

Patterns of Piety

by Ellen G. White

Seventh-day Adventists, above all people in the world, should be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation. The warnings, corrections, and reproofs are not given to the erring among them because their lives are more blameworthy than professed Christians of the nominal churches, or because their acts and examples are worse than those of people who will not yield obedience to the claims of God's law; but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God's special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts. They signify their loyalty to the God of heaven by yielding obedience to the laws of His government. They are God's representatives upon the earth. Any sin or transgression in them separates them from God, and in a special manner dishonors His name, by giving the enemies of God's holy law occasion to reproach His cause and His people, whom He has called "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," that they should show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

—Advent Review & Sabbath Herald, September 7, 1886.

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Future for America

Mission Statement

The ministry of *Future for America* is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future—for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now *present truth*. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the **prophetic word** includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, *Future for America* emphasizes all aspects of the **medical missionary work**. The "entering wedge"—medical missionary work—must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, **country living** becomes more essential with each passing moment. *Future for America* upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

Future for America intends to print and distribute **truth-filled literature**, while helping to establish lay-printing operations in parts of the Lord's vineyard where faithful brethren do not have the means to raise up a **printing operation** with their own resources.

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*Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened,
that it cannot save; neither his ear
heavy, that it cannot hear.*

-Isaiah 59:1.

Future for America has come into existence so that meat in due season may reach the flock at this time. . . . It is present truth that the flock needs now. We look to add our *flavor* to the many ministries available today.

Future For America is a self-supporting 501-C3 nonprofit corporation, and is funded by readers like you. We exist to assist those who are striving to be among the 144,000—through the Prophetic Word and the Health Message—by the power of the Holy Spirit. We hope to help God's people teach our Health Message by using the effective teaching and learning tools which we will provide. We also hope to inspire lay persons to do this by arousing them to the lateness of the hour through the Prophetic messages found in this publication, in seminars, and available in books and on both audio and video tapes.

MINISTRY NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

PHILIPPINES

Jeff and Kathy Pippenger have returned from the Philippines. The Prophecy Training Seminar—which the Philippine Conference leaders had requested for the Pastors and Bible workers—was a success. It had been anticipated that around 100 persons would be attending, but 135-140 were in attendance. The workers were enthused with the message, and determined to teach it in their districts.

As Jeff's mother is very ill, he had hardly gotten home before he left to be with her, so more details on the evangelistic crusade will be given at a later date.

One thing that both Jeff and Kathy emphasized, was the immense need of the people in that area of God's vineyard. The poverty is extreme, and God's workers are working at a great disadvantage. Transportation is expensive or non-existent, and the wages are not enough to sustain a family. But these faithful workers are truly working sacrificially for the Lord's return.

It was a disappointment that we did not have the funds we were hoping to have to assist these dear brothers and sisters in a greater way. The seminars cost around \$18,700, but we had barely raised \$10,000 for these projects. This has severely limited our ability to help them. But there is still much that can be done now. There is such a need for equipment, books and evangelistic literature which we could send if we had the funds.

Would you please pray about this situation, and, if the Lord impresses you with this need, send us a sacrificial donation for the Philippine Project?

May God lead you and bless you as you consider these needs.

COLOMBIA

If the Lord is willing, Jeff is scheduled to return to Colombia to hold a three-week prophecy seminar there, starting the end of this May.

Tico Restrepo will be assisting and translating the messages into Spanish.

At this time Jeff will also be hand-carrying down the funds that you have sent to assist with the Colombian earthquake disaster relief.

On behalf of our brothers and sisters who will benefit from your contributions, we want to give you a sincere 'Thank you!'

LEAVES OF AUTUMN

Steven Spencer, with Joshua and Kelsie, Stephen Spence and I went to Tuscaloosa, Alabama April 30th to pass out literature at the Franklin Graham Crusade, *Festival '99*.

Although Franklin does not draw quite the crowd which his more famous father, Billy Graham, draws, there were enough people there to fill the 15,000 auditorium as well as the over-flow room. On Saturday night, they were at capacity and had to turn people away.

I cannot begin to tell you the blessings I received as a result of participating in this effort. In many instances it seemed that God walked beside me, and gave me the words to say.

These were Christian brothers and sisters, looking for a closer walk with their Lord, and most of them were very receptive to the literature. Some were even going to unattended boxes and taking the literature themselves.

Many of the Crusade officials were distinctly unfriendly, but Saturday night, after the officials started confiscating the literature at the door of the auditorium—stating that it contained "filth"—one of the officials was curious enough to come and ask me, "Do you believe in Jesus? Do you believe that He is the Son of God? How do you receive salvation?"

As a result I was able to share with him the plan of salvation, and exactly what Jesus means to me, and how much I love Him and desire to be like Him. When he had to

go, he asked to have prayer with me, and we had a lovely little season of prayer. This man left saying, "I'll see you in heaven!"

So the Lord turned the situation to serve His purposes. This was not the only person with whom we had discussions. Even before the problems, there were many people who stopped and asked questions which gave us a chance to bear a personal one-on-one witness.

In one instance Steve Spence had out his Bible on the hood of a car, explaining to a couple men about the Sabbath and the state of the dead. Gradually more and more people stopped and listened—some for considerable lengths of time—until there were several listening and asking questions. All questions were answered directly from the Bible, and it was a powerful witness to the truth.

To me it was like the Holy Spirit "topped-off" my spiritual fuel tank! Praise His holy name!

We will be going out again the first weekend in June. There will be a *PromiseKeepers* rally in Memphis, and a Billy Graham Crusade in Indianapolis the same weekend.

If you would like to help in this endeavor, there are three ways that you can help:

1. Look for Christian events in your part of the country, organize a group, and distribute the literature;
2. Contact us for information on future events and join us; or
3. Contribute to the cost of the literature—mark your donation "Literature Evangelism."

Please pray for these evangelistic efforts, that the people of God will be receptive, and that we may be able to speak a word in season to those who are seeking for the truth.

God bless you as you search for His will in your life.

Your sister in His love,

Denise Matlean

Literature Evangelism Update

by Steven Spencer

As we look at the things which are happening in our world today, we see that the final events are either already under way or are on the horizon.

What a privilege we have, and what a solemn responsibility we are faced with. Many of us will have the privilege of living in the days about which the prophets spoke and wrote—the final round of the universal battle between Satan's government and the government of our God in heaven. The charges against the Law of God have been levied, and the universe has seen the results of Satan's lawless society.

You and I have a personal responsibility in the consummation of this galactic warfare. God's people today are called upon to give the trumpet a certain sound as they give the message of the Three Angels of Revelation 14. This is neither a side issue nor something that should be considered as a secondary message. This is *present truth*. It is the great commission with eternal life and eternal death in the consequences.

The Lord has committed to us the sacred, solemn work of presenting testing truth to the world. He has greatly honored us in giving us a part to act in His cause, in permitting us to be co-laborers with Him. If we are indeed the delegated servants of the Lord, we should walk in the light, that we may be light-bearers to those who sit in darkness. The followers of Christ are to manifest to the world the characteristics of their Lord. They must not become careless or inattentive to their duty, or indifferent as to their influence; for they were to be representatives

of Jesus in the earth. *Review and Herald*, December 3, 1889.

How does the idea of being a co-laborer with Christ sound to us? Do we truly manifest the characteristics of Jesus to those in the world around us? One of the most significant attributes of the character of Jesus was manifested in His burden for souls. If we are partakers of the "mind of Christ," then we will also sincerely desire to seek and to save those who are lost. The work which we are called upon to do now is relatively easy, but that which we fail to accomplish now, will have to be completed under persecution and with much difficulty.

TUSCALOOSA, AL—April 28-May 2

Denise Matlean, Stephen Spence and myself, with my two older children, headed out to meet three other workers at the Franklin Graham *Festival '99* in Tuscaloosa Alabama. We knew that this weekend of "spiritual festivities" would be ripe soil in which to spread the seeds of truth. It is important for us to recognize that many of these sincere Christians have never been presented with the testing Sabbath truths; many Protestant denominations no longer even have an accurate understanding of the mark of the Beast.

We began our distribution of *America, Superpower of Prophecy* and *A Time of Joy* at the beginning of the opening meeting on Friday night, to hundreds of willing recipients.

Soon we were approached by the promoters of the crusade and told that we were not welcome to distribute literature of any kind. The

director told me that 200 of the area churches had been involved in the planning and expense of this crusade, and that each church had agreed not to hand out any sectarian literature. This type of "proselytizing" was contrary to the spirit of the crusade. I assured the director that we were not there representing the organized church, but independent laymen trying to present Biblical truths relevant to the day in which we live. I told him if he could identify any doctrinal discrepancy between our magazine and the Bible, that we would pack our boxes and go home.

One thing to keep in mind, the ecumenical movement is not any more interested in doctrinal truth than is Rome. We abided by their request to leave the entrance ways which were on University property, and we began distributing the literature on public property by the street corners.

FRANKLIN GRAHAM'S MESSAGE

Following in the footsteps of his more famous father, Billy Graham, Franklin presented the partial gospel. He specifically talked on the Law of God (Ten Commandments) as being binding today. He condemned murder, lying, dishonoring parents and adultery as sins against God. But never was the commandment that begins with "Remember" mentioned.

The loudest applause of the evening came when he advocated putting God back in our schools. We can see that the wall of separation is being battered, and soon, by the outcry of the people, our country will repudiate the principles which have

been such a blessing to this nation.

The traditional error of the immortality of the soul was mentioned and the concept of an eternal hell-fire and torment was heavily emphasized. I wondered if the people who appeared to be surrendering their hearts were motivated by fear of eternal torture or by love of our God? Overall, the message was well received—and the message was further evidence of a congealing of Christian beliefs. We no longer have true Protestants in this current spiritual revival in the land—in fact the Christian leaders in America are looking to Rome for approval. Very soon we will see the fulfillment of the following quote:

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.
Great Controversy, 588.

LESSONS LEARNED

I believe that every literature campaign teaches those who are participants some important lessons.

First of all, is the stark realization that in this land of religious liberty and freedom, our opportunities to disseminate literature will eventually be stopped. The Graham crusade personnel asked for the police to have us removed, and eventually

started to confiscate the magazines at the door—calling the material “filth” or “Jehovah Witness material.” This was done after we had spoken with them, and with their full knowledge of the actual content of the literature. Friends, this is a sobering fact—that they would stoop to lie, in order to prevent the people from accepting and reading this literature. I wonder if it bothered them that Satan is called the ‘father of lies.’

This persecution actually was beneficial to the cause of God, as it served to raise the inquiry of the Christians who were willing to search for truth. Many individuals’ curiosity was aroused when these types of tactics were used. We had people tell us how they refused to hand over their magazines to the officials, or in some cases asked for another copy because they had surrendered their first one under pressure. What does the servant of the Lord call the effort of the churches to have the state enforce her decrees? Is this not one of the characteristics foretold concerning the image to the beast? Brothers and sisters, now is the time to work and to get involved.

The second lesson teaches us the sure results of our church’s confederacies with the churches of Babylon. I love the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and it grieves my heart to see our distinctive doctrines being sacrificed on the ecumenical alter. By joining the Ministerial Associations, the World Counsel of Churches and a host of other confederacies, we have positioned ourselves in such a way that we are unable to sound warning trumpet—because it would jeopardize our membership creed. Are we to sit by and wait for the Apos-

tate Protestants to invite us into their churches before we give the Three Angels Message? Did John the Baptist wait for the Jewish leaders to schedule a speaking engagement at the synagogue?

We are nearing the close of this earth’s history. We have before us a great work, the closing work of giving the last warning message to a sinful world. There are men who will be taken from the plow, from the vineyard, from various other branches of work, and sent forth by the Lord to give this message to the world.—*Testimonies*, 7, 270.

God can use you and me if we are willing. Some might say that this is an antagonistic or unpleasant work. We are to have the spirit of Jesus, but to remain silent at this time would be a grave mistake. There are hundreds of Bible study requests that have resulted from these handouts. We know that in some cases we will not see the fruits of our labors until we reach the other side. I have not talked to one person who has participated in these activities who will not substantiate the blessings involved in this line of work. The Holy Spirit is not going to be poured out on us while we sleep. It is while we are working for others, and requesting divine aide, that the help will arrive.

Please pray that the souls receiving this literature will be led to read, study and accept the truth. If you would be interested in joining us in our next literature outreach activity, please give us a call. If you can not help with this work in person, please consider helping us financially so that those who are willing and able may have the material to carry on with this solemn and sacred work.

An Appeal to Parents

By Ellen G. White

Keep the Children From Hotbeds of Iniquity

Let no temporal advantages tempt parents to neglect the training of their children. Whenever possible, it is the duty of parents to make homes in the country for their children. The children and youth should be carefully guarded. They should be kept away from the hotbeds of iniquity that are to be found in our cities. Let them be surrounded by the influences of a true Christian home—a home where Christ abides.—*Letter* 268, 1906.

Before the Scourge Shall Overflow

Before the overflowing scourge shall come upon the dwellers of the earth, the Lord calls upon all who are Israelites indeed to prepare for that event. To parents He sends the warning cry, Gather your children into your own houses; gather them away from those who are disregarding the commandments of God, who are teaching and practicing evil. Get out of the large cities as fast as possible. Establish church schools. Give your children the Word of God as the foundation of all their education. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 195.

Souls of Children Versus Ease and Comfort

Let children no longer be exposed to the temptations of the cities that are ripe for destruction. The Lord has sent us warning and counsel to get out of the cities. Then let us make no more investments in the cities. Fathers and mothers, how do you regard the souls of your children? Are you preparing the

members of your families for translation into the heavenly courts? Are you preparing them to become members of the royal family? children of the heavenly King? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36. How will ease, comfort, convenience, compare with the value of the souls of your children? *Manuscript* 76, 1905.

Christian Qualities Better Gained in Retired Locations

There is not one family in a hundred who will be improved physically, mentally, or spiritually, by residing in the city. Faith, hope, love, happiness, can far better be gained in retired places, where there are fields and hills and trees. Take your children away from the sights and sounds of the city, away from the rattle and din of streetcars and teams, and their minds will become more healthy. It will be found easier to bring home to their hearts the truth of the Word of God. *Manuscript* 76, 1905.

Send the children to schools located in the city, where every phase of temptation is waiting to attract and demoralize them, and the work of character building is tenfold harder for both parents and children. *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 326. (1894)

The Refuge of Country Places

Let parents understand that the training of their children is an important work in the saving of souls. In country places abundant useful exercise will be found in doing those things that need to be done, and which will

give physical health by developing nerve and muscle. Out of the cities is my message for the education of our children.

God gave to our first parents the means of true education when He instructed them to till the soil and care for their Garden home. After sin came in, through disobedience to the Lord's requirements, the work to be done in cultivating the ground was greatly multiplied, for the earth, because of the curse, brought forth weeds and thistles. But the employment itself was not given because of sin. The great Master Himself blessed the work of tilling the soil.

"As . . . in the Days of Noah"

It is Satan's purpose to attract men and women to the cities, and to gain his object he invents every kind of novelty and amusement, every kind of excitement. And the cities of the earth today are becoming as were the cities before the Flood.

We should carry a continual burden as we see the fulfillment of the words of Christ, "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37. In the days before the Flood, every kind of amusement was invented to lead men and women to forgetfulness and sin. Today, in 1908, Satan is working with intensity, that the same conditions of evil shall prevail. And the earth is becoming corrupt. Religious liberty will be little respected by professing Christians, for many of them have no understanding of spiritual things.

We cannot fail to see that the end of the world is soon to come. Satan is working upon the

minds of men and women, and many seem filled with a desire for amusement and excitement. As it was in the days of Noah, every kind of evil is on the increase. Divorce and marriage is the order of the time. At such a time as this, the people who are seeking to keep the commandments of God should look for retired places away from the cities. . . .

Not a Deprivation

Who will be warned? We say again, Out of the cities. Do not consider it a great deprivation, that you must go into the hills and mountains, but seek for that retirement where you can be alone with God, to learn His will and way. . . .

I urge our people to make it their lifework to seek for spirituality. Christ is at the door. This is why I say to our people, Do not consider it a privation when you are called to leave the cities and move out into the country places. Here there await rich blessings for those who will grasp them. By beholding the scenes of nature, the works of the Creator, by studying God's handiwork, imperceptibly you will be changed into the same image. *Manuscript* 85, 1908.

To Secure Life's Best Results

An expensive dwelling, elaborate furnishings, display, luxury, and ease, do not furnish the conditions essential to a happy, useful life. Jesus came to this earth to accomplish the greatest work ever accomplished among men. He came as God's ambassador, to show us how to live so as to secure life's best results. What were the conditions chosen by the infinite Father for His Son? A secluded home in the Galilean hills; a household sustained by honest, self-respecting labor; a life of simplicity; daily conflict with difficulty

and hardship; self-sacrifice, economy, and patient, glad-some service; the hour of study at His mother's side, with the open scroll of Scripture; the quiet of dawn or twilight in the green valley; the holy ministries of nature; the study of creation and providence; and the soul's communion with God—these were the conditions and opportunities of the early life of Jesus.

Country Heritage of Noble Men

So with the great majority of the best and noblest men of all ages. Read the history of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, of Moses, David, and Elisha. Study the lives of men of later times who have most worthily filled positions of trust and responsibility, the men whose influence has been most effective for the world's uplifting.

How many of these were reared in country homes. They knew little of luxury. They did not spend their youth in amusement. Many were forced to struggle with poverty and hardship. They early learned to work, and their active life in the open air gave vigor and elasticity to all their faculties. Forced to depend upon their own resources, they learned to combat difficulties and to surmount obstacles, and they gained courage and perseverance. They learned the lessons of self-reliance and self-control. Sheltered in a great degree from evil associations, they were satisfied with natural pleasures and wholesome companionships. They were simple in their tastes and temperate in their habits. They were governed by principle, and they grew up pure and strong and true. When called to their life-work, they brought to it physical and mental power, buoyancy of spirit, ability to plan and execute, and

steadfastness in resisting evil, that made them a positive power for good in the world.

Better Than Wealth

Better than any other inheritance of wealth you can give to your children will be the gift of a healthy body, a sound mind, and a noble character. Those who understand what constitutes life's true success will be wise betimes. They will keep in view life's best things in their choice of a home.

Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude, go where you can look upon the works of God. Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature. Let the eye rest on the green fields, the groves, and the hills. Look up to the blue sky, unobscured by the city's dust and smoke, and breathe the invigorating air of heaven. Go where, apart from the distractions and dissipations of city life, you can give your children your companionship, where you can teach them to learn of God through His works, and train them for lives of integrity and usefulness. *The Ministry of Healing*, 265-267. (1905)

Manifold Benefits of Active Out-of-Door Life

It would be well for you to lay by your perplexing cares, and find a retreat in the country, where there is not so strong an influence to corrupt the morals of the young.

True, you would not be entirely free from annoyances and perplexing cares in the country; but you would there avoid many evils and close the door

Continued on page 15.

TIMELINES

In The Stream of Time . . . Near The End Of The Line

"Sometimes I am convinced there is nothing wrong with this country that couldn't be cured by the magical implantation of ethical standards on us all—leaders and followers."—Ben Bradlee, *The Washington Post*, in a flyer advertising a political publication.

Question: Like a National Sunday Law amendment to the Constitution?



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT

Silver Spring, Maryland, [ANN]—The Seventh-day Adventist Church released its preliminary dossier on religious freedom around the world.

The report, issued on March 4, places the nations of the world in one of five categories related to the experience of the Adventist Church, ranging from "religious freedom for all" through "restrictive legislation" to "no religious freedom." . . .

Persecution has been particularly violent in India, Indonesia, Iran, Myanmar (Burma), Pakistan, and Sudan where the chief religions are Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. . . .

Among the countries listed as the worst offenders against religious freedom are Mauritania, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and Saudi Arabia.—Jonathan Gallagher, SDANews: ANN Bulletin, March 16, 1999.



IRLA TO MEET IN SPAIN

The meeting of the Adventist-sponsored International Religious Liberty Association will be held in Madrid on May 13-16. "That IRLA chose Spain as the venue for this important meeting is truly an honor," one of the Spanish officials said. "Spain is experiencing a development in religious liberty. This meeting will raise the profile of religious liberty in Spanish society which is made up of 90% Roman Catholics," he said. The meeting's topic will be "Proselytism and Religious Freedom."—Entered ANN April 28, 1999.



ADVENTISTS TESTIFY ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Annapolis, Maryland, [ANN]—Two Seventh-day-Adventist attorneys testified be-

fore a Maryland Assembly committee hearing on a state Religious Freedom Restoration bill (RFRA) on March 9. Nicholas Miller, Executive Director of the Council on Religious Freedom and Paul Rivera, a Maryland attorney, strongly supported the bill that would increase the level of religious liberty protection available in Maryland. . . .

The Maryland Religious Freedom Restoration bill is part of a larger, nationwide effort by religious groups and civil rights leaders to restore the traditional higher level of religious liberty protection in the United States. Since 1990, a series of Supreme Court decisions have dramatically cut back on national religious freedom protection.

The Council on Religious Freedom, based in Rockville, Maryland, and other Seventh-day Adventist religious liberty leaders are active across the country in efforts to introduce Religious Freedom Restoration bills in a number of states, including Hawaii, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.—Bettina Krause, SDANews: ANN Bulletin, March 16, 1999.



SDA'S PROMOTE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BILL

Washington, DC, [ANN]—A bill designed to strengthen federal protection of religious free exercise rights was reintroduced into Congress this week. The Religious Liberty Protection Act (RLPA) was introduced last year but failed to pass. . . .

Seventh-day Adventist attorney and executive director of Council on Religious Freedom, Nicholas Miller, was a member of the committee that drafted the legislation, and believes that it will be one of the most vital issues to come before Congress in this legislative session.

"If successful," says Miller, "this bill will go a long way in reviving First Amendment free exercise protection for all Americans—its importance to people of faith can't be overestimated."

RLPA is a response to the significant shift, since 1991, in the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Free Exercise clause. Under current Court reasoning, the state and its agencies can disturb the religious rights of individuals and institutions, so long as

they do so in a "neutral, generally applicable" way. RLPA, if passed, would restore traditional safeguards, limiting the state's interference to instances where there is a "compelling state interest," and ensuring that the state will act in a way that is least intrusive to religious free exercise rights.

Proponents of RLPA . . . hope to move the measure quickly through the legislative process. A vote on the House floor is expected within the next month.—Bettina Krause, *Adventist News Network*.

Note: Far from restoring "traditional safeguards" this law would violate the "free exercise clause" of the first amendment. Do you not see the danger in allowing the state to restrict any religious practice for any reason whatsoever? Even a "compelling state interest"? Isn't that the rationale they will use to enact the Sunday law? This law changes the status of religious freedom from an "unalienable right," and gives the state the right to intrude in the exercise of religious beliefs, and then attempts to limit that intrusion to the "least intrusive" acts—when, in fact, any intrusion between a person and his God is too intrusive.



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN RUSSIA

Cambridge, England [ANN]—Mikhail Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, answered questions on religious freedom in Russia posed by Gina Wahlen, a Seventh-day Adventist, during a lecture at King's College, Cambridge, England on March 15.

"How do you see freedom of religion in the future of Russia? Will there be one State Religion, or will other religions be given equal status?" asked Wahlen, after Gorbachev had presented his lecture entitled "Russia: Between Past and Future."

"That issue has already been addressed by me," replied Gorbachev, referring to a draft law for which he had been responsible in the 1980s. "Now there have been certain steps backwards since then, but that was in order to combat certain dangerous

sects. . . "But all religions enjoy rights and support. Many church buildings are being returned to the churches, and all are free. Religion will gain momentum," he predicted, "as it always does during difficult times. The Orthodox Church and others work to support the spirit of the people." Gorbachev . . . ended his answer to the question with this statement: "I want the church to be far from politics."

Gorbachev's comments come on the eve of a national religious liberty congress to be held in Moscow March 23-24 under the auspices of the International Religious Liberty Association. —Jonathan Gallagher, *SDANews*: ANN Bulletin, March 23, 1999.



ROMANIA'S RELIGION LAW

BRUSSELS, Belgium (Compass)—Protestant denominations in Romania are arm-wrestling with the powerful Romanian Orthodox Church over the preparation of draft religious legislation. Protestants want to defend their own rights while limiting what they see as excessive claims of the Orthodox Church.

For several years, a new religion bill meant to replace the current legislation inherited from the communist period has been pending. . . .

The general strategy of the Orthodox Church includes gaining back its status of national church, enjoying a maximum of state privileges and limiting the activities and the material advantages of minority religions.

The Union of the Christian Baptist Churches of Romania (UCBR) . . . raises strong objections when the Romanian Orthodox Church refers to its historical role of majority church and claims its position as the national church, which it enjoyed in pre-communist days. According to . . . the draft law, all religions are equal. Restoring such a status would mean that all the other faiths would be considered non-national and foreign. Anxious to strengthen the guarantees enshrined in Article 40, "The religious denominations are autonomous and equal to each other," the UCBR has asked to add "and before the law." . . .

The Orthodox Church also insists on including anti-proselytism provisions in the bill, allegedly to protect its flock from being swayed by other denominations . . . [and] claims greater access to the mass media.

. . . The Orthodox Church, which is not running confessional schools, does not want the state to finance educational institutions created by religious communities. The Catho-

lic, Reformed, Unitarian, Evangelical and Lutheran churches claim state financing on the same footing as public schools.

The position of the Orthodox Church is mainly motivated by the fear of proselytism through the educational system. The same churches also ask for religious charities, health institutions and homes for elderly people to be financed by the state in the same way as similar public institutions.

When a new denomination applies for registration, it must have at least as many members as the least numerous religious community already registered, the bill says. In this regard, the Reformed Church has proposed the creation of an advisory council "including representatives of recognized religions." Its task would be to analyze the requests and to issue an admissibility recommendation.

The bill also says that only Romanian citizens who reside in the country can be religious leaders and church staff members. —*COMPASS DIRECT*



POPE/MOSLEM CONNECTION

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Proclaiming it an "important and promising day," Pope John Paul II blessed Iran's reform-minded president today at the end of his groundbreaking visit to the West. President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate cleric, came bearing a message of detente and dialogue that was warmly received. . . . His three-day trip is the first state visit to a Western nation by an Iranian president since the 1979 Islamic revolution. —*SDANet*, March 11, 1999.

Note: Because of statements made in the Koran, Moslems look favorably upon the veneration of the Virgin Mary, and therefore the Catholic Church has a "string" on them.



ADOPTING KOSOVARS

Seventh-day Adventists are expected to be among the 20,000 refugees from Kosovo arriving in the United States. Church officers are urging local churches or Adventist groups to "adopt" a Kosovar Adventist family to make their time in American more comfortable. For more information Phone: 407-522-9280; Fax: 407-522-9384. —Entered Monday Fax, May 11, 1999.



KOSOVARS HOLD FASTS

Last month saw two separate fasts called by different Christian churches on behalf of the

war-torn province of Kosovo (Kosova to the Albanians). . . . Fighting has flared up in the past year between Serbian forces and guerrillas of the Kosova Liberation Army, which is waging a war for independence on behalf of the Albanian majority. However, as the two recent fasts have shown, the majorities of both groups do not support armed conflict. The conflict has already exacted a huge toll on the Kosovan population. . . . Some 450 villages have been destroyed. —*COMPASS DIRECT*



GUNSHOTS FIRED

A gun was deliberately fired beside an Adventist pastor's head in the continuing unrest in the Solomon Islands (reported earlier). Some inhabitants on Guadalcanal Island (scene of an important American battle in World War Two) want the island returned to its primitive state — but they are using modern guns to do it. "This includes a form of spiritism and a return to the traditional dress of wearing almost nothing," Union president Neil Watts says. . . . "Some of our members have been threatened for refusing to wear the traditional 'dress.' When one of our ministers asked what would happen if they refused, a rebel fired a shot past his head." —Entered *The Record*, May 6, 1999



FOLKENBERG LAWSUIT COST \$800,000

The settlement of the lawsuit against former GC president Robert Folkenberg cost the GC's insurance company US\$800,000, according to . . . Adventist Today. The article also claims that Robert Folkenberg's position with Adventist Global Communication Network is on hold until Northern Hemisphere autumn. The former president is on "something similar to a leave of absence," the article says. "Folkenberg has been given until September to work on personal concerns. Folkenberg is receiving a General Conference salary in the meantime," the article says. —Entered May 6, 1999, www.adventist.fm.



GLENDALE EXHUMATIONS

Glendale police have obtained a court order to exhume 20 former patients of Glendale Adventist Medical Center. This follows last year's claim by a worker at the hospital that he hastened the deaths of up to 50 terminally ill patients. The employee, who has been dismissed, recanted claiming he was suicidal when he made the claims. A pros-

ecutor says there is insufficient evidence to charge him, but they hope the exhumations will provide that evidence. The exhumations are being done without permission of the families and police would not say if any families objected.—Entered April 30, 1999, www.adventist.fm.

SDA HOSPITAL LAWSUIT

The family of a man who died in Glendale Adventist Medical Center hospital in California have sued the hospital and a respiratory therapist on duty at the time of the death. The suit claims wrongful death and emotional distress upon the family. This is the first lawsuit in the “angel of death” case, where a worker at the hospital confessed to killing dozens of near-death patients, but then recanted. The worker has since been dismissed, but no criminal charges have been laid.—Entered April 10, 1999, www.adventist.fm.

VEGETARIAN RESEARCH

Research just published in “The Journal of the American College of Nutrition” confirms the health benefits of a vegetarian diet. The study examined Seventh-day Adventists and Catholics in the Hispanic community. It concluded that Adventists “who eat a plant-based diet, exhibit a more favorable blood lipid profile, lower blood pressure and lower risk for Type 2 diabetes compared to Hispanic American Catholics, who do not eat a plant-based diet.” The survey examined 74 Adventists and 45 Catholics living in Denver, Colorado, and was performed by researchers based at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins. These findings are factors in explaining why Adventists have a lower incidence of cardiovascular disease compared to the general population. “This study reveals the link between a healthy lifestyle and the lower incidence of disease—in this case the beneficial effects of a plant-based diet,” says Dr. DeWitt Williams. . . . “A parallel study . . . also indicated health benefits among the African-American community of such dietary principles. Research findings are continuing to demonstrate that a non-meat diet carries significant health advantages.” The two surveys are found in “The Journal of the American College of Nutrition” Volume 17, Number 5 and Volume 18, Number 2. —Entered *Adventist News Network (ANN)*, April 28, 1999.

ADVENTIST HOSPITAL BURNS DOWN

A major fire in India on Sunday afternoon destroyed an Adventist Lifestyle Village, including its gymnasium and physiotherapy department. The fire started outside a bamboo border fence and quickly engulfed the fence and the whole compound. All patients were evacuated in time and there was no loss of life. Ten fire engines fought the blaze. —Entered April 21, 1999, www.adventist.fm.

COLOMBIAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST TAKEN HOSTAGE

A Seventh-day Adventist is among the 37 airline passengers being held as hostages in Columbia. Abner Duarte . . . was on a flight on April 9 leaving Bucaramanga for the capital Bogota when hijackers forced the plane to divert to a remote airstrip. On April 18 a rebel group claimed responsibility for the action.—Entered April 21, 1999, www.adventist.fm.

YUGOSLAVIAN BAPTISMS

An Adventist in war-torn Yugoslavia reports that his local church had four baptisms last Sabbath. One of the four was a man who married an Adventist but persecuted her for several years because of her faith. His actions at times put her in the hospital for long periods. “But the Spirit of our Lord and prayers of his wife changed his life and four days ago he has baptized.” —Entered *SDAnet* April 8, 1999.

ECUMENISM: COUNCIL OF CHURCHES-BRITAIN

Watford England [ANN]—John Surridge, communication director of the British Union Conference, represented the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the General Assembly of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland on February 2 to Friday 26. . . .

Although Seventh-day Adventists only have associate status within the CCBI, their views are well respected and they are encouraged to join in with discussions. There are major areas where Seventh-day Adventists differ from other denominations over aspects of theology and worship, but there are many areas where they can agree and cooperate.—John Surridge, *Adventist News Report*, *SDANews: ANN Bulletin*, March 16, 1999.

CHRISTIANS & ATHLETES TARGETED IN COLORADO SHOOTING

Two teen-age gunmen at Columbine High School shot students they knew were Christians. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold also went after athletes and minority students, and some of their victims appeared to be chosen randomly, news reports said.—*CURRENT NEWS SUMMARY*, by the Editors at *ReligionToday.com*. April 23, 1999.

GOV'T INVITES PROTESTANTS TO PEACE TALKS

In a historic move, the president of Colombia has invited representatives of the nation's Protestant churches to join in peace talks aimed at ending South America's longest running guerrilla war. On January 7, Ricardo Esquivia, a Bogota attorney and member of the Colombia Mennonite Church, traveled with President Andres Pastrana . . . to inaugurate armistice negotiations with . . . the largest rebel army in the country. [He was one of 60 civilians who accompanied Pastrana to the talks, represented the Evangelical Council of Colombia, an inter-denominational association to which 85 percent of the nation's non-Catholic Christians belong.—*COMPASS DIRECT*


POLAND CONSIDERS BAN ON SUNDAY SHOPPING

WARSAW (CWNews.com)—Polish lawmakers proposed a draft bill on Thursday that would require stores to remain closed on Sunday in order to protect people forced to work on Sunday, a day of rest for Christians.

The bill, sponsored by 21 deputies, has the support of the Polish bishop's conference, citing Pope John Paul II's recent remarks that Poles are too often converging on so-called hypermarkets on Sundays when they should instead be attending Mass and spending time in spiritual pursuits. . . . Jerzy Gwizdz, one of the authors of the draft, acknowledged that respect for Sunday as a Christian holiday was one of the reasons behind the proposal. But the measure also aims at “protecting a big number of people who are forced to work on Sundays,” Gwizdz told the state Radio Three.—*CWNews.com*, March 12, 1999.

Letters



 May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. This is ___ from India.


I have received a box of books which you sent, and I really love this truth-filled material. Yes, this is present truth that will awaken the ones who love the Lord, and also to give the trumpet a certain sound. I praise God for materials such as this.

My address was given to you ... when you visited Malaysia last year. . . . I will be distributing this material to people who would in turn sound the trumpet to others. More books of *The [Final] Rise and Fall of the King of the North* are welcome.

I am an SDA evangelist since 8 years and work independently. Our whole family was Catholic before that. Three of my brothers too are evangelists, and we go as a team holding meetings in different parts of India. At the moment [two of] my brothers . . . are touring North India, North East India and Nepal. They will be back only in March. So pray for all of us. Persecution has begun against Christianity in general. I praise God that the battle is His and we are only instruments. We need to go ahead in the Lord's name, and be ready to lay down our lives. Surely we will soon see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven.

I close with lots of best wishes to you and your family and also the ministry.

God bless you all. DP-India

 Thank you sincerely for your encouraging letter, and for your prayers for my requests.

Please also pray for my eldest brother who had 5 by-pass surgery yesterday a.m. He has rheumatoid arthritis and has taken cortisone for many years; so it was hard to find good veins in his legs for the by-passes.

He does not know the Lord,

and his days are no doubt numbered.

He is nearly 78, and he knows the truth, because we had godly, SDA parents (now asleep in Jesus) who taught us the way of righteousness.


He married a non-believer, and their two children know nothing of the truth, sad to say. Please pray . . . that God will lead them to Him.

Thank you for your prayers. . . . I spend much time in prayer because I am weak, helpless, sinful myself, and I see so much of the same in everyone I know.

How thankful I am for your ministry, and for others who speak/write truth in these days of terrible apostasy within God's remnant church. . . .


The needs are endless, but God knows, and cares, and hears and answers sincere prayer!


In His love, and mine, AF-CA


 So good to hear from you and that you all made the trip OK in spite of all the problems.

Praise the Lord for His protection during your trip and from the tornadoes in your area. . . .

Love, M&AB-OR


 Thanks for the audio tape #5 of "Those Things Which Have Been, Will Be Repeated," by Jeff Pippenger. This tape is astoundingly right on, cool, really refreshing to hear what is really happening now and in the next few months. . . . Thank you, JC-WA

 Thank you for your series on History being repeated! I am being blessed by these straight forward messages, and plan to copy them to send/give to others. Truly Jesus is coming soon! . . . AF-CA


 I want to thank you for the tapes of which I finally listened to the third I received (thinking it was


just junk mail). It really hit me where it counts . . . and now it just keeps being passed on So I better order the set. . . . I will keep sharing with my friends. . . . I'm committed to lay evangelism and look forward to Christ's soon return.


Thanks again, PT-WA

 I am glad to see the printing presses scattering the leaves of autumn. I can see how this gospel shall be preached to every nation and people. May the Lord be your guide and strength. Keep humble.

Sincerely, VW-OR

 We feel strongly that your material is Present Truth! The message to the 10 virgins is to go to "the church" and in your series we found that the church militant not being the church triumphant was somewhat weakly presented. . . . By the way, we like your Mission Statement. Thanks so much for introducing us to your programs. Sincerely, LT-FL

 Christian greetings! We really enjoy hearing Jeff's messages and the inspiring ways that God is using him. God bless you all as He leads in your ministry for Him. JDT-WI

 Thank you for the tapes and Newsletters. My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed them. Some of your comments I need to turn over in my mind a few more times. However, over all, I like your approach to prophecy. We did buy your book a year or so ago (*The Final Rise and Fall of the King of the North*) and at first I had many questions. The more I study it the fewer the questions. . . . Your tapes *Those Things Which Have Been, Will Be Repeated*, and *The Three Beasts of Revelation 16*, . . . are excellent. May God continue to guide you in your ministry. God bless you, EES-TN

THE GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT OF END-TIME SCENARIOS

Part 1 of 2

by David L. Lin

Most readers of *The Great Controversy* take for granted that the events described in its last chapters have a global application. But Adventists living outside the bounds of the Christian world often wonder if events related to the time of trouble will occur with the same intensity in countries of Buddhist, Moslem and polytheistic cultures. This is obviously related to the extent of dissemination and acceptance of the third angel's message.

All divinely inspired messages recorded in the Bible may be divided into two categories: 1) those having universal application, such as the warning of the Deluge, and 2) those of limited application, such as God's order to Gideon to defeat the Midianites.

Here we are chiefly interested in God's messages of universal application, and His means of drawing the attention of all men thereto.

We note how God commanded Noah to build the ark, whereby the whole world was effectively notified of the impending flood. When it finally arrived, no man could complain that he had not been warned. Yet despite the global scope of Noah's warning, the great majority did not believe it. So it will be before the Second Advent. People will disregard the message in spite of the universal warning.

However, we read that it is God's purpose in the end time to give every person a fair chance to know and obey the truth:

But not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient

light to make his decision intelligently.—*The Great Controversy*, 605.

God is no respecter of persons, so He calls for a global dissemination of truths related to the seal of God and the mark of the beast—before the close of probation. One means of reaching this goal is depicted in a following paragraph:

Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been—the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before.—*Ibid.*, 605-606.

But these words apply mainly to the United States. In what way will people in other parts of the world be affected? Note another passage from *The Great Controversy*:

The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves, and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of Spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the

long-expected millennium.—*Ibid.*, 588-589.

As to the extent to which the whole non-Christian world will be affected, we read:

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The Advent Movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel. . . . By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. See Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.—*Ibid.*, 611-612.

These passages affirm the global extent of the message of the third angel. However, other passages in the same book seem to indicate that there will be a variance in intensity. The impending showdown between Christ and Satan finds its center stage in the Christian world, as is foretold in *The Great Controversy*, 589 and 592:

. . . But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared He would—He will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same.

. . . Though they blind their own eyes to the fact, they are now adopt-

ing a course which will lead to the persecution of those who conscientiously refuse to do what the rest of the Christian world are doing, and acknowledge the claims of the papal sabbath.

These two passages indicate that the developments in the closing conflict between Christ and Satan have their center of gravity in the Christian world. The same conclusion can be reached from two more statements with regard to "Christendom."

The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the Advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made *all nations* drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination.

The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work "with *all* power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;" and they that "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," will be left to receive "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11. Not until this condition shall be

reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete."—Ibid., 389-390.

Since Babylon is the Bible name for apostate Christianity, its bounds would naturally be within the Christian world. We now ask how this issue in Christendom will spread to other parts of the globe. First, let us study two paragraphs on the time of trouble:

As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal

*Church members
love what the world loves and are ready
to join with them, and Satan determines
to unite them in one body and thus
strengthen his cause by sweeping all
into the ranks of Spiritualism.*

execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. . . . This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death.—Ibid., 615-616.

As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment keepers shall withdraw the protection of government and abandon them to those who desire their destruction, the people of God will flee from the cities and villages and associate together in companies, dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places.—Ibid., 626.

In order to gain a fair concept of these last day events respecting the scope of the closing scenes, we highlight the following points:

1) "Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of Spiritualism. . . . Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium."—Ibid., 588-589.

This marks the global extent of the false gospel gaining strength in the end time. "One body" reminds one of ecumenism, which may eventually develop into a union of Christian bodies with other faiths, as envisaged by the Bahai cult, which professes to "present a new and more exalted system of religious faith," (Ibid., 589) and may develop into "a grand movement for the conversion of the world."

2) As Satan works feverishly to deceive the world, the remnant church is empowered to spread the truth. "Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand."—Ibid., 612.

At this point in time, "Christendom" is still distinct and separate from the Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu and polytheistic worlds. There is a trend toward their union, but the barriers separating them are still formidable, so it may require a series of miraculous events to accelerate their union. *The Great Controversy*, 624 presents the following scenarios:

Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself. . .

As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, . . . then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. . . . This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion."

The sentence, "The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world," is a verbal allusion to Revelation 16:14. The time application is not *during* the sixth plague, but *before* the falling of the plagues—before the close of probation. This is a clue to the correct application of this verse. It indicates that the drying up of the Euphrates and the going forth of the evil spirits are not two immediate, consecutive events. The drying up of its waters is in itself the sixth plague, while the activity of the evil spirits is a protracted process starting earlier than and culminating in the drying up of the waters. The "waters" in real life are people, and the "drying up" is depicted in *The Great*

Controversy, 654-656.

Note that the spreading of truth and the teaching of error are both attended by signs and wonders. The greatest lying wonder Satan can work, apart from personating Christ, is to bring down fire from heaven. But no unusual sign or wonder on God's side is described in either the Bible or the Spirit of prophecy. This leaves the way open for reasonable conjectures. I venture to make one based on the hiding of the ark of the covenant.

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in the great drama of deception,
Satan himself will personate Christ,
. . . then, in his assumed character of Christ,
he claims to have changed the Sabbath to
Sunday, and commands all to hallow
the day which he has blessed. . . .
This is the strong, almost
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delusion."*

To our knowledge, the Lord has sealed only one book in the Bible—the book of Daniel, and His purpose was to open the seal in the time of the end. See Daniel 12:4. Likewise, God has hidden only one object of great value—the ark of the covenant—and His purpose in hiding it was obviously to bring it to light again, also in the time of the end. We read,

Before the temple was destroyed, God made known to a few of his faithful servants the fate of the temple, which was the pride of Israel, and which they regarded with idolatry, while they were sinning against God. He also revealed to them the captivity of Israel. These righteous men, just before the destruction of the temple, removed the sacred ark containing the tables of stone, and, with mourning and sadness, secreted it in a cave where it was to be hid from the people of Is-

rael, because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hid. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted.— *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 414.

In the apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees, chapter 2, verses 4-8, we have the following record:

Further, this document records that, prompted by a divine message, the prophet gave orders that the Tent of Meeting and the ark should go with him. Then he went away to the mountain from the top of which Moses saw God's promised land. When he reached the mountain, Jeremiah found a cave-dwelling; he carried the tent, the ark, and the incense-altar into it, then blocked up the entrance. Some of his companions came to mark out the way, but were unable to find it.

When Jeremiah learnt of this he reprimanded them. "The place shall remain unknown," he said, "until God finally gathers his people together and shows mercy to them. Then the Lord will bring these things to light again, and the glory of the Lord will appear with the cloud, as it was seen both in the time of Moses and when Solomon prayed that the shrine might be worthily consecrated."—*New English Bible, the Apocrypha*, p. 217.

One may not give full credence to this apocryphal remark, but if God did not plan for the ark to appear again, He could have taken it to heaven to avoid the lake of fire, even as the tree of life was taken to heaven before the Deluge. See Revelation 22:2.

So we note that the very fact that it was hidden predicates that the ark will one day come to light.

To be Concluded

The Titanic Economy

by Dave M. Lee

During the last financial quarter of 1998, the ratio of savings to consumer purchases was in the negative. In other words, people bought more than they saved. This is significant because in economic terms, savings equals investment. The fact that savings were in the negative means that investment was also in the negative. The only time in the past 70 years that the savings ratio was in the negative was just before and during the Great Depression.

There is a difference though. The reason why the savings ratio was negative during certain parts of the 1920s and 1930s was that people were so scared of the banks failing that they just held their money in cash at home and their savings were all that was left for them to live on. Therefore, at that time, most families had to spend their savings in order to survive.

The reason why the savings ratio was negative during the last part of 1998 was that people were so elated with their stock market gains, that they just went into an 'orgy' of spending. Part of the reason why the U.S. economy is doing so well right now in 1999, is that it is a result of that consumer spending spree in 1998 which has carried over into 1999.

Although the reasons behind the negative savings ratio during the 1920-30s

to the present time are vastly different, the effects are still the same. Since savings equals investment, the fact that Americans are spending so much means that the country's investment levels are at dangerously low levels. Little investing now means that the country will suffer a lower standard of living in the future. In other words, the future economic foundation of this nation is in peril because people in the U.S. cannot seem to restrain their 'extravagant' spending practices in the current environment which is fostering a false sense of reality.

During 1997-1998, the world witnessed the Asian economic disaster. This was caused by investors in Asia putting their money into speculative and risky real estate deals and stock market purchases instead of putting their money into more overall productive assets such as factories and technological research.

Economists, to this day, cannot give a definite answer as to why the whole world economy didn't fall apart in 1998; or why we didn't at least fall into a global recession.

God truly is holding back the winds of strife and leading those men, such as Greenspan, to make the 'perfect' decisions in order to keep the economic structure of this world from total collapse.

ations has a refining and ennobling influence upon the mind, referring it to the Maker and Master of all. *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 136. (1876)

Expect No Miracle to Undo Results of Wrong Course

I look at these flowers, and every time I see them I think of Eden. They are an expression of God's love for us. Thus He gives us in this world a little taste of Eden. He wants us to delight in the beautiful things of His creation, and to see in them an expression of what He will do for us.

He wants us to live where we can have elbow room. His people are not to crowd into the cities. He wants them to take their families out of the cities, that they may better prepare for eternal life. In a little while they will have to leave the cities.

You may ask why I would mention the Asian economic disaster. I mention it because what happened in Asia is on a miniature scale of what I foresee will happen in the United States shortly. Right now, the stock market is over-inflated. This includes such exchanges as the NYSE, Nasdaq, and Amex. Just as it was in Asia, we are beginning to see the signs of a speculative bubble. People are putting mass quantities of their money into the stock market over-inflating its real value.

Unfortunately, this artificial rise in the increase of stock prices cannot and will not continue. I can see that the Dow Jones Industrial average may reach 11000 this year—but I am not sure.

What I am sure of is that the market is in for a correction in the next two years if not sooner and the higher it goes, the more drastic will be its decline.

We are the Titanic generation, living for the past six years in unprecedented economic growth and luxury. Do not invest money in the stock market unless you know you can lose it with a smile and walk away.

If you are already investing, count the cost if you were to lose it all, and act accordingly.

May God guide you to be faithful stewards of that which He has given you.

These cities are filled with wickedness of every kind—with strikes and murders and suicides. Satan is in them, controlling men in their work of destruction. Under his influence they kill for the sake of killing, and this they will do more and more. . . .

If we place ourselves under objectionable influences, can we expect God to work a miracle to undo the results of our wrong course?—No, indeed. Get out of the cities as soon as possible, and purchase a little piece of land, where you can have a garden, where your children can watch the flowers growing, and learn from them lessons of simplicity and purity. *General Conference Bulletin*, March 30, 1903.

—Chapter titled, *Appeal to Parents, in Country Living*, 12-17.

Appeal—Continued from page 7. against a flood of temptations which threaten to overpower the minds of your children. They need employment and variety. The sameness of their home makes them uneasy and restlessness, and they have fallen into the habit of mingling with the vicious lads of the town, thus obtaining a street education. . . .

To live in the country would be very beneficial to them; an active out-of-door life would develop health of both mind and body. They should have a garden to cultivate, where they might find both amusement and useful employment. The training of plants and flowers tends to the improvement of taste and judgment, while an acquaintance with God's useful and beautiful cre-

JUNE SPECIALS



Conscience—Your Inner Voice, Thomas A. Davis

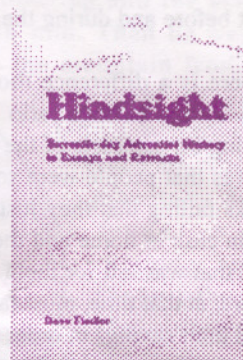
"We live in a bad day for conscience," writes the author of this little book. "Today, for many people, there are no moral categoricals. . . . Everything comes in grays." Consequently, we have a real potential for moral chaos on our planet, in which every individual does what is right in his or her own eyes. We recommend this little booklet as a useful tool offering important insights into this too often neglected and ignored but vitally important faculty of our moral being.

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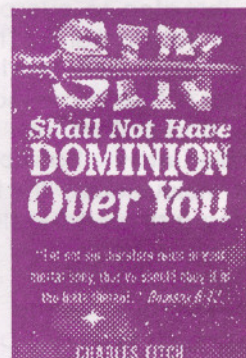
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