



Open Face

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

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Identifying The Comforter

David Clayton



For many centuries the vast majority of Christians have believed that there are three individual Persons who make up the godhead. Three entities who are co-equal and co-eternal, and who are identified as, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. In this understanding, these three Persons make up the “one God,” of the Bible, popularly referred to as, “The Trinity.” Although this concept has little support in the Bible it is widely believed and in fact it is considered to be one of the foundational beliefs of the Christian faith, an “eternal verity,” which cannot be moved.

Of course, not every Christian has believed this. There is no solid foundation for this belief in the Bible and so, of course there has been opposition to this doctrine from time to time. Today, there is a growing movement worldwide which rejects this strange concept of God, and which teaches that the one God of the Bible is the Father. Jesus Christ is not God, but the Son of God,

while the holy spirit is not a third individual, but is really the invisible presence of the Father and his Son.

This movement is growing because there is an abundance of biblical evidence to support this understanding of God. In fact, if the doctrine of the three-in-one God had not been so carefully imbedded in the minds of people for ages, it is not likely that anyone who reads the Bible would have arrived at the conclusion that God is a three-in-one Being. The evidence against it is overwhelming when one begins to look at the Scriptures with unbiased eyes.

A CHALLENGING PASSAGE

There is, however, one passage of Scripture which seems to present a strong case for the holy spirit being a third individual Being, rather than simply the invisible presence of God and His Son. This passage is found in John chapter 14. In this passage Jesus speaks of the coming of the holy spirit and refers to it as “another comforter.” It seems that He identifies the holy spirit as an individual person, separate and apart from Himself. In this article we take a closer look at John 14 and we will examine the statements made by Jesus closely. Our question is, does this passage speak of the holy spirit as a separate Person from Jesus Christ? We will begin with verses 15 and 16.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (John 14:15,16)

Here Jesus promises ANOTHER Comforter. This word “another” is the critical word which suggests to some people

that the holy spirit must be a third member of the godhead, somebody entirely distinct and separate from Jesus. At first glance it does appear that this is the reality, but as we read further in the passage other facts begin to come out which give a different understanding. In the very next verse, Jesus adds some more information which helps us to have a clearer understanding of who the holy spirit is. He says,

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 14:17)

Notice first of all that the world can neither SEE nor KNOW this comforter. He is unknown and will remain unknown to those who are not God’s people, but Jesus says that His people ALREADY know this comforter (although he has not yet come). Then Jesus says, “*he dwelleth with you.*” How can the Comforter be dwelling with them if He has not yet been given? It is clear that at this time the One who was dwelling with them was Jesus Himself. He further explains that in the future, when this Comforter comes He will be IN THEM. He then goes on to say,

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John 14:18)

Here Jesus plainly identifies Himself as

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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.

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the Comforter. He says, "I will come to you (to comfort you)." So in verse 16 He says He will give ANOTHER Comforter and then in verse 18 He says that it is He who will come to us as the Comforter. So we have two verses which seem to contradict each other. The Trinitarians grab on to verse 16, while the non-Trinitarians grab on to verse 18. But the passage is not finished yet. Let us also bear in mind that Jesus already said that when this comforter would come, he would impact on people in different ways. The world would not know him, but the people of God would have a different experience. They would know him and in fact, already knew him. The only person whom the disciples already knew was Jesus Himself. That is very clear. In the following verse Jesus expands on the point that there will be a difference in His relationship to the world and to His disciples. The world will not see Him any more, but the disciples will.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. (John 14:19)

How is this possible? Will Jesus be in-

visible to one group and visible to another? The obvious meaning is that the world will not recognize Him in the form in which He will come again, but His disciples will. This explains why Jesus refers to Himself as "another Comforter." He is coming back in another form, with another identity in which He will be unrecognizable, except by His close friends. They will recognize that it is He, but others will think that it is somebody else, "another" person. So when Jesus says, "I will send another comforter," He is speaking from the perspective of the understanding of the world, not the understanding of his friends. His friends will know that it is He, but the world will regard this Comforter as another person.

RETURN AT PENTECOST

When would this happen? What occasion was Jesus speaking of, when He would come again and be recognized by His disciples, but not by the world? He was speaking of Pentecost. Notice Jesus' next words: "Because I live, ye shall live also." At the moment when Jesus was speaking these words, there was a sense in which the disciples were dead, not alive. But Jesus says, "in that day when I come again, you will live." He is not speaking of His second coming because at that time all the world will see Him. But here, He is speaking of a time when His disciples will see Him, but the world will not. He is speaking of the day of Pentecost.

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (John 14:20)

This adds the icing to the cake. Jesus says "at that day," (that day when He would come again to His disciples, in a different form and believed by the world to be, "another,") His disciples would know something. They would know that He was in His Father, His Father was in Him, and He was in us. This is as plain as it could be made plain. The Father in Jesus and Jesus in us. This is what the Comforter is. Jesus' spirit, united with His Father's spirit and coming to us, bringing Jesus to us in another form, unrecognizable to the world, but recognized by His disciples.

At Pentecost the disciples recognized

that Jesus had come to them again and this is what Peter said to the Jews as he was preaching to them:

Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. (Acts 3:26)

Notice what the verse says; first God raised up His Son and then "sent Him to bless you." This is after the resurrection of Christ, but it is not referring to the second coming of Christ. God had sent His Son to bless the Jews. He was referring to the day of Pentecost. This was the coming of the Comforter.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. (John 14:21)

In this verse, Jesus promises to reveal or to manifest Himself to those who love Him. He is speaking of His own personal interaction with His people, not the interaction of another, third person. So Judas asks Him a straight question:

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? (John 14:22)

HIS METHOD OF COMING

Judas' question is "how?" How will Jesus show Himself to the disciples, but remain unseen by the world? We can see that Judas did not understand Jesus to be speaking of another Person. It was clear to him that Jesus was speaking of Himself, but since he did not understand the way of the spirit, He could not understand how Jesus could be present, yet not be seen by the world. This is why he asked the question.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (John 14:23)

Notice, Jesus did not say, "this is because it will not be me personally, it will be another person." No, He does not say this. Instead He emphasizes what He has already said. He and His Father will make their home with the one

who loves Him. He will be with the person, He will be in the person. This is how His disciples will know Him while the world does not even see Him. The logic behind this is simple to understand; we cannot have somebody living *inside* of us and yet not know Him.

This is the truth which lies at the heart of true Christianity. In fact, it is the greatest truth in the world. The apostle Paul refers to it as the mystery of God (Col. 1:27), *Christ in you.*” In this truth there is embodied the power of the gospel. When Christ lives in a person, He is able to do all things, sin has no more power over him, because sin cannot overcome Christ.

WHY JESUS HAD TO GO

If the question is asked, “how is it possible for Christ, one Person to live personally in hundreds of millions of persons at the same time,” the answer is, if Christ had only the power and abilities of a human being, then this would not be possible. However, the Bible does explain how it is possible in a clear way so that we do not need to be confused. It is true that when Jesus was on earth, He possessed only the abilities of a human being. He was limited as all men are limited. All His mighty works were done by the power of God dwelling in Him (John 14:10). If Jesus had remained on earth, then it would not have been possible for Him to dwell in His people. His spirit would have had only the abilities of a human spirit and the spirit of a human being does not have the capability of living in another person, much less in millions of other persons. If Jesus had remained here, the only person His spirit would have been able to fill is Jesus Himself.

This is why Jesus told His disciples,

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (John 16:7)

Jesus made it clear that He had to go, it was absolutely necessary. This comforter of whom He spoke could not come unless He first went. This is easy to understand if we realize that the Comforter is Jesus Himself in spirit

form. As long as He remained on earth with the limitations of a human body, He could not dwell in His people. However, if the comforter is somebody completely different than Jesus, then we would ask, why was it so impossible for the Comforter to come while Jesus was on earth? The fact is, Jesus had to go back to heaven and be *glorified*. This is exactly what the Bible tells us had to happen before the holy spirit could come.

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (John 7:37-39)

Notice the condition which was necessary before the holy spirit could come: Jesus first had to be glorified. Until this happened, the holy spirit could not come. So then, the question is, what was this glorification of Jesus? What was involved in Jesus being glorified? What made it so necessary that He must go before the holy spirit could come? Jesus gives us a clue in John 17 when He says,

And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (John 17:5)

Do we see what is involved here? Perhaps there are some who believe that the glorifying of Jesus was simply a legal ceremony in heaven where Jesus was praised and formally assigned authority over the universe. This is the great misconception which has obscured the plan of salvation for generations. Many of the greatest events in the life and work of Jesus Christ have been viewed as simply “legal transactions,” and this has severely hampered our understanding of what Christ really means to us.

In the verse just quoted, Jesus reveals that His glorification was to be with the Father’s *own self!* What did He mean by this? This signifies that Jesus was to

be personally filled with the life and power of God the Father when He returned to heaven, He would receive the fullness of the spirit of God in unlimited measure. When this took place, all the power of God Almighty would reside in Jesus, including the power to be *omnipresent* (Col. 1:19). With this power He would now be able to impart His own spirit, personally, to all His people at the same time. While His bodily form was located in heaven, His spirit (his mind and power) could at the same time dwell in each of his people in a literal way.

So the mind of Christ, the life of Christ, the life which had conquered sin, which had met Satan and defeated Him, that same life was now glorified by the power of the almighty spirit of God, and was imparted to every single one of His people who would receive Him. Therefore the glorification of Jesus was absolutely necessary in order for the comforter (Christ in spirit) to come to dwell in His people. This is why, sad as it was, He had to leave us and go back to heaven. The wonderful part is that now each of us may possess Him in a far more complete way than if He had remained here on earth with us. So the apostle Paul further emphasizes this point that Jesus had to go, His departure was a necessity, in order that He might have this power to fill all things.

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) (Ephesians 4:10)

So we see that as we look at the biblical concept of “the Comforter,” more carefully, there is no teaching that a third person will come, instead of Jesus. What we see is that it is Jesus Himself who will come back in another form, in a spirit form where He is able to dwell in all of His people at the same time.

This is why we are told so plainly in 1 John 1:3,

truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Not with a third person, but with the Father and His Son.



Jamaica Campmeeting Report

April 18-21 will be remembered as a time of wonderful fellowship, marked by a sense of the presence of God, and filled with good food from heaven's storehouse. This was the atmosphere which surrounded the Jamaican campmeeting this year.

We had our first campmeeting way back in 1996, but this was only the second time that we were hosting the campmeeting in our little chapel at Albion in Manchester. The reason why we have not had our campmeeting here more often is that the chapel is very small, only able to accommodate about 70 people comfortably and there are no facilities available for setting up tents and other camping necessities. However, we decided to make it work at the chapel this year, first of all, because renting campgrounds has become more and more expensive each year, and secondly, because it is becoming very difficult to find any place available during the popular seasons such as Summer and Easter.

So we asked the brethren to open their homes to accommodate those who were coming from far and we added on an extension to the front of the chapel, covered with tarpaulin. Those who sat under this tarpaulin would not be able to see what was happening inside the chapel, but under normal circumstances would be able to hear very well.

The brethren responded cheerfully and those who were able to make room for one or two others opened up their homes. The result was wonderful. Some slept on the floor, some shared their beds, but as a result, the fellowship was much closer and it felt more like we were one family than ever before.

Let me just say in passing that by the time next year's campmeeting arrives, we hope to be able to have it at our own campsite out in the woods. It will be very primitive and for the first year or two those who don't own tents may have to sleep in the meeting hall at nights, but we are planning on having at least a meeting hall with a floor and a roof, toilets and showers, and a kitchen. So we expect that by God's grace we won't have the problem of finding a campsite in the future. We don't expect the future here on this earth to be very long, but for however much longer we may remain here, it is a happy thought that by God's grace we will always have a place to have our campmeetings.

Because of the challenges of accommodating those who came from far away, we shortened the campmeeting by a day. It was really a long week-end, lasting from Friday evening until mid-day on Monday. Nevertheless, it was a time of spiritual feasting with the moments filled with good things.

We were disappointed that some of the brethren from far places did not turn up. We would have found somewhere to accommodate you if you had come. Nevertheless we were happy that some came from St. James, St. Elizabeth, Clarendon and Kingston. I sincerely believe that those who missed the campmeeting suffered great loss.

One unexpected surprise was that a significant number of persons from the community came to the meetings! There were also a few old friends whom we had not seen for a long time who



turned up, so the meetings were mostly packed and this was especially true on Sabbath when we had a hundred people present.

There were five speakers this year. As usual brothers Ken Corklin and Lenworth Frankson came from the USA to share with us, while brothers Howard Williams, and David Clayton were the main speakers from Jamaica. Brother Maurice Blair also took one of the meetings where he gave a stirring presentation on the need for living faith.

We always say that the messages were good, but how else can we describe the way God blessed us and opened





up our understanding with each message presented? As one brother said, "God has been leading us and opening up our understanding progressively. Last year was good, but this year, the truth has been presented even more beautifully." It goes without saying that the focus was Christ and His righteousness (is there anything else?). However, most of the sermons were focused on the relationship between Christ and the law and these were some of the clearest presentations on this issue that could be heard anywhere in the world.

We attempted to stream these sermons live over the internet and everything worked well for a while. Unfortunately however, midway through the campmeetings our server started acting up and the feed was very poor. The good news is that all the presentations are available on our YouTube channel. You can find this channel by going to www.youtube.com/user/vidjam



If you would like to watch these sermons in sequence, then select the playlist to the left entitled, "Jamaican Campmeeting 2014." We also have links to the sermons on our website on the Multimedia page.

Some of the events of this campmeeting were memorable for reasons which had nothing to do with the messages presented. We remember the pot-luck fellowship meal on Sabbath. God bless our dear sisters who managed to feed a hundred persons and did it very well. We also commend those who organized and took care of the children's programme, enabling the little ones to be blessed and to enjoy the campmeeting as well.

We appreciate, and apologize to those who got an unexpected bath when the tarpaulin covering at the front of the chapel began to sag and fill with water when rain fell on Sabbath. As an attempt was made to shake the water off, the water flowed in an unexpected direction and thoroughly soaked a few of the brethren including poor little baby Anna! But everyone took it in very good spirits and laughed it off. Later by the time we had lunch, everyone was mostly dry again and Anna didn't seem to be any the worse for her unexpected bath.



Music, as always, was a prominent feature of the campmeeting. The choir members sang their hearts out and the evident appreciation of the brethren was sufficient reward for all the long hours and sacrifices made in practicing the songs. Sister Daliah Deerr with her sons, Darren and Deandre also shared their musical talents. The children also played their part and everyone was enthralled by the medley of choruses which they presented on Sabbath

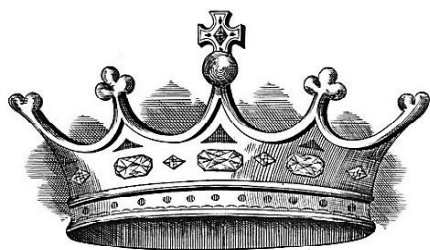


All in all it was a great blessing. We were drawn closer to God, but I am not exaggerating when I say that it was very evident that all of us who were present were drawn closer to each other. Somehow there was a warmth generated which resulted in a stronger bond of love and brotherhood. As we are so evidently at the very end of time, it is our fervent hope and expectation that as we meet for these campmeetings, our Father will continue to pour out His spirit upon us, through His Son, until we are wholly transformed into His image.



The Reign of Grace

David Clayton



It has often been said that “history” is really, “His story,” referring of course, to Jesus Christ. Christians have pointed out that Jesus is the “Desire of Ages,” the focus of all prophecy, the central target of the Scriptures. Jesus arrived on planet earth two thousand years ago, but the history of the human race with its terrible fall into sin, began four thousand years before that. Of course, Jesus came to save humanity, but the question has often been asked, why did it take so long for Him to arrive? And what happened to those people who lived before He came, what is their situation with respect to salvation?

As we have delved deeper and deeper into the subject of Christ and His righteousness, we have found these questions emerging more often. In fact, some have taken issue with our teaching that when Jesus came, He brought some benefits to the human race which had never been available before. It seems to be a popular belief that everything which Christ came to accomplish was already available before He came!

Of course, if everything which Jesus came to give us was already available before He came, then we might conclude that the coming of Jesus was not really necessary after all, or else that Jesus came simply to fulfill the legal obligations required by the law. This last idea in fact, is the concept that many Christians embrace. This false idea has infected every aspect of the Christian faith and has almost completely obscured our understanding and appreciation of the work of Christ. Therefore, of course, it has also obstructed our ability to receive the benefits of that

work of Christ. So the death of Christ is regarded as a necessity to pay a legal price demanded by someone or something, the intercession of Christ is seen as a legal issue where He literally reasons with the Father and tries to persuade Him to change His mind about us, arguing on the basis of the fact that He already paid the necessary price with His blood.

The first, and the main objection seems to be that if Jesus brought something which was not available before, then it means that people were not saved in the same way before Jesus came, as they were afterwards. This would mean that there was more than one way of salvation and of course, this is an objectionable idea. But while it is true that there is, and always was only one way of salvation, it is not true that Jesus did not bring an experience to His people which had never been available before.

In Matthew 11:11 Jesus stated:

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (Matt 11:11)

I puzzled over this verse for a long time. It never seemed to make sense because it suggests that either John the Baptist would not be in the kingdom of heaven, or else he, and all who lived before Him, would be less than all the other believers who came after the time of Christ. How could it be that we would all be in the kingdom, yet those after a certain point in time would all be “greater,” than all who lived before that time?

THE KINGDOM ESTABLISHED

I only began to understand the verse when I came to understand the wonderful truth that the kingdom of heaven was something which was established when Jesus came to this earth, but not before! John the Baptist did not experience the kingdom of heaven, neither did any of the great men who lived before Him, because it had not been established

yet. When Jesus came and preached, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” He was announcing the arrival of the kingdom, He was declaring that He was about to establish the kingdom of heaven and all who live since that time, have the opportunity to experience that kingdom. It is these who are greater than John and all who lived before, because by being in the kingdom, they have a far greater privilege than John and all who lived before him ever had.

Of course, when I say that the kingdom was established when Jesus came to earth, I am not speaking of the kingdom of glory, referred to in Daniel chapter 2. I am speaking of the kingdom of grace. The kingdom of grace is that system of government by which God interacts with His people personally by the indwelling Comforter, since the time that Jesus came to this earth. Jesus declared the establishment of that kingdom when He said,

The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. (Luke 16:16)

Notice the contrast which He made between the two systems of government: First there was the system of “the law and the prophets.” This was the system by which God governed and interacted with His people right up until the coming of Jesus. This system lasted from Mount Sinai until John. According to Jesus, since the time of John, the age of the kingdom had arrived and from that time, the kingdom was the system by which God interacted with His people and governed them. All who lived under this kingdom government were greater than John the Baptist and all who had only experienced the former government of the law.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

These passages alone demonstrate the truth that the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God was something which had never been established before Christ came, but that with the coming of Christ, the time had arrived for the establishment of this kingdom.

A FAULTY APPROACH

It is a popular ploy in religious circles to utilize the “proof text” method in supporting one’s position. The problem with this method is that it often begins with an assumption which is then fortified by finding certain selected texts to back up the assumption. It is not hard to see the danger in such an approach. If we approach the Bible in this way then we can find justification for stoning our own children, for selling unclean food to strangers and seeking salvation by law-keeping, because there are actual verses in the Bible which instruct us to do these things. This is why so many different philosophies and denominations arise from the reading of the one book; too often people do not read the Bible to discover God’s truth, but rather, to find support for their ideas.

Theologians have coined a term to describe this approach to the Bible; it is referred to as eisegesis and it signifies the method where a person imposes his own ideas onto what he reads. The converse of this dangerous approach is exegesis, which is the method of reading the Scriptures and listening to what they say, accepting their meaning regardless of one’s own personal bias. I have found many instances of an eisegetical approach to the Scriptures among Christians and unfortunately, among many of those whom I consider to be brethren in the faith.

ONLY A LEGAL OBLIGATION?

For one reason or another, most of us who have a Seventh-day Adventist background have concluded that the kingdom of grace was instituted in the garden of Eden. Therefore, every benefit which Christ made available to His people when He came to earth, was already available from the moment man

sinned. According to this understanding, Jesus actually brought nothing new, and of course, if this is true, then He only came to earth to fulfill the necessary obligation of dying so our sins could be legally cancelled, and to set an example of what the Christian life should be like. What has been the consequence of this wrong perspective?

First of all, the whole life and ministry of Christ has been seen as only accomplishing legal obligations. When I understood eight years ago that Jesus died to take me to death, it was a brand-new thought to me. I had always understood that He died *instead* of me to satisfy the demands of the law. But when I saw that He died to do something to me, not just *for* me, but in me, it changed my perspective on the gospel forever. Everything changed, and really, it is this changed understanding which has been the main reason for all the opposition which we have subsequently faced.

Most Adventists believe that Jesus’ death satisfies the law and my record of sins are cancelled. When I see this act of love, I am moved to love Him in return. I am motivated to do what He asks and this is how I am able to overcome sin. Most of them will accept that Jesus “*helps*” us in this task of overcoming sin, but this concept is far from the truth.

NEVER BEFORE AVAILABLE

The truth is that Jesus came to earth to create a new human existence, something which had never existed before. He came to be the second humanity, the last Adam. This new human creation could not have existed before Jesus actually came, because Jesus was never a human being before He came to earth. This is what the Bible teaches, Jesus was not qualified to give salvation until He became a man and passed through the great test.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Hebrews 5:8-9)

He *became* the Author of salvation after He had suffered. Before that, He was promised, but He was not yet the

author of salvation. But when He came here, He became the first God-man, the first divine-human being who had ever existed. This was the nature of the last Adam. In this divine-human identity, He defeated sin and the grave, and was raised to everlasting life at the position of power at God’s right hand. This is the nature of the new creation and this is the reality of the *kingdom of Grace!* This life which was “created in Christ Jesus,” is the very life which is given to all who receive Christ! Think of it, the victory over sin, the divine-human nature, the power available at God’s right hand, all these are the legitimate inheritance of those who are in Christ, today, at this very moment. This is the reality of the kingdom of heaven, it is a kingdom which is based on one great reality; Christ in you. This is the reality of the kingdom of Grace and *this was not available before Jesus came!*

There is no verse of Scripture which suggests that any kingdom was set up in the garden of Eden. We see a kingdom lost, but not a kingdom set up. Some of us confuse the existence of grace with the *kingdom* of Grace. Grace always existed, however, there are certain definite parameters to the *kingdom* which never existed before Christ came. Revelation 12:10 is a verse which very clearly and incontrovertibly establishes the truth that the kingdom of God was established at the time when Jesus returned to heaven and cast Satan down.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Rev 12:10)

I encourage every honest person to read this verse in context and then to answer the following questions:

1. What is the time-frame of this verse. At what time was this statement made?
2. What is the meaning of the words, “now is come ... the kingdom of our God.” Which kingdom is this and if it came at that time (*now*) how is it that some say it was already here

before it came?

This was the realization of Jesus' words in John 12:31. Some Greeks had come seeking Jesus and Jesus saw this as an indication that His ministry was beginning to reach beyond the borders of Israel. He said, "Father, glorify thy name," and a voice from heaven replied, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." In response, Jesus stated:

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (John 12:31)

Obviously the prince of this world is Satan. But Jesus said, "now, Satan will be cast out." Where was he to be cast out from? The verse above, Revelation 12:10 gives us the answer. He was to be finally cast out of heaven.

THE CONTEXT OF REVELATION 12:10

I have been chastised by zealous Adventists who point out that Ellen White stated many times that Revelation 12:10 is speaking of Satan being cast out of heaven before sin took place on this earth. I cannot answer for Ellen White, but it is sad when people would deny the plainest teaching of the Bible, would deliberately blind their minds to the plainest truth because of denominational blindness. I don't know what Ellen White meant – some suggest that Satan was cast out twice. However, it is as plain as day that the passage in Revelation 12 is speaking of an event which occurred immediately *after* Christ returned to heaven. The sequence of events as well as the statements made, make this absolutely clear.

1. Satan tries to destroy the child of the woman
2. The child (Christ) escapes and is caught up to God's throne
3. Now Satan is cast out of heaven.

A voice declares that four things have "come" at this point.

- a. Salvation
- b. Strength
- c. The kingdom of our God
- d. The power of His Christ.

Let us think about what the verse is saying and be honest with ourselves. There is no possibility at all that this

verse is speaking of a time before man sinned. How could salvation have come before there was the need of salvation? Furthermore, in the verse which follows we see that before Satan was cast down, he had been accusing the brethren before God day and night. There was no one to accuse before man sinned. This whole passage is referring to the point when Jesus returned to heaven, having conquered sin and having defeated Satan, cast him out of heaven permanently.

But the main point of what I am saying is that the passage also states clearly that it was at that time (*now*) that salvation came. It had not come before. It was at that time that strength came to God's people (at Pentecost), it was at that time that the kingdom of our God came! It had not existed before. This was the reality of what Jesus brought to us!

So John 1:17 tells us:

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17)

The marvel of the Christian faith is the reality of the amazing privileges which Jesus Christ has brought to us. This is what makes the New Testament age far greater than the Old Testament age. Let us notice that the law always existed but was not given before Moses received it from God and gave it to the people. So the law did not reign or rule, until it was given by Moses. Before that time, God's people were not under the law. In the same way, grace always existed, but the reign of grace did not begin until Jesus came and established the kingdom of grace. The human race has always benefited from grace, from the moment that Adam sinned in the garden. However, God's work on behalf of humanity was limited. There are certain benefits which God wanted to pour out on His people but He was not able to do it because Jesus had not yet provided those benefits.

This is why it was absolutely necessary that Jesus had to come. His coming was not a mere fulfillment of a legal obligation, but the bringing of life itself to the human race, the bringing of salvation itself. Both these things had been prom-

ised before, and by faith God's people had looked forward to receiving these things in the past, but they had never been experienced as an actual reality until the coming of Jesus. At his coming, faith and hope became reality, promise became fulfillment.

One of the biggest objections which many people have to this clear biblical truth is the fact that many of the people of God in Old Testament times did have a wonderful relationship with God and many of them were apparently filled with the spirit of God and were mightily used by Him. How was it possible for these holy men and women to have such a wonderful experience with God if their privileges were more limited than those who lived in the gospel age? This is the great question and some have concluded on this basis alone that it must have been that those saints back then did have just the same privileges as we do. However, as we have seen, the Scripture teaches differently.

NOT PERFECTED BEFORE US

Hebrews 11:39,40 states:

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Heb 11:39-40)

These verses come at the end of the great faith chapter, Hebrews 11. In this chapter we find the great heroes of the Old Testament mentioned. Some have referred to this list as, "God's honor roll." In this list we find such illustrious names as Enoch, Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Daniel and many others whose names stand out as the greatest servants of God that the world has ever seen. Yet, these are the very people of whom Jesus said, "the least in the kingdom," is greater than them. Notice what we are told in the passage quoted above. These great heroes *did not receive the promise!* None of them received it, as great as their faith was. They received a good report because of their faith, but still, they did not receive the promise, and what was this promise? Some have concluded that this promise was the promise to inherit the land of Canaan,

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Boost Your Breakfast with Oats

Lenworth Frankson



Oats, known scientifically as *Avena sativa*, is a hardy cereal grain able to withstand poor soil conditions in which other crops are unable to thrive. The modern oat draws its ancestry from the wild red oat, a plant originating in Asia.

Oats have been cultivated for two thousand years in various regions throughout the world. Before being consumed as a food, oats were used for medicinal purposes, a use for which they are still honored. Their fortitude seems to be transferred to those who consume this nutrient-rich grain. When we think of a satisfying and enriching way to start the day, one that gives us strength and lasting energy, we oftentimes relish the thought of a hot bowl of oatmeal.

We all know that oats are suitable for human consumption, as oatmeal and rolled oats, but one of the most common uses is as livestock feed. It is fed to horses also when extra carbohydrates, and the subsequent boost in energy, are required. For us humans, it is mainly eaten as porridge, as an ingredient in breakfast cereals and in baked goods like oatcakes, oat cookies and oat bread.

It is said that oat bread was first manufactured in Britain, where the first oat bread factory was established in 1899. In Scotland, they were, and still are, held in high esteem, as a mainstay of the national diet. In third world countries including the Caribbean oats is popular and regularly eaten especially as a part

of breakfast.

Oat bran is the outer casing of the oat and its consumption is believed to lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, and possibly reduce the risk of heart disease. Oats contain more soluble fiber than any other grain, resulting in slower digestion and an extended sensation of fullness. Over the past few decades oats have become a very popular "health food". The potential health benefits of oats include: reducing the risk of coronary artery disease, lowering levels of cholesterol, and the reduction of colorectal cancer.

NUTRITIONAL BREAKDOWN OF OATS

Dietary fiber: One cup of oats contains 16.5 grams of fiber, which is roughly half of a person's recommended daily intake of fiber.

Calories: One cup of oats contains approximately 607 calories.

Risks and precautions: Although oats don't contain gluten, in rare cases, they are grown in the same fields as wheat or barley and these crops can sometimes contaminate oats with gluten. Therefore, those who suffer from intolerance may have to exercise caution when eating oats.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Cholesterol Levels

A steaming bowl of fresh cooked oatmeal is the perfect way to start off your day, especially if you are trying to prevent or are currently dealing with heart disease or diabetes. Oats, oat bran, and oatmeal contain a specific type of fiber known as beta-glucan. Since 1963, study after study has proven the beneficial effects of this special fiber on cholesterol levels. Studies show that in individuals with high cholesterol (above 220 mg/dl), consuming just 3 grams of soluble oat fiber per day, the amount found in one bowl of oatmeal, typically lowers total cholesterol by 8-23%.

This is significant because each 1% drop in blood cholesterol translates to a

2% decrease in the risk of developing heart disease. High cholesterol levels correlate with the buildup of plaques in blood vessel walls. If these plaques become damaged or simply grow too large, they can rupture, blocking a blood vessel and causing a heart attack, stroke, or blood clots elsewhere in the body. Lowering high cholesterol levels can therefore significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Colorectal Cancer

Researchers in Britain and the Netherlands pooled published evidence that covered nearly 2 million people to evaluate whether a high fiber diet, mainly from whole grains and cereals like oats, is linked to a lower risk of colorectal cancer. The study found that for every additional 10g of fiber in someone's diet there is a 10% reduction in their risk of developing colorectal cancer.

Blood Pressure

An article published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition concluded that a diet which includes plenty of whole-grains, such as oats or whole meal bread, is just as effective as taking anti-hypertensive medication in lowering blood pressure.

Cardiovascular Disease

Oats, because of their high fiber content, are known to help remove cholesterol from the digestive system that would otherwise end up in the bloodstream. The latest research suggests oats may have another cardio-protective mechanism.

A study conducted at Tufts University and published in *The Journal of Nutrition* suggest that the antioxidant compounds unique to oats help prevent free radicals from damaging LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) thus reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

In another study researchers at Colorado State University randomly assigned thirty-six overweight middle-aged men to eat either an oat or wheat cereal daily for twelve weeks. At the end of the

three-month period, the men eating the oat cereal had lower concentrations of small, dense LDL cholesterol (thought to be particularly dangerous) and lower LDL overall, compared to those in the wheat group, while their HDL (“good”) cholesterol was unchanged.

Preventing Heart Failure

Heart failure is the leading cause of hospitalization among the elderly in the United States. Success of drug treatment is only partial and its prediction remains poor. Follow up of 2445 discharged hospital patients with heart failure revealed that 37.3% died during the first year, and 78.5% died within 5 years. Consumption of whole grain products and dietary fiber has been shown to reduce the risk of high blood pressure and heart attack so Harvard researchers decided to look at the effects of cereal consumption on heart failure risk and followed 21,376 participants in the Physicians Health Study over a period of almost 20 years. They found that men who simply enjoyed a daily morning bowl of whole grain, but not refined, cereal had a 29% lower risk of heart failure.

Boosts Immune System

Oatmeal’s beta-gluten fiber does more than protect your heart. Beta-gluten can also build up our immune systems and help fight bacterial infections by helping non-specific immune cells called neutrophils, our body’s first line of defense against pathogens, quickly locate and heal infected tissues.

Significant Cardiovascular Benefits for Postmenopausal Women

Eating a serving of whole grains, such as oats, at least 6 times each week is an especially good idea for postmenopausal women with high cholesterol, high blood pressure or other signs of cardiovascular disease (CVD).

A 3-year prospective study of over 200 postmenopausal women with CVD, published in the American Heart Journal, shows that those eating at least 6 servings of whole grains each week experienced both:

- Slowed progression of atherosclerosis, the build-up of plaque that narrows the vessels through which blood

flows, and

- Less progression in stenosis, the narrowing of the diameter of arterial passageways.

The women’s intake of fiber from fruits, vegetables and refined grains was not associated with a lessening in CVD progression.

Stabilize Blood Sugar

Studies also show that beta-glucan has beneficial effects in diabetes as well. Type 2 diabetes patients given foods high in this type of oat fiber or given oatmeal or oat bran rich foods experienced much lower rises in blood sugar compared to those who were given white rice or bread. Starting out your day with a blood sugar stabilizing food such as oats may make it easier to keep blood sugar levels under control the rest of the day, especially when the rest of your day is also supported with nourishing fiber-rich foods.

Lowers Risk of Diabetes

Speaking of blood sugar, eating oatmeal can also help reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Oatmeal contains high amounts of magnesium, which help the body to properly use glucose and secrete insulin. An eight-year trial showed a 19 percent decrease in type 2 diabetes risk in women with a magnesium-rich diet and a 31 percent risk decrease in women who regularly ate whole grains.

Bowel Function

Oats have high fiber content. Fiber is necessary in keeping bowel movements regular. Oats are high in both soluble and insoluble fiber. Insoluble fiber does not dissolve in water. It is spongy and absorbs many times its own weight of liquid. It makes stools heavier and speeds their passage through the gut, relieving constipation.

Weight Control

As the soluble fiber of oats is digested, it forms a gel, which causes the viscosity of the contents of the stomach and small intestine to be increased. The gel delays stomach emptying making you feel full longer which helps with weight loss. New research suggests that children between ages 2-18 years old who have a constant intake of oatmeal low-

ered their risk of obesity. The research found that the children who ate oatmeal were 50% less likely to become overweight, when compared to those children that did not eat it

Athletic Performance

Oats, like other cereal grains, are valued primarily as a source of carbohydrates which provide calories for energy needs. Oats have been shown in scientific studies to favorably alter metabolism and enhance performance when ingested 45 minutes to 1 hour before exercise of moderate intensity.

General Health and Longevity

Oats, whether ingested by humans, horses or livestock, have proven to be one of the healthiest food available. Oats have a higher concentration of well-balanced protein than other cereals and it is also affordable on most food budgets. Oats contain photochemicals (plant chemicals) which have been associated with protection from chronic disease such as cancer. They contain a good balance of essential fatty acids, which have been linked with longevity and general good health. It also has one of the best amino acid profiles of any grain. Amino acids are essential proteins that help facilitate optimum functioning of the body. Oats are a good source of essential vitamins such as thiamin, folic acid, biotin, pantothenic acid and vitamin E. They also contain zinc, selenium, copper, iron, manganese and magnesium. Oat beta glucan appears to help speed up response to infection, which may result in faster healing.

Health experts tell us that having a healthy nutritious breakfast is an excellent and important way to start the day. Boost your breakfast with oats, you will feel the difference. Don’t delay, start eating more oats today!



Once it was the blessing,
Now it is the Lord;
Once it was the feeling,
Now it is His Word.
Once His gifts I wanted,
Now the Giver own;
Once I sought for healing,
Now Himself alone.

The Reign of Grace

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but this is a ridiculous idea. Many of them did live in Palestine and it was the homeland of the Hebrews for hundreds of years. No, the promise being referred to is the promise of the Seed; it was the promise that God would send a Seed who would crush the head of the serpent and who would bless all nations. This was the promise in which they had faith, but which they did not receive.

But as the verse tells us, God provided some better thing for us, for us who live on this side of the cross, so that they would not have been perfected before us. For those of us who live on this side of the cross, this is the word of God:

For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. (Heb 7:19)

For by one offering he hath per-

fectured for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb 10:14)

This is what those who lived before Christ did not receive. Their relationship with God was not perfected, the life which they possessed was not perfect because the perfect one had not yet arrived. But those of us who live on this side of the cross have **already** been perfected! We possess the perfect life of the second Adam and in Him we already possess eternal life. Those who lived before Christ did not possess this in their lifetime, but must await the resurrection to receive this life, while those alive today, in Christ, do already possess this life.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath

not the Son of God hath not life. (1 John 5:11-12)



*My Goal is God Himself,
not joy nor peace,
Nor even blessing,
but Himself, my God;
'Tis His to lead me there—
not mine, but His—
At any cost, dear Lord,
by any road.*

*No matter if the way
be sometimes dark,
No matter though the cost
be oft-times great,
He knoweth how
I best shall reach the mark,
The way that leads to Him
must needs be strait.*

Open Face

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