

The Sabbath Watchman



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for they shall inherit the earth."**

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Beacon of hope, faith, and truth in a confused world.

We believe:

- The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer.
- He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.
- The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and, when abiding in man, overcomes all unrighteousness.
- The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.
- His people, in harmony with God's Word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.
- Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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Introduction

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9.

"Obedience to the laws of God develops in man a beautiful character that is in harmony with all that is pure and holy and undefiled. In the life of such a man the message of the gospel of Christ is made clear. Accepting the mercy of Christ and His healing from the power of sin, he is brought into right relation with God. His life, cleansed from vanity and selfishness, is filled with the love of God. His daily obedience to the law of God obtains for him a character that assures him eternal life in the kingdom of God." -*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 42.

"The truth is no truth to the one who does not reveal, by his elevated spiritual character, a power beyond that which the world can give, an influence corresponding in its sacred, peculiar character to the truth itself. He who is sanctified by the truth will exert a saving, vital influence upon all with whom he comes in contact. This is Bible religion." -*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 378.

"We need constantly a fresh revelation of Christ, a daily experience that harmonizes with His teachings. High and holy attainments are within our reach. Continual progress in knowledge and virtue is God's purpose for us. His law is the echo of His own voice, giving to all the invitation, 'Come up higher. Be holy, holier still.' Every day we may advance in perfection of Christian character." -*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 503.

Ellen G. White.



"Blessed Are the Meek: For They Shall Inherit The Earth"

By Tzvetan Petkov

Meekness is an important part of the divine character and will be part of the character of all who inherit the new earth and the heavenly kingdom. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:29. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever." Psalm 22:26.

To understand true meekness and its importance, we want to see what "meek" really means. The Greek word translated "meek" in Matthew 5:5 comes from the root word *praise*, meaning "mild," "gentle," and "soft." A meek person is gentle, tenderhearted, patient, and submissive. Synonyms for "meekness" are "mildness" and "gentleness." In general, the term "meekness" describes people who submit their own wills to the judgment of the Lord and are ready to accept everything, good or bad, as the will of the Lord.

Do Not Resist Evil

"But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:39.

One of the most important aspects of meekness is the willingness to submit to the will of God and to be part of His army on this earth. The Lord fights and overcomes evil through the influence of goodness and love. To be sons and daughters of our Father in heaven, we need to pray for our enemies and not hate them.

"If any man will sue thee at the law," the Lord stated in the Sermon on the Mount, "and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:40-45.

In the time of the apostolic church, Christians did not oppose Roman persecution with violence. They were tortured and killed before the eyes of the multitude, but the very example of meekness and love converted unbelieving spectators. Every drop of Christian blood became gospel seed—and produced fruit.

The history of God's church is written with the blood of its martyrs. In all ages, God has His faithful children. The faithful remnant of the church of God, during the world wars, preferred perishing as martyrs to compromising with sin. Even now, their examples of meekness and sacrifice have the power to attract earnest believers. In our modern time, in Rwanda, Burundi, and other war-torn areas, for example, faithful members of God's church have died as martyrs.

The righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ enables His followers to obtain His character, including meekness, which becomes visible in times of trial. Christ Our Righteousness is not a theory, nor a clever theological definition, but power from heaven revealed in action. Revelation 12:11 mentions some of the important attributes of those who will be saved. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Faithful followers of Christ do not fear death because they have the love of God in their hearts. Nothing can take from them the faith and the wonderful hope of eternal life kept before their eyes. Like Abraham, they long for the heavenly home. With the apostle Paul, they can say: "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Hebrews 10:39. The Holy Spirit and the holy angels comfort the followers of Christ. Do you want to be one of them?

Recognize the True Enemy

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." 1 Corinthians 9:26.

To understand and exemplify meekness, we need to have always before our eyes the true enemy of our souls. The apostle Paul stated in the verse above that he did not want to waste energy in his spiritual fight. He constantly kept in mind who the enemy is. (Are you and I aware of who our enemy is?) He is identified in Ephesians 6:11, 12. "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The true enemy is not our brother or sister, not our neighbor, not even the unbeliever who mocks our faith. Millions of ignorant people of different denominations blindly follow their faith and conviction without knowing the present truth. The second and third angels' messages declare that Babylon is fallen. All members of the apostatized churches are in terrible danger. They need to be warned and enlightened. The false prophet of Revelation 16:13 and the unclean spirits encircle the world to deceive its inhabitants. Fallen angels make every possible effort to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. Spiritualism is at

work, miracles are performed. Even .re will fall from heaven to deceive poor, ignorant people and prepare them for destruction and eternal death.

Now, as never before, the people of God need to wake up and demonstrate with heavenly power the character of Christ. The true enemy needs to be clearly distinguished. Jesus Christ, dying on the cross, remembered and prayed for His persecutors: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. This magnificent example, the center of our belief, has attracted humanity over the centuries.

An example of goodness and love has strong influence. When king Saul persecuted David, he did not respond with evil for evil. Although the Lord gave the life of Saul into the hands of David several times, he did not take revenge but set an example of goodness and love. The hardened heart of Saul was broken, and he confessed his sins publicly: "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil." 1 Samuel 24:17. David was tested hard and tempted by his friends, who advised him to kill Saul. David did not want to follow the desire of the flesh but, guided by the Holy Spirit, he left judgment in the hands of the Lord. Do you want to overcome evil? Follow the example of Christ. Meekness is the strongest weapon with which to destroy the bondage of Satan and deliver many precious souls. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isaiah 61:1.

Resist the Devil

Let us not misunderstand meekness. This quality is not fearful, undecided passivity. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7. The daily Christian life is one of hard battles, requiring quick and correct decisions. The war against the enemy of our souls is one of the most severe ever fought. Every single moment we need a clear mind and a spiritual connection with the Holy Spirit.

A believer was asked by his fellow students why he did not use alcohol. The believer answered with a question: "Would you use alcohol if you were driving your car at 200 km/h [160 mph]?" His friend answered in astonishment: "Of course not!" Then the believer said: "Do you think that it is easier to drive through the streets of life than to drive your car on the highway?"

Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other harmful substances affect our minds and the ability to make right decisions. The complete truth of health reform has been revealed to us to keep our bodies and minds in the best condition in order to maintain an uninterrupted connection with our Lord. A wrong combination of foods produces alcohol and often, in very decisive moments, can cloud the mind and stir up our passions. One wrong step in our behavior or words may cause severe consequences for this life and for eternity. Daily Bible study, hours of



prayer, and the exercise of obedience to the will of God are the only solution for us sinful men and women.

The Lord Jesus Christ "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Matthew 21:12, 13. Meekness conflicts with unrighteousness and sin. Christ was meek with sinners while fighting the false teachings and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. True believers need to stand up like a wall against false teachings and the apostasy in the church. We are to be "the pillar of the truth," "the temple of the Holy Spirit," "the salt of the earth," "the light of the world." We need, as never before, to give the right sound to the trumpet, to preach the present truth without fear and intimidation. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Psalm 1:1.

The world needs to see the holy character of Christ revealed in His followers. The life of Enoch shone like a burning light before the eyes of his neighbors; he was taken alive to heaven. Moses, well-known for his meekness, led the people of God through the wilderness to the Promised Land and was privileged to speak with God face to face. Solomon humbly submitted himself to the will of God and was rewarded with wisdom greater than anybody else in this earth. John the Baptist left his career as a priest to become an example of faithfulness that reaches to our days.

Do you want to shine like Enoch, Moses, Solomon, and John the Baptist did? Then follow Christ, and pray for His meekness. The meek shall inherit the earth—not this sinful and corrupted world, but the perfect new earth, where all "shall be ... righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isaiah 60:21. Amen.



"The Judgment Hour And The Worship of God"

By Antonino Di Franca

Among the visions and prophecies in the Holy Scripture, we find the glorious image of angels flying through space, broadcasting messages to human beings!

Revelation 14 presents three angels, one following the other. Then, in chapter 18, still another angel flies through the sky, further empowering the messages of the first three angels. They all carry warnings from God to the world, urging all to accept salvation. Let us consider the first angel's message.

The First Angel

"I saw another angel [the first in this chapter] fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice: 'Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters'." Revelation 14:6, 7. These verses are full of interesting elements, some real and some symbolic. First, we meet an "angel," a glorious heavenly being acting as a messenger. Earthly messages, spoken and written, are delivered by human beings; but the messenger in Revelation 14 is a holy being, pure and glorious. This angel, like the others, all flying in midair, is a symbol. In reality, it is God's people. "The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth." —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pp. 455, 456.

A Divine Message

The second point is that the "angel" is not a silent one. He has a special message, called "the everlasting gospel," the good news of salvation. Besides preaching the gospel, the angel warns about the seriousness of the time and invites everyone on earth to come to God. "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7.

This message has been preached since the beginning of the Advent Movement. The Lord has entrusted it to His people to give to the world in this time. "The angels are represented as flying in the midst of heaven,

proclaiming to the world a message of warning, and having a direct bearing upon the people living in the last days of this earth's history. No one hears the voice of these angels, for they are a symbol to represent the people of God who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven. Men and women, enlightened by the Spirit of God, and sanctified through the truth, proclaim the three messages in their order." —Life Sketches, p. 429.

A missionary people

God's people do not live for themselves only but especially to be a blessing to others. Our gathering together, visiting, preaching, preparation and distribution of literature, and all other work is not to be limited to our own church members. If it were, we could not be represented by an angel, a messenger to others. The Lord represents the work of this time through a heavenly herald to impress us with the need to be a missionary people. He has entrusted us with a message for the entire world. To preach the gospel should be our first priority at every level—the General Conference, as well as every union, .eld, church, institution, and individual member.

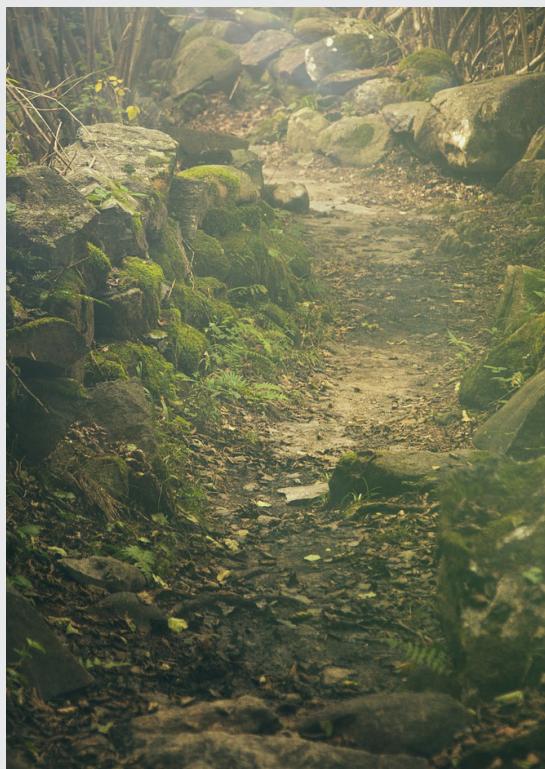
John the Baptist ministered by preaching to the people; Jesus did the same. Matthew 3:1; 4:17. During His three-and-one-half-year mission, He traveled and preached in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. During His ministry, He chose and instructed twelve disciples. Matthew 10. Next, He sent seventy others to go before Him into every town and village of Israel,

the chosen people, to prepare hearts for His message. The result? Even the disciples performed miracles! Luke 10:1,17.

The gospel, Jesus announced, is for every country, people, and tongue. Before the end of the world, the good news would be preached everywhere. Matthew 24:14. His last reminder, before His ascension, was the same great missionary mandate: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. This commission should therefore be the center of our ministry. Time and energy, gifts and service, funds and printing—everything—should be employed for this purpose.

Counsel for our mission

Sometimes we don't know exactly how to reach certain people, to speak to their hearts. This is why the Lord has promised his Spirit. We can begin missionary work in the simplest way, speaking words of faith and hope while going about our daily work among our family, friends, and coworkers. Hand them a nice magazine, book, or leaflet full of good, inspired counsel about the love of God. Never argue about Jesus! First, let others see Jesus in us. At home and in the homes of others, share the Bible's sublime promises. Introduce people to the Lord Himself. Cooperate with other brothers and sisters of experience. Learn from the blessed counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy, such as the following:



"I remember when the converting power of God came upon me in my childhood. I wanted everyone else to get the blessing that I had, and I could not rest till I had told them of it. I began to visit with my young companions and went to their houses to talk with them and tell them my experience, how precious the Saviour was to me, and how I wanted to serve Him, and how I wanted them to serve Him also. So, I would talk of the preciousness of Christ, and I would say, 'Won't you kneel down and pray with me?' Some would kneel and some would sit in their chairs, but before we gave up, everyone would be on her knees and we would pray together for hours, till the last one would say, 'I believe that Jesus has forgiven me my sins.'" —*Welfare Ministry*, p. 99.

There is great power in Jesus. "Now when we go into the house we should not begin to talk of frivolous things, but come right to the point and say, I want you to love Jesus for He has first loved you.... Take along the publications and ask them to read. When they see that you are sincere, they will not despise any of your efforts. There is a way to reach the hardest hearts. Approach in the simplicity, sincerity, and humility that will help us to reach the souls of those for whom Christ died. We do not want to be negligent in this work." —*Ibid.*, p. 91.

The blessing of preaching

In preaching the message, there is blessing—blessing for the preachers, blessing for the hearers, and blessing for the entire church. On the contrary, if we don't share the gospel, we will become like stagnant water, causing problems for both ourselves and others. Hearers but not doers can hardly be compared with a glorious angel heralding the gospel to the world. How does the Spirit of Prophecy describe those who reflect the angel's light? "The faces of men and women who walk and work with God express the peace of heaven. They are surrounded with the atmosphere of heaven. For these souls the kingdom of God has begun. They have Christ's joy, the joy of being a blessing to humanity. They have the honor of being accepted for the Master's use; they are trusted to do His work in His name." —*The Adventist Home*, p. 535.

"Work is a blessing, not a curse. A spirit of indolence destroys godliness and grieves the Spirit of God. A stagnant pool is offensive, but a pure, flowing stream spreads health and gladness over the land." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 352, 353.

People who are not working for the Lord sooner or later become gloomy, critical, and faultfinding, unable to share the joy of the Lord. "When our church members during the week act their part in the service of the Lord, they will be roused from the despondency that is ruining many, body and soul. As they work for others, they will have much that is helpful to speak of when they assemble to worship God. The Sabbath meeting will be like meat in due season; for all will bring precious offerings to the Lord. When God's people see the great need of sinners being converted, turned from the service of Satan to serve the living God, the testimonies they bear ... will not be dark and gloomy, but full of joy and courage, life and power. Instead of thinking and talking about the faults of their brethren and sisters, and about their own trials, they will think and talk of the love of Christ, and will strive earnestly to become more efficient workers for Him." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 92.

It's time to preach the message

Dear brethren and sisters, young and old, now is the time to let the light shine. Don't wait, thinking that others will do your work. Get busy now; work for the Lord and for the beloved souls for whom He has given

His life. If every one of us would be a little light, how blessed the world and the church would be.

"Church members ... are to be ever ready to spring into action in obedience to the Master's commands. Wherever we see work waiting to be done we are to take it up and do it, constantly looking unto Jesus.... If every church member were a living missionary, the gospel would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to all peoples, nations, and tongues." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 32.

"My brethren and sisters, it is too late to devote your time and strength to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of the heavenly treasure. Seek to push the triumphs of the cross, seek to enlighten souls, labor for the salvation of your fellow beings, and your work will abide the trying test of .re." —*Ibid.*, p. 56.

The judgment hour

Another serious point in the first angel's message is that "the hour of His judgment has come"—in heaven and on earth. Judgment began in 1844. Since then, cases are being judged one after the other. How long will the judgment continue? Here on earth, natural, social, and religious catastrophes claim the attention of unbelievers, who ask their meaning. "There is an earnest work of preparation to be done by Seventh-day Adventists if they would stand firm in the trying experiences just before them. If they remain true to God in the confusion and temptation of the last days, they must seek the Lord in humility of heart for wisdom to resist the deceptions of the enemy." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 347.

"We are not, as a people, sufficiently aroused to the short time in which we have to work, and we do not understand the magnitude of the work for the time.

"The night soon cometh, in which no man can work. God calls for men and women to qualify themselves, by consecration to His will and earnest study of the Scriptures, to do His special work for these last days. He calls for men now who can work. As they engage in the work in sincerity and humility to do all they can, they will be obtaining a more thorough experience. They will have a better knowledge of the truth and better know how to reach souls and help them just where they need to be helped. Workmen are needed now, just now, to labor for God. The fields are already white for the harvest, and yet laborers are few." —*Life Sketches*, pp. 211, 212. In the time of Noah, the flood did not immediately follow the flood message. The Lord first announced the end of civilization, then mercifully granted one hundred and twenty years of grace. Noah's preaching and faithful example urged people to change their lives and prepare to meet the Lord, but they wasted the time. We also have been given ample time to prepare for the Lord's coming, but grace will not last forever. How are we using our time? How are we helping others to prepare to meet Jesus?

Worship Him

The first angel's message ends with an invitation: "Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7. Such a call indicates that people are neither worshiping nor obeying God. As in the past, today men, women, and children look away from God and worship and serve their modern idols. Idols, of course, are not only statues or pictures in a temple or the sun or stars in the heavens. Idols may be interests, customs, ideas, habits, feelings—anything that leads the mind from the worship of God.

For many people, the first god is money; others idolize amusements; still others focus, to the exclusion of God, on travel, culture, sports, fashions, the media, a new car or an old one, their house or houses, or even furniture. You name it—someone has made an idol of it. God showers us with blessings every day, yet often we don't even think about them, let alone thank Him for His gifts. We rob God by withholding thankfulness, obedience, honor, and glory. Humanity seems to have lost its way, like an off-course ship.

One day a ship went down on the coast of Ireland. Nobody knew how the vessel could have gone so far off course—until a diver plunged into the water and recovered the ship's compass. Careful investigation revealed a strange bit of steel in a column of the box. How could the piece have gotten there? Shortly before the ship sank, one of the sailors had been asked to clean the compass. He used his penknife during the cleaning. A tiny bit of the tip of the knife blade broke off, but the sailor left it in the sensitive compass. Can you imagine? Such a little piece of steel influenced the magnetic needle so much that the ship was steered off course. It ran right into a cliff and sank.

That little piece of steel was insignificant to the sailor—but very significant for the compass and even more for the direction of travel, the security of the ship, and the lives of the passengers. It's the same with the sin that challenges us human beings. At the beginning, it seems so insignificant to us and billions of others also; but little by little it leads people away from God, in the opposite direction, and eventually to shipwrecked, ruined lives.

Let us not permit sin to destroy our lives. As long as we cultivate and idolize sin, God will be in second, third, or even the last place in our affections. We cannot truly worship Him. God is love, grace, justice, goodness, the source of true happiness. In the person of Jesus Christ, God sacrificed everything for us. Year after year, we receive uncountable signs of His mercy. Let us give Him His due—our faith and love, our obedience and service, our worship and gratitude. Let Him lead our lives as we preach to others the glorious "everlasting gospel," then lead us all to the eternal harbor of peace and happiness.



"Continuing the Early Attentions"

By Henry Dering

The family unit was designed to be a blessing to mankind. Love was to be woven into the tender and sacred fabric of this enduring relationship. Even though sin entered this world, it is still love that binds and unites the happy couple to face life's realities and to cope with its many difficulties, as well as to share its joys. The apostle Paul briefly describes the duties of the husband and wife. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Ephesians 5:22, 25. These wise and timeless words point out clearly the obligations of each partner in order to preserve this monumental pillar which the Lord instituted in the Garden of Eden.

Unfortunately, too often in the family the precious heavenly gift of love begins to lose its luster, charm, and novelty; and it eventually wanes into a state of dissatisfaction, lack of interest, lack of respect, and may even die out completely. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Revelation 2:4

Has your once romantic and idyllic adventure of love grown to bring still greater closeness and happiness? Do you still remember how you treated your spouse just after the ceremony in which you made your solemn vows to love and to cherish? Maybe you thought, "I will do everything for my sweetheart." Not only did you frequently say, "I love you," but you really meant it. Many beautiful memories may still linger in your mind of the early period of marriage, which was just ideal, wonderful, with cheerfulness and happiness radiating from both of you.

As the years go by, the husband and wife may get out of tune or out of step with each other, so to speak. They may lose touch with each other on a mental and spiritual plane. Each travels his own road, and the distance between them widens. This should not be the case. God said, "Let them be one." It is God's plan that the couple should share the joys and experiences of life rather than living each to himself.

Early Attentions

It is very important for both husband and wife to treat one another the same way now as they did in former years. Did you ever open the car door for your wife or buy her a bouquet of flowers on that special occasion—birthday, anniversary, or Mother's Day? It cheered her up and made her feel loved and appreciated as an individual, didn't it? Do you still call up your wife when you will be late for supper? This way she can plan the supper and not be too inconvenienced. How about the second honeymoon? It's sure worth taking again after the children have grown up.

"Let the husband and wife study each other's happiness, never failing in the small courtesies and little kindly acts that cheer and brighten the life. Perfect confidence should exist between husband and wife. Together they should consider their responsibilities." —Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 393.

Many husbands think that the housewife is just a maid or robot to be ordered around. The woman of the house has more than an eight-hour job. The daily routine of housekeeping needs to be interrupted with a change of pace and scenery. How about a trip to the mountains, to the zoo or the seashore? A surprise or two may lift her spirits.

Appearance

Let's not forget how pleasant it was when both husband and wife looked neat and attractive. Each one was properly groomed and tried to look his best at all times. One doesn't need to spend a fortune on the latest fashions to be physically attractive, but do take care of your clothes. Make sure they are clean, pressed, well-fitting, and generally becoming to your person. It is our privilege to look our best. Wouldn't it be great to receive a compliment on how you look and to have a feeling of self-respect and self-confidence?



Spiritual Values

With but few remaining days of probation still left, the enemy of our souls will work with greater zeal and energy than ever before to hinder the development of a Christlike character. Without Christ as the connecting link between husband and wife the union will not withstand the stresses of life. Both parties are to reflect the image of Christ and to help and strengthen one another. Defects of character will be readily seen in each other, but you should still be able to honestly say, "I appreciate you more than ever." Have you prayed for your husband or wife to overcome sin? Have you asked for forgiveness for the wrong attitude or harsh words you have spoken to each other? Have you talked things over in a nice way, without getting hot under the collar? Does morning and evening worship still continue in the family, or is no time found for God's Word? Do the children receive the right guidance from both mother and father, or are they permitted to go their own ways?

These few questions are meant to stimulate your thinking regarding the importance of the early attentions. I do hope that you can answer these questions positively and, if not, that you will make a prayerful assessment of your shortcomings and correct them.

I would like to conclude with this inspired counsel:

"There are many who regard the expression of love as a weakness, and they maintain a reserve that repels others. This spirit checks the current of sympathy. As the social and generous impulses are repressed, they wither, and the heart becomes desolate and cold. We should beware of this error. Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 360.





May the peace of the Lord be with you. Greetings with the Word of God in Ephesians 3:16:

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man ..."

We at the General Conference are very thankful for the generous donations of the brothers and sisters of the church. From the beginning of this movement, the church has supported actively the needs of the work of God, the spreading of the gospel to new countries and the different projects related to the expansion of the work. Therefore, we are glad to report on the Special Sabbath School Offerings usage.

Usually, after the request for Special Sabbath School Offerings is announced, it takes two to three years until the major portion of the offerings has been collected. On average, we collect \$20,000 to \$30,000 USD per offering. Then we will request from the country entitled to Sabbath School Offerings their project and the funds will be transferred. In this administration, with the help of the Lord, the General Conference has created a reserve with which we are able to pay in advance urgent requests for Special Sabbath School Offerings with the faith to collect the corresponding funds afterwards. This helps us not only to attend to the urgent needs of fields and unions but also to see the results and share the report with the donors.

During the last two years, we were able to transfer the funds of Special Sabbath School Offerings of several projects. The projects are usually related to purchases of land or financing a construction of churches or headquarters, establishment of departments or institutions and expenses of their infrastructure, or the expenses related to salaries of missionaries working in the opening of new missionary fields.

BUILDING PROJECTS

One interesting project is the construction and establishment of an educational institution in Tanzania that will be accredited as such by the Ministry of Education. This College will provide certificates in languages, computer science, secretarial work, administration, and serve at the same time as our permanent certified theological institution (missionary school). The work of God is increasing in Africa and we enjoy the blessing to have our own graduated teachers in all these areas. In addition, our young people may study in our missionary school and, at the same time, earn a certificate from an accredited institution.

Years ago, the General Conference purchased inexpensively plot of land far from the capital of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, for use of the youth. The city expanded in this direction and today a highway, bus transportation, and electric train are passing nearby our property. We began the construction of the first buildings which will cover the need of office and allow us to begin online operation of our educational institution. The second stage will be the construction of classrooms and establishment of in-person education where the students will visit our facilities only to receive their classes. The third stage will include dormitories and dining hall with the plan of having boarding facilities.

With the help of the Lord, we are planning to finish the first stage by the end of this calendar year (2021) and begin online operations. All additional donations are welcome.

(\$46,865.52 USD has already been paid).





WORLD IN BRIEF

NEWS

PURCHASE OF LAND IN FRENCH GUIANA

French Guiana is a newly opened missionary field and our work was blessed by the Lord with success where more than 20 souls were baptized and many more visit our church as interested souls and are preparing for baptism. The rented place for worship became too small and our missionary informed us that one of the interested souls is selling his own land at half price if we will use it for construction of a church. After proper investigation of the legal status and the location of the land, we decided to send funds immediately and secure this property. The construction of the temple will be done by the members and the interested souls and the funds invested will be collected by Special Sabbath School Offerings.

(EUR 16,800.00).



UNIVERSITY IN GUATEMALA

With the help of the Lord, in Guatemala years ago we were able to purchase a technical school together with its curriculum and program, which has been working until today and serves not only as an educational institution but is also spreading the gospel to the young students. The plan of the General Conference is to expand this technical school by construction of a second floor with classrooms and office and purchase from the Ministry of Education the program and permits for a college. This college will offer different professional certificates but also a pastoral education for our ministers. Special Sabbath School Offerings have already been collected and funds have been transferred. We are in negotiation with the Guatemalan Field leadership of how the college will be registered and which is the part the General Conference will have in the management. The General Conference is willing to invest up to an additional \$150,000 USD from our Building Fund to accomplish this project. Your donations are welcome.



PURCHASE OF LAND IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

With the help of the Lord, we sent a missionary to Central African Republic in January 2019. The work of our brother was blessed and the church was officially registered. However, recently we received the following message: "According to the information that we have, on décembre all the churches that have not the permit will be closed.. We went to the ministry to renew the file of our church to get the permit. The first condition is to have a land. We pray God to open the way so that the money be sent to buy the land. God bless you." Our missionary, Brother Daniel Masumbuko, provided information for a possible purchase of land. As usual, we investigated the legal condition and location of the property and proceeded with immediate transfer of funds. The brethren have made a temporary structure which, later on, will expand as a building of a church. We will continue supplying this field with funds for this project and we will collect the funds through Special Sabbath School Offerings. Your donations are very appreciated. (**\$4,000.00 USD**).





WORLD IN BRIEF

NEWS

GENERAL OFFERINGS FOR NORTH AFRICA

The territory of North Africa is part of the 10/40 window where Christianity has not advanced as it has been the case in the rest of the continent. That is why this offering was collected to help the African Division to send missionaries and expand the work into these countries. At the moment, we are working in Somalia, where the work has greatly expanded during the civil war. We have also contacts in Egypt and hope soon to be able to establish the work there. The funds \$27,399.00 USD/EUR 22,960.40 have been transferred successfully to the African Division.

(\$27,399.00 USD / EUR 22,960.40).



CONSTRUCTION OF THE CARLOS KOZEL CLINIC IN PERU

Years ago, the brethren in Peru started a missionary school in Huaral. A project was created so that a clinic can also be set up on the side. A Special Sabbath School Offering of \$33,700.00 was raised for this purpose.

(\$33,700.00 USD).



EUROPEAN DIVISION

At the General Conference South Africa in 2012, it was decided to create Divisions as an extended arm of the General Conference. The European Division had no funds for operation, much less for development of missionary or other projects. Therefore, Special Sabbath School Offerings were collected for the European Division. Until the moment, we collected the amount of EUR 28,544.00 and it was successfully transferred to the account of the Division. May the Lord bless these offerings and our brethren responsible for the European Division so that the work in Europe may grow.

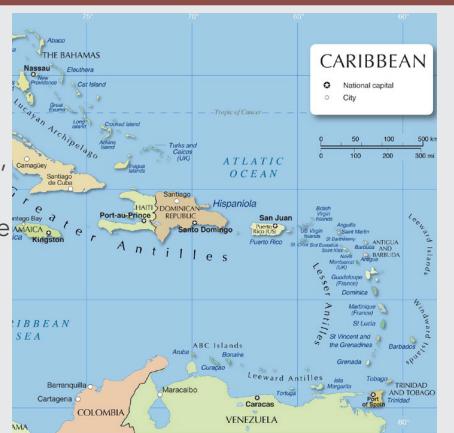
(EUR 28,544.00).



NORTH AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN DIVISION

At the General Conference South Africa in 2012, it was decided to create Divisions as an extended arm of the General Conference. The North American and Caribbean Division had no funds for operation, much less for development of missionary or other projects. Therefore, Special Sabbath School Offerings were collected for the North American and Caribbean Division. Until the moment, we collected the amount of \$29,221.00 USD and it was successfully transferred to the account of the Division. May the Lord bless these offerings and our brethren responsible for the North American and Caribbean Division so that the work in North America and the Caribbean may grow.

(\$29,221.00 USD).





WORLD IN BRIEF

NEWS

MALTA

Years ago, the desire to open the work in the island of Malta, where the Apostle Paul himself brought Christianity, came to the attention of the General Conference. Years passed by since the offering was announced and funds were collected. Italy is the land next to Malta and they have sufficient workers and ministers to proceed with evangelistic activities and begin the work. Therefore, the General Conference has transferred to the Italian Field the collected \$41,543.00 USD. Let us pray that our Italian brethren will be successful in beginning the work in the Island of Malta.

(\$41,543.00 USD).



BAMI AND GAMI MISSIONARY SCHOOLS

Years ago, the first missionary school in Africa was established in our headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. This school was called BAMI (Berea Adventist Missionary Institute) and it was accredited by the Ministry of Education. Later on, the need of missionary training required a missionary school in west Africa, for which purpose another school was organized in Ghana. This school was named GAMI (Gilead Adventist Missionary Institute). The two schools operated and trained many missionaries that today lead the work in different countries and have been the manpower behind the newly opened missionary fields. However, now with the project in Tanzania, the African Division has decided to concentrate all education in the college in Tanzania and both missionary schools, BAMI and GAMI, have been closed. The offerings collected in the amount of \$29,953.00 USD/EUR 25,100.60 have been transferred to the account of the African Division and will be used for the establishment of KIBAHA College.

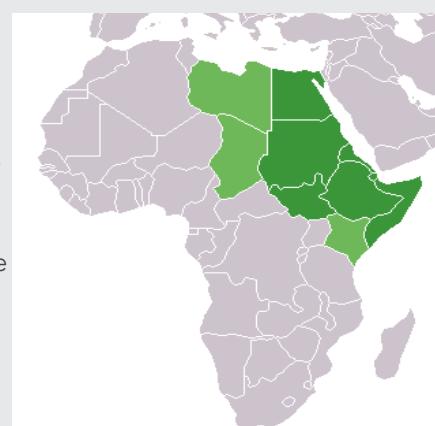
(\$29,953.00 USD / EUR 25,100.60).



GENERAL OFFERINGS FOR NORTHEAST AFRICA

Since the previous administration, several countries in Northeast Africa have been visited by our missionaries and the work was opened in some of them, such as Djibouti, Somalia, and Eritrea. However, due to lack of funds and lack of results, some ministry was suspended. This Special Sabbath School Offering has the purpose of supporting our missionaries with salaries and travel expenses so that more intense efforts can be made to establish the work in these countries. The amount of \$47,567.42 USD has been successfully transferred to the account of the Foreign Mission Fund of the General Conference.

(\$47,567.42 USD).





WORLD IN BRIEF

NEWS

LITERATURE IN ARABIC

Not long ago, we have received contacts from the Arabic countries, such as Iraq and Yemen. The work was completely established and we had a full-time missionary in Yemen when war broke out and the majority of our members emigrated out of the country in order to save their lives. However, we have contact with these members and they were willing to translate our Principles of Faith into Arabic so that our message can be spread also in these countries. The books of Ellen G. White and Christian literature in general is very scarce in this language. Therefore, a Special Sabbath School Offering was collected to sponsor the further translation of books like Steps to Christ and publications on health. The amount of \$31,000 USD has been collected and transferred to the GC Publishing Department. Let us pray that the Lord may bless this work and many souls of the Arabic countries may hear the message of Reform Adventism and come to the knowledge of Christ.

(\$31,000 USD).



ZAMBIA HEADQUARTERS PROJECT

With the help of the Lord, the work has been established in Zambia many years ago. Together with Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa, Zambia was one of the pioneer countries in Africa. However, all these years no proper headquarters have been obtained. Zambia has requested funds for their headquarters but the General Conference did not have money to help. Publishing this request as a Special Sabbath School Offering will require another two to three years of collecting it before funds may be transferred. Concerning the increase of prices, it was considered that by the time the Special Sabbath School Offerings will be fully collected after some years in the future, the property prices will be so high that our funds will not be enough to cover the needs. Therefore, the General Conference has decided to send an advance of \$25,000 USD and to collect these offerings afterwards. Out of this advance, \$8,000.79 USD has already been sent to Zambia. Praise the Lord, the construction of the headquarters is now in process..

(\$25,000 USD).



GENERAL OFFERINGS FOR WEST AFRICA

Since the previous administration, several countries in West Africa have been visited by our missionaries and the work was opened in some of them, such as Benin, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and others. In most of these countries we have workers and organized work. However, the few members are not in a condition to sustain the salary of their workers and the General Conference is totally responsible for their financial support. With this purpose, Special Sabbath Offerings were gathered to lighten the burden of the Foreign Mission Fund. The amount of \$60,013.24 USD has been successfully transferred to the account of the Foreign Mission Fund of the General Conference.

(\$60,013.24 USD).



RETIREMENT FUND

According to the decision of the World Assembly, all workers and missionaries in the foreign mission employed by the General Conference should be officially employed and be able to receive retirement benefits from the social security funds of their country of origin. However, there are some countries that do not have a social security fund for their citizens and the employer is the only one taking care for their retirement. In addition, we have employees of the past that are reaching the age of retirement, for which the General Conference did not have any retirement plan. For that reason, we have developed a retirement plan for our workers and missionaries in third-world countries. This Special Sabbath School Offering is designed to establish a fund from which we are paying retirement of such officers that meet the requirements. Until this moment, \$32,915.80 USD has been collected.

(\$32,915.80 USD).



Other funds of Special Sabbath School Offerings have been collected and paid out but these funds were additional payments on offerings collected during the previous administration. This group also includes, for example, Indonesia, Uruguay and Ecuador. We sent an additional amount of \$14,700.00 USD to Indonesia this month. \$24,280.53 was transferred to Uruguay to complete the construction of the headquarters. \$22,585.35 was sent to Ecuador for the same purpose. Since the main purpose of these offerings has already been completed, we did not mention them in the above presented list.

The above information has been compiled at your request to give you an idea of what is the process of the Special Sabbath School Offerings. We will do our best to continue informing you about the use and further payment of Special Sabbath School Offerings.

We continue praying for the wellbeing of our dear brethren and the expansion of the work.

Sincerely,
Your brother in Christ,

Tzvetan Petkov
President of the General Conference

**We appreciate your prayers for the world
missionary work, God bless you!**



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