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The Advent Lightbearer



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Lessons from Graysville

By Carl Person

"Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been—the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, ***the event so long doubted and disbelieved*** is seen to be approaching, the third angel's message will produce an effect which it could not have had before." SOP, 423, 1884; GC, 605, 1888; GC, 605-606, 1911.

In the late 90s, I read a small pamphlet titled “Tales of a Tennessee Chain Gang;” there was no author listed on the pamphlet, and didn’t know if it was true or not— I was however, quite intrigued so, I decided to see if this really happened. To my surprise, not only did it occur, it was not an isolated event. I originally published an article with the same name at that time but, due to the current atmosphere in the U.S, I feel it is necessary to revisit this period of our history.

So, what happened exactly, and what can we learn from it? First, we must consider the law involved in the above mentioned “crimes.”

In the late 1820s, the Temperance movement had its beginnings, primarily through groups engaged in religious and capitalist thought with Protestant churches taking the lead. For the religious leaders the basic premise was that by avoiding alcohol, people would be better prepared for eternity. The capitalists put forth the argument that it would increase worker productivity via improved work habits. In theory, this is not a bad thing—alcohol is a drug, it is addictive and definitely causes problems in the home and society as a whole. It would seem to be a reasonable thing to restrict or perhaps outlaw it altogether. The problem is that, due to its connection with religious entities such as the Woman’s Christian Temperance Movement, Independent Order of Good Templars and the use of churches for temperance meetings, restrictions regarding alcohol would not be the only thing promoted. Originally, most of the regulations concerned the sale of alcohol near schools, churches and hospitals but, soon other regulations would be added.

Ellen White describes this pernicious unity as such: “… the temperance work, one of the most prominent and important of moral reforms, is often combined with the Sunday movement, and the advocates of the latter represent themselves as laboring to promote the highest interest of society; and those who refuse to unite with them are denounced as enemies of temperance and reform.” CG, 587.

And so it was: Embedded within the Tennessee Code, section 2289, 1884, a violation of “Sabbath” Laws meant “carrying on of the common avocations of life, works of real necessity and charity only excepted, under penalty of $3, to be recovered by ‘one half to the person who will sue for the same’ before a justice of the peace.” When I went to the Chattanooga Library to look for this law, I could not find it under Sunday or Sabbath but rather under the subtitle “Vice.” The volumes I was looking at were not from the 1800s, rather the newest at the time however, these laws were still present although with the amendment that allows

different counties to choose to enforce them or not. Indictments in the 1800s were typically under the term “nuisance.”



George W. Colcord

Now, back to Graysville. In 1892, Professor G.W. Colcord established Graysville Academy (later becoming Southern University in Collegedale, Tn.) which blossomed with an attendance of over 150 students. All was going well until the fall of 1894 when a person who had recently moved into the community was refused credit at a grocery owned by a Seventh-day Adventist (Later, it was revealed that Wright Rains and two of his friends spied on Colcord after slipping out of Sunday services). This man and his friends sought to use the Sunday Laws against 14 members of the Adventist community. Soon after the following arrest warrant was issued:

“State of Tennessee, to the Sheriff of Rhea County, Greeting: You are hereby commanded to take the body of William S. Burchard, if found in your county, and him safely keep, so that you have him before the judge of our circuit court … at the Courthouse in the town of Dayton, on the Monday in March next, then and there to answer the state for violating Sabbath. Herein fail not … C.G. Gillespie, Clerk.”

Court was to be held on Monday, March 5, 1895.

LESSON 1:

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass,

nor anything that is thy neighbor's." Ex. 20:17.) ***Envy*** is often one of the reasons. Just as Satan covets God's throne and rule, so will men covet what God has blessed you with. In my personal experience, this is often a problem within various ministries towards each other. Many wish to be the "big guy" therefore, in order to bring adherents towards themselves, demean, in any way possible, the works of the ministers or leaders. By looking for their mistakes and amplifying them, as did Wright Rains in 1864, seek to cause them harm.

LESSON 2:

A false sense of righteous indignation. Most nominal Christians believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of the Lord. They do not actually care that people do some work on Sunday, it is more that you don't keep their sabbath but, through the influence of the deceiver, *they are insulted by it because you won't do these things on the Seventh day.* Put simply, "they" keep no true sabbath at all, and you are a rebuke to them—The Dayton Coal and Iron company had around 400 employees keeping the furnaces hot on Sunday; the switcher train was moving slag through the train yards and you might have taken a train yourself to get to Dayton on Sunday—not a problem, unless you kept the Seventh day Sabbath.

LESSON 3:

Sunday will be aligned with something positive. Since Sunday "sacredness" will likely be attached to something positive, you will be accused of being against whatever it is. Of course, at the end we are told that we will also be accused of bringing God's wrath upon the land for failure to comply in keeping "the Lord's Day."

In the next issue, we will dive into the actual trial itself.

Now, we leave you with a thought question: I started off by quoting Ellen White and highlighting a specific sentence - "***the event so long doubted and disbelieved***" —why would she have included this in 1888 and 1911 especially considering an approximate twenty year span of Adventists being jailed, fined, put on chain gangs, etc. (especially concentrated between the years 1885 to 1896)? Some even died while in custody—Robert. M. King, 1885 in Arkansas and Samuel Mitchell, 1878 in Georgia to name a few. I often wonder if the editors or even Mrs. White herself actually noticed or contemplated it? The answer, in part comes via the 1888 messages. We will discuss this at the end of the next issue.

Last day Events

By Carl Person

In this section, we want to highlight significant events that give us clues as to what's coming as well as things that might influence the Protestant and other religious leaders to push for reforms that will ultimately lead prophetic fulfillment.

If anyone finds anything that applies, please send us the information so that all may see it!

Texas Bill for Biblical Teachings in Schools:

In a 9-5 vote, the Texas State Board of Education approved a **mandatory** literature curriculum for over 5 million students that integrates Bible stories. Stemming from House Bill 1605 passed in 2023, the reading list includes excerpts from Genesis to the New Testament. The curriculum will phase in starting in 2030.

Elementary: Adaptations of *David and Goliath* and the parable of the *Good Samaritan*.

Middle & High School: Passages including the Book of Job, the Sermon on the Mount, and *Adam and Eve*

"While supporters argue that these teachings provide necessary historical context regarding the nation's foundations, the inclusion has sparked significant debate. Critics argue that forcing Christian texts violates the constitutionally protected separation of church and state, and **lacks diversity** by primarily focusing on Protestant translations." Associated Press, June 26, 2026.

By making this curriculum mandatory, it definitely blurs the line. The government cannot "establish" a specific religion. While instituting the reading of any book is okay—what's the difference between mandating evolutionary texts as opposed to biblical? The problem here is that they are in effect, mandating religious thought. While not now specific, we know where that will lead.
Notice also that "diversity" seems to find its way into everything these days!

The Pope and Ecumenical Patriarch meet concerning unity.

Pope Leo XIV and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I met in Istanbul on [sic] to sign a landmark joint declaration. The Christian leaders met at the Phanar to mark the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, affirming their commitment to restoring full communion between the Catholic and Orthodox churches.
The two leaders met at the sacred center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople to participate in an ecumenical prayer service. Following their prayers, Pope Leo XIV and Patriarch Bartholomew I issued a Joint Declaration that focused on four key areas:

- **The path to unity:** A continued pledge to work toward restoring full visible communion between their churches.
- **Easter alignment:** A shared willingness to establish a common date for celebrating Easter.
- **Rejection of violence:** A strong, joint condemnation of violence and wars waged in the name of religion.
- **Shared peacemaking:** A commitment to collaborating on practical efforts for environmental protection and defending society's most vulnerable.

How will this work? The split in 1066 was over the “Primacy” of the Roman Pope! Further, Easter will be very interesting. The Orthodox Church uses the Julian Calendar to decide the dates for Easter (and all liturgical matters), while the Roman church uses the Gregorian calendar. The reason for the Orthodox church’s use of the Julian calendar is to preserve the traditions and early church decrees while the church was united. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII developed the Gregorian calendar (the one we use today which includes a “leap year”) to adjust for the “drift” of the Julian calendar. Since it was done by Papal decree it was rejected by the Orthodox church which viewed it as a compromise with the Roman church that would undermine Orthodox autonomy.

Health and Disease

In this section, we will be offering insights into health and disease and specifically how lifestyle choices influence it. If there are issues you would like to see addressed, please let us know.

By Dr. Michael Snyder

Is there a Higher risk of Colorectal Cancer with Obesity?

KATIE WAGNER LENNON, Family Practice News Digital Network MAY 25, 2015
FROM GUT

A cohort study of 239,658 Swedish men, who were followed for an average of 35 years, beginning in late adolescence showed that body mass index (BMI) and inflammation in early life may be important to the development of colorectal cancer (CRC), said Dr. Elizabeth D. Kantor and her colleagues. This study was not commissioned and was subjected to external peer review. This study was supported by the National Cancer Institute and the Rose Traveling Fellowship from the Harvard School of Public Health.

The study's participants, who were all between the ages of 16 and 20, were drawn from a cohort of men who underwent a compulsory conscription assessment for the Swedish military between 1969 and 1976 – when only men with severe disability or chronic diseases were exempt from serving in the military.

During the assessments, each young man's height and weight was measured, which the study's researchers used to calculate BMIs in kg/m2 for the sample. The BMIs were categorized in the following ways: 15 to <18.5 was underweight, 18.5 to <25 was normal, 25 to <27.5 was the lower category of overweight, 27.5 to <30 was the upper category of overweight, and 30 to <55 was obese. Venous blood samples of the entire cohort were also collected during the assessment. These were used to assess inflammation levels as indicated by erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR), a nonspecific biomarker of inflammation. The researchers classified each study participant's ESR as low, moderate, or high. The researchers tracked the incidences of malignant CRC in the cohort for an average of 35 years using the Swedish Cancer Registry.

Results: Men who had been categorized as being in the upper category of overweight at the time of assessment were 2.08 times more likely to get CRC than normal weight men; obese men were 2.38 times more likely to get the disease. Both of these findings were statistically significant. The researchers also determined that a high ESR was associated with a significant 63% increased risk of CRC, using a multivariable adjustment.

“While no other studies have directly addressed the association between early-life inflammation and CRC risk, evidence supports the role of inflammation early in carcinogenesis,” the researchers wrote.

Why has obesity become such a plague? Why is it rare to non-existent in many third-world countries? The answer is simple. Let’s explore the subject in depth.

What are we supposed to be eating? The government has just released new guidelines because they know that the old ones a false and detrimental but, is it really any better?



In short, yes it is. For starters, the new pyramid emphasizes “Whole grains” but, in a limited amount whereas, the old one asserts 6-11 servings per day! Let me first say that this is more than I could eat in two days, let alone one! The part that is

left out is that most of the grains and sugars consumed are highly refined. The complex carbohydrates are broken down the into simple carbohydrates in white sugars, white flours, white rice, etc. These simple sugars quickly metabolize and become fat. Then, to add to the problem, most people work at jobs that require very little real exercise. This is a dangerous combination! You will notice milk is higher in the pyramid at 2-3 servings per day. The problem with that is that there are a plethora of "low fat" milks and other dairy products that have replaced the fats with sugars!

In a very real way, we were not created to live in the world as men have made it. God's plan was quite different. Consider the following two verses:

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it up and keep it." Gen. 2:15.

After the fall, we read "…thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread…" Gen. 3:18-19.

Notice that manual labor was part of the plan. It is no secret that if we eat and don't exercise, we gain weight but, it is even worse when you are consuming highly refined foods! Doughnuts, pancakes, cakes, waffles and most breads are inundated with sugars and then we pour syrup on top!

The next problem we face is what Dr. Snyder refers to as "Frankenfoods." Most of the food products found in grocery stores are just cleverly rearranged corn, proteins, etc. They are calorie dense products with little nutritional value so, you end up eating more calories because your body is not getting the nutrition that it needs; however, you are still ingesting large amounts of refined junk—not the whole foods your body needs.

When Daniel was to be tested, he did not partake of the king's food but, rather he said, "…let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink." Dan. 1:12. Notice that this was his *first test!* The result: "…in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better all…" *ibid.* vs. 20. The kings table would be full of fried foods, unclean foods and refined foods—much the same as we see today.

The early Christians were also aware of the dangers presented by consumption of these items. Clement of Alexandria in the 2nd century A.D. writes, "Some men, in truth, live that they may eat, as the irrational creatures, 'whose life is in their belly, and nothing else.' … there is discrimination to be employed in reference to food. Ands it is to be simple, truly plain … ministering to life, not to luxury. … We must therefore reject different varieties, which engender various mischiefs, such as a depraved habit of body and disorders of the stomach, the taste being vitiated by an unhappy art—that of cookery, and the useless art of making pastry. … In their greed and solicitude, the gluttons seem absolutely to sweep the

world with a drag net to gratify their luxurious tastes. These gluttons, surrounded by the sound of hissing frying pans, and wearing their whole life away at the pestle and mortar, cling to matter like fire. More than that, they emasculate plain food, namely bread, by straining off the nourishing part of the grain, so that the necessary part becomes matter of reproach to luxury." The Instructor, v. 2, Ch. 1. He gives much more on this subject—in fact, several pages.

I have often heard that vegetarianism is a Seventh-day Adventist doctrine—really? No, it is a Christian practice that has been observed from Apostolic times. As Seventh-day Adventist, we are to be the final movement towards Apostolic purity, and the health message is part of it.

The Prophetic Faith of our Pioneers



By Dr. Michael Snyder

There are some very important principles that one needs to follow when trying to interpret prophecy. First, and most importantly, nothing can be done without the initiation of prayer. After all, this is the word of God, and prayer is the communication that man needs to discuss issues and receive understanding of this Word. For God has said, "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. The word of God is given to men, by God, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for

instruction in righteousness:" 2 Tim 3:16. So, it is, by the grace of God that we understand His Word. We tap into that grace through prayer and submission to His answers to that prayer.

Which brings me to the second principle of proper prophetic interpretation, we must abandon all preconceived ideas about what the scriptures say. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Pet 1:20. We cannot understand scripture without the aid of the Holy Spirit.

The third principle of prophetic interpretation is found in the verse in Isaiah, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." In this verse, we find that scripture is understood as we compare scripture with scripture. Knowing already, that the Bible is of no private interpretation, we must then turn to the Scriptures to allow them to interpret themselves.

We are simple, fallible human beings. It is important for us to establish our regimen of daily and regular Bible study. Through submission to the will of God, daily prayer and study will become second nature. As we commune with God in this manner, he will reveal to us understanding. I am reminded of the thought that I have read elsewhere in my studies that God is spending all the resources of heaven to redeem fallen humanity. Understanding His Word is easier when we grasp this reality of His Word. It is through this filter that I read every line of scripture because every word is salvational.

As you study scriptures, it is important to glean meaning from every verse. If something seems obscure or not well understood, then you should proceed no further until understanding is obtained. Instituting the aforementioned principles will aid in gaining this understanding. By comparing every other text in scripture with this text in question.

The next principle we should understand is that the bible should be understood literally, unless the language used is clearly figurative. The symbolism in prophecy is to be understood figuratively. The bible will provide answers to the meaning of the symbols. When a literal interpretation is required, let the Bible speak. Do not substitute men or women's ideas about the meaning. The Bible is generally pretty clear in this regard. Keep in mind that the Bible is a system of Truth in which no person should be confused.

Finally, a couple of last principles that cannot be understated. First, Prophecy repeats and in so doing gives an enlarged understanding. This principle of Repeat and Enlarge is clearly seen in the prophetic images used in Daniel and Revelation. The 4 kingdoms represented in the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar saw in Daniel 2, were the very same kingdoms that Daniel saw in chapter 7. The repetition clearly adds more detail to the prophecy.

Lastly, and not to be minimized in any manner, is the principle of scriptural consistency. Our work will be quickly diminished if we are able to alter symbolic meaning in one part of scripture to something else in another part, as we then would have no consistency. Under a lack of scriptural consistency we can make the Bible say whatever we want, wherever we want. At that point the Word of God, simply becomes the word of man.

Subtle Changes with Big Implications

By Carl Person

To begin this article, it is well to look back to the Garden of Eden itself: "Now the serpent was more ***subtil*** than any beast of the field which the LORD God made." Gen. 3:1. We all know this story very well but, to summarize, the serpent is sitting in the tree while Eve is misquoting what God had said. God said nothing about "touching" the tree, only that you cannot eat of it. Obviously the serpent is not dead so, it must be okay.

This brings us to consideration of the scriptures: Don't you think that satan will use subtle changes to God's word in order to lead people astray today?

Let's consider the following verse: "And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons …" Jer 9:11. This is a prophecy concerning what God will do. Because it is a prophecy, God employs symbolic language to convey specific messages. In this case, a "den of dragons" is understood to be a den of devils—the dragon is the symbol of Satan. Despite the importance of what God is trying to convey, most bible translations read, "I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a den of Jackals …" Jer. 9:11, NKJV. Why would they do this, and how effective is it? Why didn't "they" change the following verse as well, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and ***behold a great red Jackal***…" Rev. 13:12. The answer is, it sounds ridiculous or they would have.

So, does it have any actual effect? The answer is yes. First, it obviously takes the notion of Satan out of the verse. After all, nowhere is Satan referred to as a Jackal—a ***small*** opportunistic canine that feeds on berries, insects, carrion and small rodents. It is also a solitary, skittish creature that avoids humans at all costs

—does that sound like satan? Another instance I recently heard being claimed by someone giving evidence of creation lists this change from Dragon to Jackal as possibly being dinosaurs but the translators didn't know what to do with it. Of course this makes us look stupid



A Jackal — not very scary at all!

Defenders of the New King James in particular say that it just got rid of old English terms that are no longer in use and confuse people. While it is true that there are some words that I have to look up because they are no longer used, the King James is an exact translation of the original texts. The defenders claim the same for the New King James—well, can you explain why Young's Literal Translation, the Douay-Rheims (a Catholic Bible!) and the King James, which we know use a direct translation of the received texts all say dragons? And the Dead Sea scrolls which also says dragons?

The answer is simple: It is yet another subtle way to twist the scriptures. One item is not enough to be concerned with but, the cumulative effects can be the difference between life and death.

The Cleansing of God's Church

By Carl Person

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich …" Rev.3:18.

Why this admonition to the church of Laodicea? We are that church thus, the message is for us today. What is it saying?

Let's begin with a couple of quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy:

"***Prosperity multiplies*** a mass of professors. ***Adversity purges*** them out of the church."—Testimonies for the Church 4:89 (1876).

"***In the absence of the persecution*** there have drifted into our ranks men who appear sound and their Christianity unquestionable, but who, if persecution should arise, would go out from us."—Evangelism, 360 (1890).

In the latter half of the 19th Century, as we have seen by the opening article "*Lessons from Graysville,*" there were persecutions, while we know that from 1844 onward we had issues with certain people bringing devision and doctrinal issues into the church, the external persecutions kept us fairly well in line; however, by 1901, that was over with. Then, in 1925, the famous "Scope's Monkey Trial" took place in Dayton, Tn. (Rhea County, Tn.— the same courthouse where the Adventists were tried). This case heralded the end of Creation being taught in schools and being replaced by Evolutionary Theory. Now, the nominal Christians had something else to worry about taking their attention away from other Christians that didn't conform to their ways.

So, the Adventist church during the later 19th and throughout the 20th Centuries exploded in growth, and does not seem to be slowing down much in the 21st. It would seem a good thing that God's last day church should expand so much but, when we consider the above SOP quotes and the message to Laodicea, it would seem that all is not well. Perhaps a brief look into history can teach us something about ourselves?

During the reign of Constantine, the church had been elevated and experienced a freedom not seen in the prior three centuries. Eusebius Pamphilus, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, book viii, ch. 1, recounts "The events which preceded the persecution in our times."

"It is beyond our ability to describe in a suitable manner the extent and nature of the glory and freedom with which the word of piety toward the God of the universe, proclaimed to the world through Christ, was honored among all men, both Greeks and barbarians, before the persecution in our day.

"The favor shown our people by the rulers might be adduced as evidence; as they committed to them the government of provinces, and on account of the great friendship which they entertained toward their doctrine, released them from anxiety in regard to sacrificing.

"Why need I speak of those in the royal palaces, and of the rulers over all, who allowed the members of their households, wives and children and servants, to speak openly before them for the Divine word and life, and suffered them almost to boast of the freedom of their faith? …

"And one could see the rulers in every church accorded the greatest favor by all officers and governors. But how can any one describe those vast assemblies, and the multitude that crowded together in every city, and the famous gatherings in the houses of prayer; on whose account ***not being satisfied with the ancient buildings they erected from the foundation large churches in all the cities***?

"***No envy hindered the progress of these affairs which advanced gradually, and grew and increased day by day.*** Nor could any evil demon slander them or hinder them through human counsels, so long as the divine and heavenly hand watched over and guarded his own people as worthy.

"***But when on account of the abundant freedom, we fell into laxity and sloth, and envied and reviled each other, and were almost, as it were, taking up arms against one another***, rulers assailing rulers with words like spears, and people forming parties against people, and monstrous hypocrisy and dissimulation rising to the greatest height of wickedness, the divine judgment with forbearance, as is its pleasure, while the multitudes yet continued to assemble, gently and moderately harassed the episcopacy.

"***This persecution began with the brethren in the army***. But as if without sensibility, ***we were not eager to make the Deity favorable and propitious***; and some, like atheists, thought that our affairs were unheeded and ungoverned; and thus we added one wickedness to another. And ***those esteemed our shepherds, casting aside the bond of piety, were excited to conflicts with one another, and did nothing else than heap up strifes and threats and jealousy and enmity and hatred toward each other,*** like tyrants eagerly endeavoring to assert their power. Then, truly, according to the word of Jeremiah, '*The Lord in his wrath darkened the daughter of Zion, and cast down the glory of Israel from heaven to earth, and remembered not his foot-stool in the day of his anger. The Lord also overwhelmed all the beautiful things of Israel, and threw down all his strongholds.'* Lam. 2:1-2."

The most notable problems listed were:

1. Not being satisfied with what they had but, wanted large, beautiful churches—appealing to the eye. They desired to be the envy of the Empire.

2. Laxity and sloth. This is mirrored in the Laodicean message: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and

knows not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked …" Rev. 16-17.

3. Former "brethren" started the persecution: Ellen White warns, "As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. ***By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light;*** and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. ***They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren.*** When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." GC, 608.

4. They didn't even try to make the Word of God palatable rather, like the Jews of old, they looked at non-believers as a lesser people.

5. Conflicts and strife among their leaders—even hatred, jealousy and enmity towards each other.

The result was that God would allow persecution to separate the wheat from the chaff. He has used this method throughout the centuries, and will do so at the end. We shall indeed be required to buy gold tried in the fires of satan's armies.

The Sweetness the World Missed

By Irene Guzman

Scripture Reading: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." — 2 Corinthians 4:7 (KJV)

Have we ever caught someone talking about us with a sigh? Maybe they called us "that sweet girl or boy" right before they wrote us off. Or maybe they didn't even say it to our face. They just looked right through us, deciding we didn't have anything left to offer. The world is brutal like that. It throws people away the exact second it decides they lose their utility or value.

But here is the kicker: being valued by the world is not where our purpose lives. Popularity and worldly worth are not where true sweetness comes from. That sweetness stems directly from the One who created you and me—Jesus, the true Vine and the very source of our life.

The very moment we realize we are not a ruined, discarded vessel is the moment we step into our true purpose. True faith is about seeing our worth at the exact moment the world tells us that we have none left.

Salt, Light, and the Unbroken Sweetness: The truth is, we are the sweetness of God that the world has not managed to choke out. We are the salt and the light. The Bible tells us to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).

God doesn't just want us to know He is good; He wants us to reflect that goodness to a bitter world.

When we look at our life, remember that the Gospel isn't a book we just finish, close, and lay aside on a shelf. Instead, it is the living, breathing beginning of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

The Good News spreads across the earth one broken person at a time. We are ordinary, cracked "earthen vessels" carrying a priceless, divine treasure. Those very cracks are exactly what God uses to shine His light through, showing that the excellency of the power belongs to Him alone.

We are the ones bringing the antidote to a dying world, setting the stage for a great harvest. The Return of the King:

If we feel fractured today, take heart. Jesus is coming back, and soon. On that day, the restoration He started in our broken life will be perfectly completed. The world’s rejection will fade into nothingness when we see Him face to face.

Until then, we hold our heads high, knowing exactly where our sweetness comes from.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, guard my heart from every careless word and dismissive sigh today.

Fill my earthen vessel with Your peace, and let Your undeniable sweetness and grace shine brightly through every single one of the cracks.

May I go forth in Your strength, Lord, carrying Your priceless treasure to a world that is in need of it.

In Jesus' name, Amen 🙏 "Hallelujah, the King reigns supreme".

Enjoy the beauty of His grace in our brokenness today, it's His beginning in us!

We are interested in contributors for this online magazine. Submissions do not have to be full length articles. If you find something that fits into any of the other categories: Last Day Events, Health and Disease or perhaps a different item all together, please email us at — mdsnydermd@att.net