oncoming waves and high tide, the others tenaciously cling more strongly to and deeper on the rocks as a sure anchor and strength so as not to be washed away. What an object lesson for the Christian who knows that the end of time will bring torrential rains, floods, and forceful waves of persecution and distress! Like the tiny limpet, we too must build upon the rock, upon Jesus Christ, and hold on tighter to Him as we see others being washed away in the ocean of sin, worldliness, apathy, or discontent.

Toward the final triumph—conversion and endurance

Like the psalmist, we may repeat the prayer, "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: Thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." "But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: Thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying." Psalm 40:17; 70:5. This verse appears twice in the *King James Version* of the Psalms and always at the end of a psalm. Maybe that is the longing of your soul. Maybe you, too, are poor and needy and desire an escape from trouble and affliction.

But notice that the first verse of the subsequent psalm adds another prayer: "In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. Deliver me in Thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline Thine ear unto me, and save me. Be Thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: Thou hast given commandment to save me; for Thou art my rock and my fortress." Psalm 71:1-3.

May God spare us from the prevailing confusion in Adventism today. May you, too, be delivered by seeking refuge in Jesus as your "strong habitation." May you "continually resort" to Jesus as your "rock" and "fortress." He is the spiritual ark in which we must hide through the coming torrent and storm.

Jesus told His disciples that there would be a tarrying time. "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." Matthew 25:5, 6. Everyone slept, and it was necessary to have a reserve of oil while waiting for the bridegroom. This is the tarrying time when many consider the coming of the Lord as late. This is the time to store more oil of the Spirit in our souls and to watch for the midnight hour of liberation.

In Western Latin American culture, the bride typically tarries and the guests anxiously await her arrival for the marriage ceremony. Yet in Jesus' time, it was the bridegroom who tarried, and everyone waited to call out, "Here comes the Bridegroom!"

Jesus also told His disciples that they would need to endure and persevere in order to be saved on the last great day. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matthew 24:13. "And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Mark 13:13.

"There is to be no end to this warfare this side of eternity, but while there are constant battles to fight, there are also precious victories to gain, and the triumph over self and sin is of more value than the mind can estimate. The effort put forth to overcome, though requiring self-denial, is of little account beside the victory over evil.

"The life-work given to us is that of preparation for the life eternal, and if we accomplish this work as God has designed that we should, every temptation may work for our advance; for as we resist its allurements, we make progress in the divine life. In the heat of the conflict, while engaged in earnest spiritual warfare, unseen agencies are by our side, commissioned of heaven to aid us in our wrestlings, and in the crisis, strength and firmness and energy are imparted to us, and we have more than mortal power. But unless the human agent shall bring his will into harmony with the will of God, unless he shall forsake every idol, and overcome every wrong practice, he will never succeed in the warfare; but will be finally overcome. Those who would be conquerors must engage in conflict with unseen

agencies; inward corruption must be overcome, and every thought must be brought into harmony with, and subjection to, Christ."⁹

William C. White in a letter in which he recounted the last days of his mother, Sister Ellen G. White, stated that she believed in "the final triumph of the third angel's message."¹⁰ Do you believe you can be part of this final triumph?

As another Week of Prayer ends and brings us closer to the return of our Saviour Jesus Christ, let us realize that only our personal conversion, the necessary change of heart, mind, and spirit, will prepare us for the final triumph of the third angel's message, which will be witnessed in the return of Jesus in glory and majesty to redeem His people.

"Has your character been transformed? Has darkness been exchanged for light, the love of sin for the love of purity and holiness? Have you been converted, who are engaged in teaching the truth to others? Has there been in you a thorough, radical change? Have you woven Christ into your character? You need not be in uncertainty in this matter. Has the Sun of Righteousness risen and been shining in your soul? If so, you know it; and if you do not know whether you are converted or not, never preach another discourse from the pulpit until you do. How can you lead souls to the fountain of life of which you have not drunk yourself? Are you a sham, or are you really a son of God? Are you serving God, or are you serving idols? Are you transformed by the Spirit of God, or are you yet dead in your trespasses and sins? To be sons of God means more than many dream of, because they have not been converted. Men are weighed in the balance and found wanting when they are living in the practice of any known sin. It is the privilege of every son of God to be a true Christian moment by moment; then he has all heaven enlisted on his side. He has Christ abiding in his heart by faith."¹¹

The story is told of a skeptic who was demeaning and downgrading the Bible as he dialogued with a Christian.

Skeptic: "It is impossible in this modern age to believe in any book so old whose authorship is questionable."

Christian: "Then, tell me, sir, do you know who was the author of the multiplication table? Such a table is very ancient for this modern age."

Skeptic: "No, I do not know, nor do I believe anyone knows."

Christian: "You must certainly not believe in the multiplication table because the authorship is questionable."

Skeptic: "O, but I do believe in it, because it works. There are mathematical proofs to show that it is true."

Christian: "Let me then add that the Bible is also true because it works and there are proofs to show it is true. Just think for a moment of the millions of people through the ages both great and small who have changed their lifestyles, because of the gospel of Jesus, from worst to good. They have abandoned a life of drunkenness, adultery, drugs, stealing, and other vices which still afflict our modern world. They have adopted a life of service to humankind, stopping slavery like William Wilberforce, opening orphanages like George Muller, establishing hospitals like Ida Scudder, founding universities like William Carey, setting up rehabilitation centers like Corrie Ten Boom, and promoting peace like Leo Tolstoy. Jesus works, and He is true."

Dear friend and believer, the coming of Jesus into our souls and His return to our planet will be the final triumph of the third angel's message. Hallelujah. Amen!

¹ Victor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2006).

² C. Everett Koop, "The Slide to Auschwitz" (Lecture before the American Academy of Pediatrics, October 18, 1976), www.humanlifereview.com/the-slide-to-auschwitz/. Accessed June 13, 2014.

³ Quote from the "Diary of an office worker in Amsterdam," 1941, Auschwitz museum exhibit, Auschwitz, Poland.

⁴ Martin Niemöller, "First They came for the Socialists," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?Module=10007392. Niemöller was a prominent Protestant pastor who spent seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps.

⁵ Ellen G. White, "A Call to Service in the Master's Harvest," Pamphlet No. 19 (Fernando, California, April 21, 1907), p. 7.

⁶ Jacob M. Patt, "The History of the Advent Movement in Germany" (dissertation, Stanford University, 1958), p. 256.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 270, 271.

⁸ *The Encyclopedia Americana International Edition*, vol. 17 (Danbury, CN: Grolier Incorporated, 1993), pp. 493, 494.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Christian Education* (1894), pp. 122, 123.

¹⁰ William C. White, "Letter of W.C. White," *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1915, par. 14.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (1923), pp. 440, 441.

Keep Christ Before the People

The standard by which to measure character is the royal law. The law is the sin detector. By the law is the knowledge of sin. But the sinner is constantly being drawn to Jesus by the wonderful manifestation of His love in that He humiliated Himself to die a shameful death upon the cross. What a study is this! Angels have striven, earnestly longed, to look into the wonderful mystery. It is a study that can tax the highest human intelligence, that man, fallen, deceived by Satan, taking Satan's side of the question, can be conformed to the image of the Son of the infinite God. That man shall be like Him, that, because of the righteousness of Christ given to man, God will love man—fallen but redeemed—even as He loved His Son. Read it right out of the living oracles.

This is the mystery of godliness. This picture is of the highest value to be placed in every discourse, to be hung in memory's hall, to be uttered by human lips, to be traced by human beings who have tasted and known that the Lord is good, to be meditated upon, to be the groundwork of every discourse. There have been dry theories presented and precious souls are starving for the bread of life. This is not the preaching that is required or that the God of heaven will accept, for it is Christless.

The divine picture of Christ must be kept before the people. He is that Angel standing in the sun of heaven. He reflects no shadows. Clothed in the attributes of Deity, shrouded in the glories of Deity, and in the likeness of the infinite God, He is to be lifted up before men. When this is kept before the people, creature merit sinks into insignificance. The more the eye looks upon Him, the more His life, His lessons, His perfection of character are studied, the more sinful and abhorrent will sin appear. By beholding, man can but admire and become more attracted to Him, more charmed, and more desirous to be like Jesus until he assimilates to His image and has the mind of Christ. Like Enoch he walks with God. His mind is full of thoughts of Jesus. He is his best Friend.

We have been pained to see, when ministers are much together and laboring together, that one catches the ways and the attitudes and the gestures, the manner of address, the very tones of the voice, of another, until his identity is lost in that of his associate. This causes me pain of heart, because I know that if he had been looking to Jesus, thinking of Jesus, talking of His love and imitating His character, the stamp of Jesus would be upon him and not the human impress of finite beings who, in words, manner, and spirit, but faintly represent the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. If every minister who claims to love Jesus will only be filled with His charms and become assimilated to His image, what an example would he give to his brethren and to the world! The more ministers are in the company of Christ by communing with Him, the more they will be fastened to Christ. Catching His holy looks and copying His holy ways, they will be transformed into His image. They may be truly said to represent Jesus Christ....

Selfishness is written on the human heart in plain, unmistakable characters. Just as soon as the love of God takes its place, there is the image and superscription of Jesus Christ. His entire life amid a world filled with pride and selfishness was without an exception an embodiment of that charity that suffereth long, and is kind; that envieth not; that "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Here is presented before us the fruits of the grace of God which every follower of Christ will manifest in his life and reveal in his character. If those manifestations are wanting, there must be most earnest seeking of God. By repentance and faith in Jesus Christ we may receive the spirit of Christ here specified, and then we may indeed be called children of God and not chil-

dren of the wicked one. We must have greater faith; then we shall have more of Christ....

A Christian is the highest type of a man, because he is Christlike, and when he departs from the principles that are after Christ's order, he is often ignorant that he has done wrong. The Lord sets the case before him as it is, as he is. He does not specify all his wrongs but gives him a chance to manifest that he is a true child of God by his repentance and confession, not only of the sins specified but of those which conscience sets in order before him. In doing this work he reveals he has made an open rupture with Satan and with sin. He feels his weakness, he lays hold with earnest purpose and living faith upon the strength of God, and is an overcomer. Great becomes his peace, his joy, for it comes from the Lord, and there is nothing more acceptable in the sight of God than the continual humiliation of the soul before Him. These evidences are unmistakable proofs that the Lord has touched hearts by His Holy Spirit. More wonderful than miracles of physical healing is the miracle wrought in the child of God in wrestling with natural defects and overcoming them. The universe of God looks upon him with joy far greater than on any splendid outward display. The inward character is molded after the divine Pattern....

Holding up Christ as our only source of strength, presenting His matchless love in having the guilt of the sins of men charged to His account and His own righteousness imputed to man, in no case does away with the law or detracts from its dignity. Rather, it places it where the correct light shines upon and glorifies it. This is done only through the light reflected from the cross of Calvary. The law is complete and full in the great plan of salvation, only as it is presented in the light shining from the crucified and risen Saviour. This can be only spiritually discerned. It kindles in the heart of the beholder ardent faith, hope, and joy that Christ is his righteousness. This joy is only for those who love and keep the words of Jesus, which are the words

of God. —Ms 24, 1888, pp. 10, 11, 13, 23, 25. (“Looking Back at Minneapolis,” c. November or December 1888.)

Bible religion is not made up of theological systems, creeds, theories, and tradition, for then it would not remain a mystery. The worldly would understand it through their own natural abilities. But religion, Bible religion, has a practical, saving energy, elements proceeding wholly from God—a personal experience of God’s power transforming the entire man. —Ms 30, 1889, p. 23. (“Experience Following the Minneapolis Conference,” c. June 1889.)

To him who is content to receive without deserving, who feels that he can never recompense such love, who lays all doubt and unbelief aside, and comes as a little child to the feet of Jesus, all the treasures of eternal love are a free, everlasting gift.

Come up to the Conference in calm, perfect trust. “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.” Psalm 145:3. He will work, and who will let or hinder? There is nothing too hard for Him. His is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory and the majesty. Let us not limit the Holy One of Israel. —Letter 19e, 1892, p. 1 (to O.A. Olsen, October 26, 1892). *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, pp. 182-186.

“Grand and glorious things hath God prepared for those who love Him. Angels are looking forward with earnest expectation to the final triumph of the people of God, when seraphim and cherubim and the ‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands’ shall swell the anthems of the blessed and celebrate the triumphs of the mediatorial achievements in the recovery of man.” —*My Life Today*, p. 307.

