



Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

No. 127

OCTOBER 2020

Battle For The Universe

David Clayton



THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

The great majority of the people who live on planet earth have very little awareness of the great issues and purposes which have faced all human beings from the very beginning of life here. Most people live for a few years and return to the dust when they die, having spent their existence simply struggling to survive until their time expired. For most, life has been simply a slight step above that of a horse, or a dog or some other dumb beast. There has been no purpose or reason to their existence other than the mere necessity to survive until circumstances took them out. It is no wonder that there are so many cases of people taking their own lives, sometimes while they were still very young. The fact is, a life without meaning, an existence without some purpose greater than simply survival is ultimately pointless, and now and then

people will realize the truth of this and act accordingly.

However, the Bible reveals that every person born on this earth has a tremendous purpose to his life which has far reaching consequences. It reveals that each one of us has a part to play in settling great issues which affect the very existence of the universe in which we live. We are much more than simply creatures which exist by chance, we are more than simply specks of life aimlessly existing until we die. The entire universe is engaged in the greatest battle of all time, and each one of us is involved, whether we know it or not!

BATTLE FOR THE UNIVERSE

The Bible describes this conflict more clearly than any other source in the world. There we find the record of a rebellion which took place at the center of the universe thousands of years ago and which has been raging ever since. Through the prophet Isaiah we are able to gain an insight into some of the underlying issues involved in this rebellion, and we are introduced to the person who instigated this great uprising.

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

Lucifer was one of the most prominent of all the angels of God, but here we see that he became filled with the ambition to be elevated to the place of God. A strange desire arose in his heart to be equal with God and he allowed this intent to develop until it broke out into open rebellion against God. This rebellion spread to the rest of the angels in heaven and eventually a large percentage of them united with Lucifer in this uprising. One significant battle in this conflict is described in Revelation 12:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-9)

AN IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT

It's hard to imagine what this battle was like; Satan and his angels fought and in most illustrations where artists try to depict this war in heaven, they represent the angels as fighting with swords. But of course, angels are beings from another dimension, they are spiritual beings and the battle must have

Also in this issue:

- Christ Versus The Beast.....4
- Escaping the Chains (pt 1).....6
- Building Healthy Bones.....10

Open Face
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

October 2020

Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

Open Face is published bi-monthly, and is sent free of cost to all who desire to receive it.

Editor:David Clayton

Publishing committee:....Howard Williams

.....Karleen Williams

.....Jennifer Clayton

.....David Clayton

P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

Phone: (304) 932-4543
Jamaica: (876) 603-0821

email: vidclay@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.restorationministry.com>

been of a nature completely different to what we are accustomed to. In fact, since Satan was fighting to usurp the place of God it cannot have been a conflict based on physical force, it had to be of a different nature because Satan could never hope to overcome his Creator by using physical force. Even Satan could never lose his mind so completely as to think that he could defeat God by using physical might! But Jesus explains the way Satan works and gives us some clues as to how Satan set about to usurp the place of God:

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

Satan was a liar and a murderer from the beginning. He is the “father” of lies, he is the originator of lies, the practice began with him. Satan’s intent was to

overthrow God in some way and he knew it was impossible to do it by force. He knew that it is impossible to kill God, yet in his heart he realized that he could never achieve his ambition to be worshiped and exalted like God, as long as God was still supreme in the affections of the universe. In his heart the desire arose to eliminate God somehow, not to murder God literally, but to take him out of the way by making everyone fear him and cease worshipping him. The only way he could do this was by defacing God’s character through the use of lies and so, in order to destroy God (God’s reputation), he invented lies and used them effectively in turning many of the angels against God.

This “war” in heaven must have been something of the nature of an ideological battle, a battle of truth versus lies, a battle for the affection of heavenly beings. It was only in warfare of this kind that Satan could have hoped to have some success against God. Satan extended this battle to earth and as we can see when we look at what has happened here, his crusade has been very successful. The great majority of mankind distrusts God, is afraid of him and wants to have nothing to do with him. Many see him as a fearsome being who is to be avoided as much as possible.

SATAN’S PRINCIPLE

There is an institution called “The Church of Satan,” Which was established in the United States a few decades ago. This “church” has published a book titled, “The Satanic Bible.” When we examine some of the principles of Satanism laid out in this book, we see Satan’s philosophy of government clearly revealed. Here are some quotes from the book:

- “For I stand the forth to challenge the wisdom of the world; to interrogate the “laws” of man and of “God”!
- Before none of your printed idols do I bend in acquiescence, and he who saith “thou shalt” to me is my mortal foe!
- No creed must be accepted upon authority of a “divine” nature. Re-

ligions must be put to the question. No moral Dogma must be taken for granted – no standard of measurement deified. There is nothing inherently sacred about moral codes. Like the wooden idols of long ago, they are the work of human hands, and what man has made, man can destroy!

- Say unto thine own heart, “I am mine own redeemer.”

It is easy to see the focus of these statements. Ultimately, they are focused on self as the supreme ruler and they defy all authority and control by God. This was the root of Satan’s rebellion in heaven and it is the foundation of his government on earth.

Satan’s rebellion against God was founded on the idea that he could present a way of life that gave everyone “freedom.” Each person should be his own god in the sense that each person would choose his own lifestyle, would live as he pleased without the need to be constantly directed by God. Satan’s argument was that we do not need God to direct us, we are already capable of being good and doing good. All we need is to know what is right and what is wrong, and we will naturally do what is right, without the need for God. The heart of Satanism is really the focus on living life without interference by God, it is the philosophy of independence of God.

We see this Satanic philosophy expressed in the temptation of Eve in the garden of Eden. Satan told her that if she ate from the tree, she would obtain the “knowledge of good and evil,” and would become like God. Knowing good and evil, she would no longer need God.

SATAN’S SYSTEM - RULES

But if each man governs himself and is his own god, how can there be any kind of harmony and cooperation when individuals come together and form a society? There must be some kind of system to ensure that people who each have their own idea of what is right and wrong, may live together in some kind of order. The answer is that is that there

has to be a system of rules to control people and to compel them to conform to the will of a ruler, or to the will of the majority. This is the basis and the foundation of all human government, and it is the fundamental element in Satan's system of government.

Interestingly, even though Satan presents the ideal that each person becomes his own ruler, living by his own ideas of right and wrong, yet ultimately, his kingdom demands a system of rules to compel everyone to live by the decisions of others. Ultimately it makes men subject to other men and does not create freedom at all, but a system which always becomes tyrannical, where a few people dominate, control and enslave others.

History has revealed that human governments can never produce anything that is lastingly good. When men are given the task of governing themselves and others, the result is corruption, injustice and ultimately, anarchy. There is nothing but selfishness and abuse. These systems are able to bring some level of discipline by inflicting hard punishment on transgressors, but though man's natural behavior may be restrained, his heart remains the same and this is why all human governments are corrupt and fail over and over again. Even those who set up the systems to control people, do not submit to their own rules, there is corruption everywhere and these systems of government only become a means to subjugate and enslave people.

But what if God himself makes the rules? What if God explains what is good and what is evil and makes it so clear that every person knows exactly how to behave? What if man has a perfect understanding of what is morally acceptable, won't this make all the difference in the world?

The answer is no. The history of God's dealings with the nation of Israel in the time of the Old Testament reveals clearly that even if God makes the rules it does not make a difference because the process still involves human governors and human nature. This is why even

the system set up by God at Mount Sinai, with the ten commandments at the heart of it, never made the people any better because it was based on rules outside of the people, rules that were contrary to their nature. This is not God's way of government but God used this type of system as a stop-gap measure for a time, until the moment came for the establishment of his perfect government.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (Gal 3:19)

This is why it had to be replaced by God's perfect system, the system of the New Covenant.

GOD'S SYSTEM - LIFE

The only system of government which really produces good, is the system where God himself is actually living his life through his people. God's perfect system of government arrived when the New Covenant was established by Jesus Christ. The following verses give us a clear understanding of this New Covenant principle which is the vital difference between God's government and all other governments:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer 31:33)

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. (Ezek 36:26-27)

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth

with you, and shall be in you. (John 14:16-17)

The great difference is that God governs his people by coming to personally live inside of them and to fulfill his will in their lives by directing and motivating them from the inside. God's way is to give his life to each individual and in this way, he creates a perfect system. Just as the members of a body work together in perfect harmony without the need of external government, so God's people work in perfect harmony without the need of human government, because one head controls all. The one thing necessary in such a government is that each subject yields himself to God so that he may receive the spirit of God and be born again. Such a system of government is impossible for anyone else in the universe, including Satan. All other systems of government, man-made or Satan-made, must work from the **outside**, but God's way is perfect, he governs his people and achieves his purposes by personally directing his people from **within**. This is the perfect system of government and it is the one system that cannot fail. In the verses above God refers to this system and describes it in this way:

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts"

"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes"

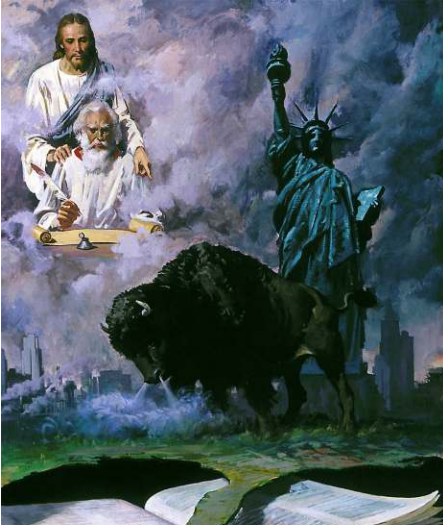
"the spirit of truth . . . shall be in you."

This is the great principle behind the New Covenant, the foundational element that makes it the perfect system. It is perfect because it enables the perfect God to become one with his people and to carry out his will through them.



—

Christ Versus The Beast



A CONTEST OF SYSTEMS

As we saw in the previous article, the controversy between God and Satan is not primarily a contest focused on *individuals*; It is not a contest to see who is more powerful, or who is more popular, it is a contest between two systems of government. Satan's complaint was not directed against God as a person, but against his system. It's a question of which system of government is the better way, which system produces the happiest and best results. We have to always remember this.

Satan's system is based on independence of God and dependence on self. It emphasizes morality through receiving the knowledge of good and evil but without God himself being involved. It is the theory that good information will make people into good people (Gen 3:5). The government of God on the other hand, is based on God imparting his own life (his spirit) to each intelligent being and in this way, producing his own righteous lifestyle in each one. It is not focused on obtaining moral information (rules and commandments), but it is focused on obtaining a righteous life (the spirit of God in Christ).

What Satan presented to the universe was a system of government where each person was to be "free," from God's dominion. Satan represented this as a

"better way," and his theory was that since everyone was created good, each person would naturally do what was right if he knew right from wrong. Self-dependence, directed by moral awareness, was the basis of his government.

But God is the only one who is good (Mark 10:18) and because this is so, no one can be good without God. It is impossible to be independent of God and still live a holy life. Satan's philosophy of government is an impossible dream and was doomed to failure from the very start. But since nobody knew this at the beginning, the universe had to be allowed to discover this fact for itself and this is why Satan has been allowed to continue his rebellion for so long. It is the long process by which the lesson is being deeply embedded in the hearts of all intelligent beings, that nobody can be good without God. The only way to live meaningful lives is to surrender those lives to God.

THE GOVERNMENT OF SINAI

At Mount Sinai God met with the children of Israel and gave them an elaborate set of rules which was to govern every aspect of their lives. These rules not only directed how they were to behave in their personal lives, but it also laid out a system of government and worship which included administrators, as well as religious intermediaries called "priests." The first head of this system was Moses and when he died he was succeeded by Joshua. From time to time different men would arise who would lead out and govern Israel and these were referred to as, "judges."

Many religious bodies today, try to establish their organization on principles similar to that which God established in the time of Moses. God made Moses the head of Israel, a governor who had direct communication with God and who had absolute power over the people. He made all the important decisions and nobody was allowed to question

his authority. He was assisted by other men who were chosen by God and given a special measure of the spirit so they could help in bearing the responsibility of government. God directed Moses in establishing this system and this fact has led to the conclusion that this was a perfect system of government, this is why so many seek to emulate this pattern. But we should always remember that this system was only a type or a shadow, an illustration of something else.

Moses' system was not a perfect system of government, it was not God's ideal even though God had established it, it was only a *shadow* of the perfect system, it merely illustrated something far greater. The apostle Paul establishes this point in the following verse:

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (Heb 10:1)

THE TWO AGENCIES

Throughout the Bible, one being appears over and over who fights the battles of God. This person is God's representative who speaks on his behalf. Sometimes he is referred to as, "the angel of the Lord," and in several places he is identified as "Michael the archangel," "the great prince." In fact, in Revelation 12:7, he is revealed as the one who led the angels of God in the war against Satan and his angels. The New Testament Scriptures reveal that this person is none other than the begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ who was incarnated and became a man in order to bring a final end to Satan's rebellion. By becoming a man Jesus would finally completely defeat Satan, make it clear that his accusations against God were nothing but malicious lies and in the process, make a way for all men to be delivered from his dominion.

Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; (Jer 51:20)

So although the great battle taking place in the universe is a battle between Satan and God, it is Jesus Christ who fights on behalf of God, he is God's chosen warrior who speaks and acts on God's behalf, so the two antagonists are really Jesus and Satan.

Yet when we come to the book of Revelation, the central figure is the beast. Satan is represented as being there, somewhere in the background, but the visible, active enemy of God's people on earth, is the beast. On the other hand, there is no equivalent, visible representative of God's people; there is no earthly warrior, no worldly leader, or agency by which God meets the beast in battle.

This fact is highlighted in the judgment scene in Daniel chapter 7. There we see that the decision of the judgment concerns two entities; the beast and Christ. Notice the verdict of the judgment; the decision is, condemnation for the beast and an everlasting kingdom for Christ (Dan 7:9-14). It is clear that the conflict is being presented as being between Christ and the beast. But why is the beast presented as the opposite, the equivalent to Christ?

Let us remember that the beast is an organization, an empire, a worldly kingdom operating and dominating by means of human government, as dictated by human wisdom. It is clear that Satan is directing the beast in the background, but the beast is the visible, active agent in carrying out the work of Satan. There is a clear worldly government directed and controlled by human beings even though it is Satan who is really at work.

Christ does not have such an agency, in his kingdom, there is no worldly government! The Catholic Church is convinced that it is God's organization, with the Pope being the vicar of Christ, God's special chosen instrument. Many other denominations such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, the Seventh day Adventists etc. believe and

teach that their governing body such as the General Conference, is God's mouthpiece on earth. This is one of the great errors which exists in the Christian world – and in the religious world in general. The shortsightedness of men, and their misconception of the gospel always results in them trying to enclose God's work in a human box.

It is true that God has a **movement** on earth through which he works. This is the church of Christ which is also referred to as "the body of Christ." However, this "body of Christ" does not operate on the same principles of government and organization as human governments, and its principles of operation are very different to the government of the beast system.

The false idea is that the main difference between Christ's Church and the system of the beast is the difference in the rules which govern each system. You will hear it emphasized that the Beast kingdom commands the observance of Sunday, while God commands the observance of the Sabbath. The difference between God's system and the Beast's system is represented as being primarily, a contest between **different rules**. But this is an erroneous view, the real difference is much more significant than that.

To put it simply, the system of Satan's government is the Beast – a system of government based on rules and human control. The system of God's government is Christ – a system of government based on the impartation of life and Christ's control. In other words, Christ's government is himself, there is no mediator between himself and the people of his kingdom.

WORSHIPING THE DRAGON

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? (Rev 13:4)

In the system of human government, ultimately, it is Satan who is glorified and worshipped. The real antagonist is

the devil, the controversy is between Christ and him. Yet again, we see that there is this medium who stands in the middle called the beast. Satan cannot operate in the physical realm without a human agency. He is made visible and his principles of government are displayed through the principles of the beast system. This relationship is not by means of demon-possession as we understand it, it is not that the beast becomes the direct medium of Satan as was the case of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, not at all. What we see here is that the Beast kingdom is Satan's agent in the sense that it adopts and operates on Satan's principles of government. It believes in, and establishes a government based on the philosophy of the Devil and in this sense, it is Satan's kingdom. As men "worship" the beast by submitting to his principles and embracing them, they are in reality worshipping Satan, the dragon.

So it is really Christ's kingdom versus the kingdom of the beast, but the real issue is the system by which each kingdom is governed and since the beast kingdom operates on the principles of Satan, it is Satan who is really worshiped when men submit to the beast.

Again we need to remember the great difference between Christ's system of government and Satan's system of government. Christ governs his people by coming to live inside of each individual by his spirit, and so personally directing and enabling each member of his kingdom. This is the foundational principle of Christ's system – "*Christ in you, the hope of glory!*" (Col 1:27). Every other system of government is based on the completely different principle of Satan's philosophy. This philosophy that created beings are capable of being good and doing good, if they are aware of "good and evil (Gen 3:1-5)." Satan's kingdom is based on the principle of morality, it is the philosophy that if created beings are required to conform to rules and moral principles, the result will be a society which is stable, happy and prosperous.

Continued on page 11

Escaping the Chains (part 1)

Howard Williams



PREFACE

It is a fact that we all came into life with no knowledge. All that we know today is an accumulation of all that we have been taught since we were babies. Our parents or guardians were our first instructors, and our customs, culture, and environment are constantly impacting us. We have acquired much of our knowledge from associating and interacting with others. All that we know at this very moment is directly related to what we have learned since we were born.

What is very interesting is that the knowledge we possess is not new, but has been a transfer of old knowledge which has been passed on through our teachers. In fact, the wisest man that ever lived penned it this way, *“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing.”* (Ecc 1:9)

What do you understand this to mean? I realize that my knowledge is not original; it is the same knowledge that my teachers and instructors had that has been passed on to me. That is how cultures and religions are maintained for generations. Consider, for a moment, the idea of receiving a scholastic degree from an institution. The curriculum is

prepared by teachers who have been taught the same things that they teach. You are required to understand it the exact way your teacher or professor understands it, and so you are graded accordingly. What is even more interesting is that when the institution is satisfied that you have learnt what they taught you, they then accredit you with a degree. This degree says to the world that you are a very learned person.

What if the knowledge that was acquired is flawed, how do we deal with that? Well, the history of the world is a great lesson book. The men who stood against popular opinions were persecuted or even killed for presenting the facts as they saw it – even if their knowledge was accepted afterwards. An example of this is the shape of earth. It was believed for centuries that the earth was flat and if you walked far enough you would fall off. The scientists who challenged this belief were ridiculed and suffered for it, but today their work is an accepted fact. The point I am making is that all knowledge is relative to the times and revelations of the times.

In the religious realm it is different. There is always a standard for what is believed in religion. For the Muslims it is the Koran, for the Hindu it is the Bhagavad Gita, for the Buddhist it is the Tipitaka and for Christians it is the Bible. What is the accepted norm has been for centuries, and any dissent from the established teaching will result in excommunication from that religious group. This explains why there are splinter groups in these religions.

In light of what I have just shared, I give you my story as a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA), which is a Christian religion, and how I grew up with all the influences that led me to where I am at present. There is no intention on my part to denounce or disqualify the SDA church in any way, but just to let my experience be known. If, by any means,

my story can help anyone in a similar situation find true peace and rest in Jesus, it will have accomplished its goal. May you read with an open mind and be honest in your conclusions.

CHILDHOOD

On August 13, 1970, a son was born to Vincent and Rachel Williams. They were good Seventh Day Adventists, and the thrill of this newborn so overjoyed the family that they named him after their favorite preacher, H.M.S. Richards, giving him the initials H.M.S. Williams. His father, a carpenter and builder by trade, was also a church elder and founder of a new SDA branch. His mother was a housewife and a backbone support to his father. So it was that I, Howard Micheal Stanley Williams, the second son and fifth child of the family, came into this world and began my life under the discipline and beliefs of the SDA church.

CHURCH INFLUENCE

Seventh Day Adventists worship on Saturday, which they call Sabbath. Every Sabbath my family would go to church. We would spend the entire day, from morning till evening, taking part in the various schedule of classes, worship hour, lunch break, and other activities. This was the core of my religious education throughout childhood.

The church has a routine program for Saturday. It begins at 9:15am with a song service. This is followed by Sabbath School, conducted by someone who is called the superintendent who leads out in the preliminaries of introduction. After the introduction comes the mission story, providing a little glimpse into how the SDA message is advancing in foreign lands. Once these preliminaries are accomplished, the school is called to order and divided into the different classes for the study of the lesson. After about 40 minutes a bell is rung signifying 5 minutes to

end, then the final bell brings the lesson to a close. Once again, the superintendent makes some remarks in closing and so ends Sabbath School.

Next is time for Lay Activities. The term 'Lay' is from the word 'Laity', referring to everyone in the church who is not clergy, so this deals with the activities of the church members. During this time a report is taken up where some questions are asked from a report card and answers recorded. It looks something like this:

1. Number of missionary contacts made
2. Pieces of missionary literature distributed
3. Persons helped
4. Articles of clothing
5. Cash expended and value of food
6. Numbers reporting

Once this report is taken, the Lay Activities leader gives a short encouragement to the church to continue to work for God. After this a short break, followed by the 11 o'clock worship service. This is the service with a sermon and is sometimes called Divine Service. A lunch break runs from the end of Divine Service to 3 o'clock, which is time for Bible class. During Bible class one person, maybe the leader or someone he appoints, will go through a subject or belief of the church and show the Biblical foundation for such a belief. Seventh Day Adventists use what is called a proof text method to prove their belief; this means to find two or more verses that support what you teach.

After the Bible class, which usually lasts about an hour, comes the Missionary Volunteers (MV) service where the youth do their part in singing, poetry, acting or whatever the format takes. Sometimes there are Bible games like *Sword In Hand* and Bible drills. The last service of the day, Vespers, is just a few minutes of encouragement for the coming week and sometimes a few testimonies from the brethren.

In addition to the full day of Sabbath services and activities, there were also evening meetings on Sunday and Wednesday. The Sunday meetings were

called evangelistic meetings and consisted of singing and a sermon. Wednesday evening was prayer meeting time. As its name implies, prayer meeting included time and opportunity for prayer, but also for reading from a book, usually one written by Ellen White.

Ellen White is among the pioneers of the SDA church. She is believed to have had encounters with God through visions which she received for the church. These visions and instructions from God are written in many volumes of books and periodicals. Although she died in 1915, her influence on the church was so great that even today her writings are used in every aspect of church life. How the Seventh Day Adventists understand and interpret the writings of Ellen White influences the way they dress, the way they eat and how they live from day to day.

In the Adult Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly, the beliefs of the church are put forth in lesson format. Questions are asked and the scriptures are normally used to answer; however, most scripture is then supported by an Ellen White quote. Very rarely is another author quoted and, if so, it is always someone of renown within SDA history.

Every SDA church member is taught that the Seventh Day Adventist church is God's only church in the world and all the other denominations are false, but that one day God will bring them to the truth of the Sabbath worship and, one day, all true Christians will become a part of the Seventh Day Adventist church.

I grew up with the great moral principles as taught by the church and my knowledge increased rapidly.

LIFE AT HOME

At home, my family gathered to worship every morning and most evenings. During these times all the members of my family were always present. Since my father was the church leader I was greatly influenced and learned a lot from him through personal studies and questions. As I grew older and started school I became known for my ability with

Bible verses, most times dominating other students with my knowledge – especially of the Sabbath.

In my early years my mother would read the Sabbath School lesson story to my siblings and I. After the story we were supposed to memorize the topic of the lesson and the scripture memory verse. The stories were always kids' Bible stories and I enjoyed them very much. As I grew, these lessons increased my memory capacity and more verses were added through what is called the Morning Watch. (The Morning Watch is a booklet of verses for the entire year at one per day. These are also used in the Sabbath afternoon Missionary Volunteers program.)

At an early age I felt the call of God on my heart and wanted to be a Christian. I wanted it so badly that I would always be at the altar calls crying. When I was eight years of age I requested baptism. It is the practice with Seventh Day Adventists that, before baptism, the candidate stands before the church to answer questions from a book called the Church Manual. Before the questions are asked the pastor reminds the candidates to answer each question in the affirmative. Upon answering these questions in the affirmative, the candidate is eligible for acceptance to baptism.

I was baptized at Camp Verly, at a large gathering when hundreds of people were baptized from all over central Jamaica, and was welcomed into the family of God and given the right hand of fellowship. In my understanding, I was now a Christian and my siblings would always be watching me to make sure I lived and behaved like one.

Tragedy struck early in the family: the year following my baptism my eldest brother, who was also the Adventist Youth leader, died at the age of seventeen on a church trip. But being Christians and following our father's example, my family trusted God and moved on, with pain in our hearts from the loss yet with the joy of knowing we would see him again.

My family had the shield of a strong

father image. Even when other influences came in from school and elsewhere this training prevailed. The greatest influence for bad happened after I passed my examination for high school. Then I had to travel by minibus to school and worldly music was played morning and evening. After listening to this kind of music, I found myself rhyming my own lyrics. In the early mornings when going about my chores away from home, taking the goats to find pasture, I would practice. When I got perfect I told my smaller brothers and after they learned they would start singing. My father would hear and after finding out the truth he would tell me how ashamed he was of me.

As I matured and grew up, I became more responsible. When I was fifteen I was nominated for my first church office. I became the Lay Activities secretary. My role was to add up the report every month and present to the church a report of the great work they had been doing through the giving of clothing, literature, help, food and cash. This report was sent to the conference where it was added to all the other reports, then those conference reports were sent on to the General Conference, the headquarters, and they compiled a big report about the great work the SDA church had been doing all around the world. It is a good feeling to belong to something of such magnitude. After serving in this capacity for two years, at the age of seventeen I was nominated to serve as a church leader, but was declined by my father who said I was too young.

With such a heavy religious influence, my life was channeled in a path that led a certain direction. I now realize that the life of every individual alive has been impacted by their childhood. You become what you are taught. In fact, the Bible teaches this principle of life, *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”* (Prov. 22:6) This can also be seen with the influence of other religions on their people.

EXPANDING HORIZONS

I took a course in mechanical engineer-

ing at school. At eighteen years of age, right after graduating, I moved away from home and began working at an SDA food factory. Now I was in the real world gaining first hand experience of how life was on my own. I was living in the home of my sister and her husband but was on my own. I could go home when I wanted or stay out as long as I wanted, but never felt the need to do so; in fact, the same week I began work, a friend invited me to visit an SDA church. I was asked to make it my home church. Since it was so much like the church in which I grew up, I started worshiping there every Sabbath. It was a small, poor church, but the fellowship was warm and inviting to a country boy like me. Over the course of time I was elected to different positions, eventually becoming one of the elders.

It was in this church that my training as a child was put to the test. I shared all that I learned and studied with these brethren, keeping their focus on our mission to evangelize the world. A few years after becoming elder I started a little publishing ministry called *“The Everlasting Gospel,”* writing some tracts and mailing them out to people, using a phone book to get the contacts. This caught the attention of a brother from another SDA church and he began to work along with me. We started having street meetings on Sunday evenings and doing other evangelistic ventures together. I will call him brother W.

MEETING THE LOVE OF MY LIFE

It was at my work place that I met the love of my life, a very quiet, soft spoken young lady who was attending high school. Karleen was an SDA from St. Elizabeth, a neighboring parish to where I was working. The same friend who invited me to the local church at the beginning also introduced us. She, too, was invited by him to attend our church and we all worshipped there together.

After finishing high school Karleen went on to college. Finally, after she graduated, we decided to get married. We had a morning wedding in our pastor’s front yard with just our immediate

families and friends.

She had been with me through all our evangelizing as a singer and as my wife she continued to sing with me as I played the guitar. We make a wonderful duet.

A NEW DISCOVERY

I can honestly say I am always open minded. I have learned over the years to always listen to the opinion of others and try to understand the point they are making, then to compare their teaching with the scriptures. I have met people of many different persuasions and am always willing to talk and share ideas. I met a brother about whom I had heard things for years. I will call him Brother C.

Brother C had been disfellowshipped from the SDA church. By this I mean his membership with the church had been removed. For any person to reach such a place is very, very bad in SDA thinking because we are taught that the SDA church is God’s true church. If you are not a member of this church then you are lost and will not make it to heaven. So when I met this brother and spoke with him for a while, I asked to understand what happened in his experience with the church and why he was put out. He consented to talk with me and shared with me just what happened.

He explained to me about some strange ecumenical meeting that took place in another SDA church in the capitol city of our country. He, being a leader in one of the churches, wrote a letter to the conference and asked about the events that took place. He got no answer. He asked his pastor and others and still no answer, so finally his congregation made a plan to boycott the harvest ingathering for that year. The harvest ingathering is a begging venture of the church. We are given magazines with a report of some project the church is working on and the members are sent to beg money to support this project. I had been personally involved with this from childhood. A goal is set for the church to reach, then a super goal, so the membership is then divided into the



goal (which is the first to reach) and the amount is set for each member to get. We would each be given a card to record names and amounts and would set out to achieve our personal assigned portion of the goal.

It was not until Brother C's church decided not to participate in this money venture that they gained the attention of the conference. This attention came in the form of constant arraignment from the pulpit as the pastor began to preach every Sabbath about the importance of following church authority and doing what the conference says. This continued unabated until it became actually painful to worship at the church. Finally, one week Brother C decided to worship at his home the following Sabbath. The members agreed to worship with him. With still no explanation from the conference and a decision against participation in the ingathering still firm by the church, the president of the conference came to worship there that Sabbath. All who were absent were disfellowshipped, over thirty members all at once.

Upon hearing this story my eyes were opened to another side of my well-loved and respected church. I could see immediately that this action was not Christ-like or Christian. I began listening to tapes by other speakers which brother C gave me. As I listened, I learned things about my church that I had known nothing about. I had been only aware of what was happening in my own church and maybe some neighboring churches, but not on a world-wide level. The internet was still some distance in the future, so we had to go by these tapes and documented evidence we received from overseas. In all of this I never had a reason to doubt my church or the principles it stood for, I simply saw that some men in positions of authority abused their position by the decisions they made.

AN EYE OPENER

It was during these times that I had to rely on the Bible as my guide. My friend, brother W, was asked to trans-

port our pastor and his wife to the capitol city. During this drive he was playing a tape we had received from Brother C. This tape was talking about the SDA church and the corruptions that were entering. The pastor's wife asked for the speaker's name, saying he sounded like a speaker on a tape which she had at her home and that the message sounded similar. After returning from the city, brother W asked if he could hear their tape that she had mentioned. They gave it to him with careful instructions to allow no one else but me to hear. Because of our close relationship, he came straight to my house for us to listen together. It was a VHS tape so we watched the sermon, presented by a strangely named guy called Bill Stringfellow. His topic was "The Rubber is Meeting the Road." I thought it was a very good presentation. At the end of the tape was his contact information. I got the phone number and called him immediately, telling him I appreciated his message. He asked for my mailing address. About a week later I got a small envelope in the mail.



It was the strangest mail I have ever received: a small piece of yellow index card with a drawing in red ink. The picture was depicting a baseball or cricket game. You could see the bowler bowled the ball and the batsman hit the ball, and a fielder was under the ball while the ball was in mid-air. Then a bold question was asked at the bottom, "Did you catch it, or did you miss it?" The address and phone number was given for you to find out, so I called again to see what this was all about. He said he would send it to me by mail. Finally it arrived, two VHS tapes entitled, "The Red Flag is Waving, pt.1&2". Little did I know that what seemed to be just two tapes would cause the great-

est travail in my life.

As I had now become accustomed to do, I called brothers W & C (my evangelizing friend and the disfellowshipped brother) to tell them about the tapes. We arranged to view them that same evening. They were very long recordings but the presentations were of such gripping magnitude that we were glued to the screen. The subject with which these tapes dealt was God. Who is He? Is He a trinity? Of course, during this time I am a Christian, so I believe in the trinity as taught by the SDA church: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, three co-eternal, co-existent ones. I watched this man use the Bible and tear this doctrine to shreds. My heart was uneasy, my stomach churning. My foundation was being attacked – and he was using *my* proof texts to show the inconsistency with the rest of scripture.

Brother C said that some years back he studied into this and saw things very similar but never saw the importance. I was flabbergasted to say the least. I saw that now I needed to research this thing properly to prove this man wrong, because Seventh Day Adventists are people of the Bible. I determined I would go through the texts which he used and show that God is, indeed, a Trinity.

The more I studied, the more I saw that I was wrong and the Bible right. It was very, very hard to accept. So, since I was one of the church elders and believed in the counsel of Solomon who said, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." (Prov. 11:14), I went to church the following Sabbath and called a meeting with all the officers under me. I shared with them what I had found and asked them to look at the subject with me and we would discuss it more the next Sabbath. They all agreed and I left that meeting with the understanding that together, as a people, we would examine this issue.

SURPRISE, SURPRISE, SURPRISE

Then came the most shocking experience of all. The next morning (Sunday)

Strength Training for Optimal Health

Lenworth Frankson



According to the American Heart Association, Strength training, also known as weight or resistance training, is physical activity designed to improve muscular fitness by exercising a specific muscle or muscle group against external resistance, including free-weights, weight machines, or your own body weight. Strength training is not just about body builders lifting weights in a gym. Regular strength or resistance training does help to prevent the natural loss of lean muscle mass that comes with aging and it is an important part of overall fitness for people of all ages, particularly those with health issues like obesity, arthritis and heart conditions.

STRONGER AND FITTER:

Muscle strength makes it easier for us to do the things we need to do on a day-to-day basis, especially as we get older and naturally start to lose muscle mass. This type of exercise involves strengthening and toning muscles by contracting them against a resisting force. There are actually two types of resistance training:

- Isometric resistance: This involves contracting your muscles against a nonmoving object, such as against the floor in a push-up.
- Isotonic strength training involves contracting your muscles through a range of motion as in weight lifting.

IMPROVES HEART HEALTH

A recent study conducted at Iowa State University shows that weight lifting can greatly reduce one's risk of stroke or heart attack. The study focused on nearly 13,000 men and women at the Aerobics Center Longitudinal Study. The participants who lifted weights for less than one hour per week reduced their risk of a cardiovascular event by 40 to 70 percent. Spending more than an hour per week in the gym did not necessarily produce more health benefits to the participant. This study was one of the first to research how resistance exercise could affect one's risk of heart disease. The results showed that activities like weight lifting could have unique benefits for the heart that are independent of aerobic exercises like running and walking, both of which are typically recommended to promote heart health.

PROTECTS BONE AND MUSCLE

At about age 30 we start losing as much as 3 to 5 percent of lean muscle mass per year due to aging. According to a study published in October 2017 in the Journal of Bone and Mineral Research, just 30 minutes twice a week of high intensity resistance and impact training will improve functional performance, as well as bone density, structure, and strength in postmenopausal women with low bone mass. Muscle strengthening activities help preserve or increase muscle mass, strength, and power, which are essential for bone, joint, and muscle health as we age.

As it improves your muscle mass, strength training also reduces your risk of osteoporotic changes to your bone and thus prevents broken hips, wrists or vertebrae from calcium loss and thinning.

KEEP THE WEIGHT OFF

Most people know that exercise such as walking, running, and cycling is a

way to help increase the number of calories you burn in a day which helps to shed extra pounds. But what is equally true is that strength training also helps, even if you're not burning a huge number of calories during your workout. Strength training is helpful for weight loss because it helps increase your resting metabolism (the rate at which your body burns calories when you're just going about your day, not exercising). This benefit continues for much longer than after an aerobic workout. A study published in the journal Obesity in November 2017 found that, compared with dieters who didn't exercise and those who did only aerobic exercise, dieters who did strength training exercises four times a week for 18 months lost the most fat (about 18 pounds, compared with 10 pounds for non-exercisers and 16 pounds for aerobic exercisers).

BETTER BODY MECHANICS.

Strength training also benefits our balance, coordination, and posture. One study showed that in older people who are at higher risk of falling which could cause a lot of injury as well as worsen physical problems, strength training reduced risk of falling by 40 percent compared with individuals who did not do strength-training exercise. In some ways balance is dependent on the strength of the muscles that keep us on your feet. It seems that the stronger those muscles, the better our balance.

Bone and muscle loss are compounded by a sedentary lifestyle, increasing the risk of loss of mobility. Weak muscles in combination with a brittle bone structure are a recipe for crippling and disabling falls.

REDUCE INSULIN RESISTANCE

Research out of Japan strengthens the case that exercise can help control glucose (blood sugar) levels in Type 2 diabetes. Scientific literature has estab-

lished that aerobic exercise and resistance, or strength, training expand the storage capacity for blood sugar in the muscle and improve insulin sensitivity, effectively reducing the negative health effects of type 2 diabetes. The findings in the new study, published in the February 2018 edition of the American Journal of Physiology, suggest that resistance exercise lessens indicators of Type 2 diabetes by increasing the effects of a protein that regulates blood sugar absorption in the body.

REDUCES BRAIN SHRINKAGE

Resistance training does help reduce shrinkage of white brain matter, thereby improving your cognition. In one study, elderly sedentary women taking part in a 12-week strength exercise program improved their cognitive ability by 19 percent. In a different new study reported in the Journal of Applied Physiology, researchers demonstrated that weight training could overcome cognitive impairment and even jumpstart the creation of new neurons. Just three resistance-training workouts a week were enough to improve cognition and boost memory performance in rats. Of course, this doesn't mean that humans who weight-train will get the same brain gains. Nevertheless, the researchers suspect that strengthening exercises may very well counteract age-related cognitive impairment and memory loss in humans.

LOWERS INFLAMMATION

Resistance training lowers inflammation in your body, an indication of most chronic disease, especially heart disease and cancer. You might have heard that you shouldn't restrict yourself to just cardio when you work out. If you're wondering why, science has the answer.

If you want to keep inflammation in your body to a minimum, lifting weights can provide benefits, according to a study from the European Journal of Applied Physiology. While high resistance training will give you the best results if you want to build mass, even low resistance training can increase the amount of some anti-inflammatory compounds, in the blood. These compounds

attack the free radicals that can trigger disease

PREVENT JOINT DAMAGE

Inactivity and muscle loss increases the potential damage to large joints, leading to arthritic changes and pain, while strength training helps prevent these changes. When a person lifts weights using the proper form and proper weight for their body and ability, weightlifting can strengthen muscles around the joints. As those muscles become stronger, the joints don't slide around as much, meaning they are more likely to work correctly, reducing the occurrence and severity of pain.



So, in conclusion, strength training is not just good for your muscles. It provides a multitude of benefits for your whole body, including improved heart health and balance, stronger bones, weight loss, and improved mental well being. Using external resistance in the form of free-weights, weight machines, resistance bands, and even your own body weight, strengthens the specific muscle or muscle group, and forces the muscles to adapt and grow stronger. We know that as we age our bodies become weaker but regular strength training can help prevent the gradual and natural loss of lean muscle mass.

The benefits of strength training are too good to neglect. So if you haven't started strength training, now is the time. Better late than never!



Christ vs The Beast

Continued from page 5

WHO DO YOU WORSHIP?

So this is really the great question before each one of us: Who do you really worship? Is your worship of God directed and controlled by human agents? Do you relate to God in a distant, second-hand way by trying to conform to a set of rules (even if they are good rules)? Is your religious life dominated by a system of government which claims to be God's agency on earth? If this is your way of life then it is clear that you are building on the principles of the government of Satan and have been caught in the great, universal deception. It is time to turn from the worship of the dragon and to submit to the government of God by allowing Christ himself to become your life, to live in you and to govern you by his spirit.

This is why the message that Christ is our righteousness is the heart of the gospel; this is why it is the answer to all the deceptions and devices of Satan, it is the reason why God's people must make sure that they allow nothing else to enter into their experience than the reality of "Jesus Christ and him crucified." He is to be to us, our everything. Through the experience of 'Christ in you,' God lives and self is put out of the way. There is no need for a government of rules and human control when God is our life, we possess the greatest element of true goodness and God's will is fulfilled in us.

God help us that we may never again be deceived by religious philosophies and governments based on Satan's system. May God's way be exalted, vindicated and justified in us, as we allow Christ to be our all in all.



Escaping The Chains

Continued from page 9

word got to our pastor that I was teaching some strange doctrine. By that week at our mid-week prayer meeting our pastor started talking about the matter as an uprising issue in the church which, according to him, should never be raised because our foundation is Biblically based. I ask for a discussion on the issue but it was never granted. Instead, they held a big meeting at the biggest church in our circuit, with five pastors, two local ministers, and three conference representatives.

It was like a kangaroo court. Our pastor preached a sermon on the Trinity for two whole hours to a full trinitarian congregation. Then, after the listening span of the people was exhausted, he asked for questions. All I had asked for was a private meeting, even with our pastor, to discuss the issues, but to this very day of my writing that has never

been done. I don't think it ever will be. I got a taste of the power of the hierarchy for myself and saw the arrogance with which they deal with issues. It was right there, in that church, on that night, that I saw more clearly than ever before that I would have nothing to do with such a system: my wife and I walked out of church that night never to return. I went home and told the Lord, "As you lead me, give me the strength to follow," and I have followed the Lord from that night to now and forever. It suddenly dawned on me that I had been following the church all my life. My entire life had been controlled by the church. My Sabbaths – every hour of them – were dictated by an authority which I claimed to be of God but was truly not. They told me when to sing, when to pray, when to study, when to stand, when to sit. Everything about the Sabbath was programmed.

This was my time to experience the love of the church for me, the love of all the brethren with whom I had fellowshiped for years upon years until we had become family, bonded together in Christ. It was a rude awakening: do you know that since that time, when my brethren passed me on the road, they would be polite enough to say hello, but that's as far as it ever went? No church member ever visited me or my wife to discuss the issue. If that was bad, even worse was the fact that our pastor, a man to whom I was so close that I even addressed him as "daddy", the pastor who married me, never even for one moment called or visited to show us our fault and bring us back to the 'fold of safety' (as they call it). That surprised me!



Open Face

*Open Face Fellowship
P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.
ph. (304) 932-4543
Jamaica: (876) 631-8555*