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FATH **ON THE LINE**
DARE TO STAND

EDITOR'S CORNER

This month, my family has been reading the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah is often called "the prophet of doom" because he seemed to only ever get gloomy messages from God that the people of his day didn't welcome.

Halfway through the book of Jeremiah, we were reading another message with again the same theme: "Repent, 'turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do..." (26:3). My daughter asked, "Why doesn't he just quit? They're so bad, they deserve to be punished. Why don't God and Jeremiah just give up and quit begging them over and over again?"

It was a good question that reminded me of Jonah and why he didn't want to go to Nineveh: "I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil" (Jonah 4:2). Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he knew if even just a handful—maybe even just one—of Nineveh's evil people would humble themselves before God in repentance, God would spare that wicked city.

How kind and patient is our God. Over and over and over again He calls us, patiently waiting for us when we stray. Even when we've failed, He picks us up again.

This week I was struck by Psalm 116:1-6:

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low and he helped me (emphasis added).

Some of us may sometimes struggle with our salvation. We may ask, "Can the Lord save even me? After all my sins, surely I deserve nothing but death. I can't hope for heaven. Hell is where I belong." But the stories of Jeremiah, Jonah, David, and so many others, testify to the amazing awesome power of God. He saves those who call upon Him. When hopeless thoughts arise in our hearts, it is our privilege and humble delight to call upon the Lord and say "I beseech thee, deliver my soul." This is part of what overcoming by faith means.

The fact is, we need a Saviour. We cannot save ourselves. And the good and mysterious and beautiful news we see throughout the history of God's people is that He wants us. God wants us to give our whole lives to Him. God is God of not only good and perfect people. He wants to be your God, and mine.

He doesn't need us—it is we who need Him to live and breathe. But He WANTS us. As this year draws to a close, and a new year begins, remember that God loves you and wants you. He wants you not only when you are on your knees, but when you are making dinner, paying the bills, and driving your kids to school.

Wendy

Our aim is to urge men and women to stand for truth and resist error. We pray that in times of serious compromise our ministry will equip you with solid information on current end-time issues and trends, and encourage you to live a life apart from worldly influences.

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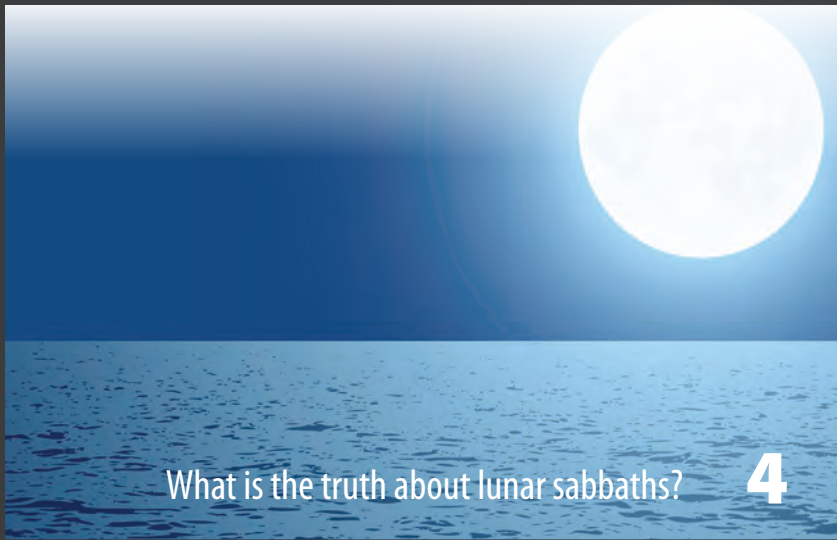
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Lunar Sabbaths: FACT OR FICTION?

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8).

Many people know very little about lunar Sabbaths, but much is being said about the concept nowadays. Every argument thinkable is being used to convince us of its legitimacy. The idea is sweeping through many Sabbath-keeping churches bringing confusion and doubt, and it is gaining momentum.

What is the truth about lunar Sabbaths?

It is my desire to present simple, clear, and logical truth on this important subject. I hope to strengthen you with a Scriptural basis for keeping the true seventh-day Biblical Sabbath that God gave to humanity at Creation.

The lunar Sabbaths are in total contradiction to the seven-day cycle given to us by God at Creation. The concept of the lunar Sabbath uses the moon to determine when the week begins and ends. This being the case, the Sabbath might begin on any day of the week. The moon has a 29.5 day cycle. Because you cannot split a day in half, this means that some months will have 29 days while other will have 30 days. Imagine the confusion. In contrast, God makes it simple for us:

Six Days of Work

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea,

and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it (Exodus 20:9-11).

God created the week to consist of six days of work followed by the Sabbath, then six days of work, another Sabbath, and so on.

There are four Sabbaths every 28 days. If you follow the moon cycle, some months you will have to work seven or eight days before the Sabbath. This is in total contradiction to the commandments of God that "six days shalt thou labour."

The Seventh Day

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD (Leviticus 23:15-16).

Leviticus makes it clear that God established a seven-day week, the Sabbath coming at the end. Seven multiplied by seven is 49. This means that the day after the seventh Sabbath would be the 50th day. If God wanted us to keep lunar Sabbaths, this passage of Scripture would not make sense.

In fact, the Scriptures are quite clear that the Sabbath comes on the seventh day of the week. God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh day. He blessed the seventh day, hallowed it, and asked us to keep it holy as well. That weekly cycle



by Victor Gill

has never changed and never will. God established it. Once God establishes something it is established forever.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made (Genesis 2:1-3).

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8).

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD (Isaiah 66:23).

This recent agitation over lunar Sabbaths actually began early in the 20th century, when a number of critical scholars rejected the Biblical origin of the Sabbath and suggested its origin was related to several “evil days” in the Babylonian calendar. This confused many honest hearts.

The origin of the Biblical Sabbath is definitely connected with the Creation week and was instituted by God Himself three days after He made the moon—not seven days after He made the moon or seven days after the first day of the month.

The Sabbath has nothing to do with the month or the sun. It is God’s memorial of Creation. It is related to the passing of time,

from the beginning. Work six days and rest on the Sabbath. This weekly cycle has never been broken. Let no one deceive you.

Feasts and Festivals

Some would argue that the Sabbath is part of the Israelite festivals, but this is not so. The Sabbath was given to man long before the festivals were given to the Israelites. In fact the Bible makes it very clear that the Sabbath was not to be confused with the festivals:

*These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: **Beside the sabbaths of the LORD**, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD (Leviticus 23:37-38, emphasis added).*

Besides that, on “the Sabbaths of the Lord,” no work was to be done whatsoever. But on “ceremonial Sabbaths” only no regular work was to be done:

*Six days shall work be done: but **the seventh day is the sabbath of rest**, an holy convocation; **ye shall do no work therein**: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings (Leviticus 23:3, emphasis added).*

*And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: **ye shall do no servile work therein**: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations... **Ye shall do no servile work therein**: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD (Leviticus 23:21, 25, emphasis added).*

*On the first day shall be an holy convocation: **ye shall do no servile work therein**. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and **ye shall do no servile work therein** (Leviticus 23:35-36).*

The Final Word

Let me make one point clear: I am not judging those who see the Sabbath otherwise. I’m sure their intentions are good. But be assured that there is only one true Sabbath, which comes at the end of every six days of work.

This weekly cycle, set forth by the Creator God Himself after six days from the beginning of His Creation, has never changed since it was first established. ■

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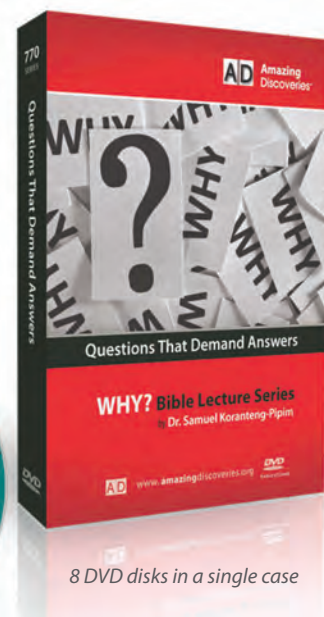
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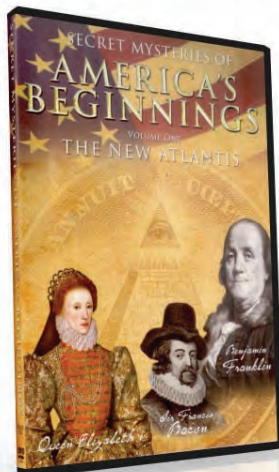


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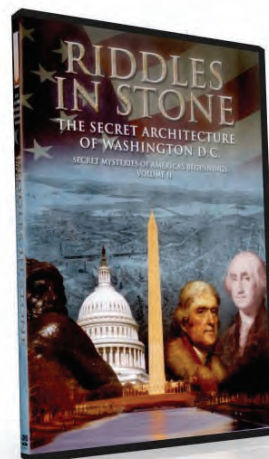
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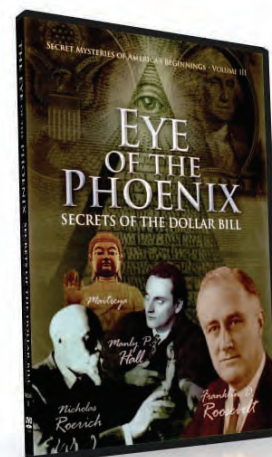
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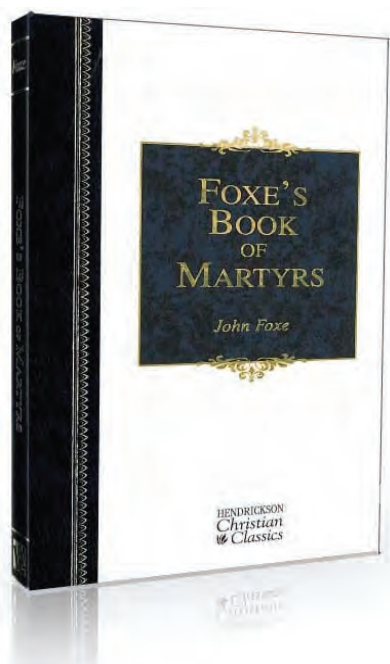
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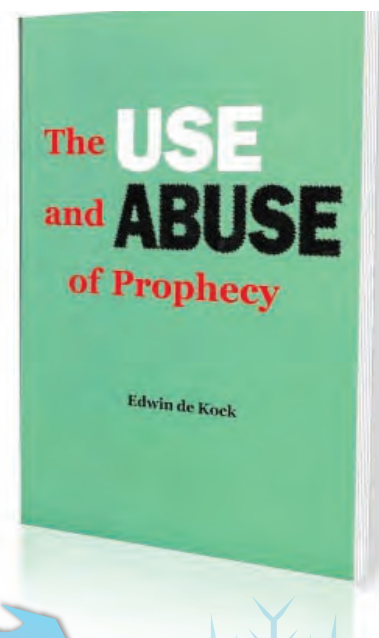
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How did we get here?

Music, th

The elements that caused our once-Christianized Western world to become a secular society could fill a book.

The rise of spiritualism in the 19th Century and its acceptance by many Christians blurred the distinction between the godly and the demonic.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and her Theosophical blending of Eastern and Western occultism laid the foundation for the New Age movement and its key prophets such as Annie Besant and Alice Bailey.

These women promoted the idea that humanity is essentially a god and, thus, we ourselves are the real solution to our problems. Added to these developments were Darwin's theory of evolution and the rise of communism.

Moving along with these trends was the rapidly transforming world of the arts. While impressionism grew in the visual arts, North American music evolved from classical, to blues, to jazz, swing, be-bop, rhythm and blues, and then, by the mid-50s, to rock and roll. With the help of the technology boom in media and communication, a once-Christian culture transformed into a secularized society.

The Religion of Me

Secularism is supposed to be non-religious. Yet, it becomes an idolatrous system by placing trust only in human emotions.

We as Seventh-day Adventists face the question of how to live in this secular social structure. How do we reach the secular mind with the eternal Gospel? How much of our culture's philosophy and lifestyle should we absorb into our daily experience?

How are we to be in the world and not of the world, maintaining the high principles of our faith while staying relevant to those whom we are trying to reach with the precious truth?

Is it possible—in this world where MTV culture seems to rule the lives of our youth and where the “plastic reality” of Hollywood has found inroads into our own homes—to stay true to what we believe? These are profound questions that need to be answered.

photo credit: www.christianholmer.com



e Media, & ME

by Brian Neumann

In 2 Timothy 3:1-5, Paul describes a people that would exist in the last days:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

At first glance, this description seems to be about a people without religion—perhaps an accurate description of a neo-pagan secular society. However, verse five clearly states that these are a people that have religion, “a form of godliness,” but without the power.

Paul’s first description of these deceived believers is that they love themselves—the very attribute that contributed to Lucifer’s fall from grace. Humankind, while believing that it is worshipping God, is in fact making a god of itself. All the other attributes such as covetousness, boasting, and disobedience to parents grow out of this foundational evil—love of self.

People seem to be ruled by the overpowering master of passion. The slogan of our society is, “if it feels good, do it.” The media, through movies, sitcoms, commercials, games, printed material, and the music video culture has led society—even Christians—to make decisions based on how they feel rather than the higher, eternal guide of Scripture.

Who do You Worship?

A culture has developed that is counter the culture of Christ, that has brought Christians, even Seventh-day Adventists, to the point where they may be practicing godliness without the

power. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the radical changes that have taken place in our music and worship practices.

It would be naïve to imagine that while we Christians eagerly absorb so much that pop culture has loaded on us, our expression of worship could remain untainted. Indeed, music has become the emotional vehicle for so much of the media’s communication. Without the use of physical force, a revolution has replaced a Biblical value system with a system that elevates self-centeredness.

Consider the words of 18th century British Statesman, Edmund Burke. He outlined the most successful method used by revolutionaries to overthrow an established cultural and political system:

Cultural and political revolution always go hand in hand, because revolutionaries understand that if a people can be persuaded to abandon their traditions, their mores and their cultural and religious norms, they can easily be led to accept radical political changes.¹

If a once-godly nation would reject its moral and religious position in the name of liberty and freedom, why would it not allow the laws of “humanistic passion” to become its system of value?

Edmund Burke contributes some sobering comment to this discussion:

Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to put moral chains upon their own appetites... Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.²

In 1889, Ellen White wrote to a young girl named Belle. She highlighted some of the same concerns expressed by Edmund Burke. The world had become Belle’s standard—the wisdom of humanity and its desire to please self had brought her into deep moral and spiritual danger.

Try to imagine how much worse is the problem today thanks to the media and intense indoctrinization of counter-culture philosophy. Consider, too, the remedy suggested by Ellen White:

Belle, your disposition and temperament is such that I greatly fear for your soul... The sensational and emotional is more fully developed than the intellectual. Everything, Belle, should be avoided that would exaggerate this tendency into a predominating power...

The mind may in this crisis of your life take a turn, a bias of grossness rather than refinement. The contaminating influences of the world may mold your habits, your taste, your conversation, your deportment... The counsel of parental affection is lost upon deaf ears... Your passions are strong, your principles are endangered, and you will not consider and will not follow advice which you know to be good...

In order to gain that which you think is liberty you pursue a course which, if followed, will hold you in a bondage worse than slavery. You must change your course of conduct... place your will on the side of the will of God... But if you are determined to listen to no counsels, but your own and you will work out every problem for yourself, then be sure you will reap that which you have sown... Remember every action and every course of action has a two-fold character, be it virtuous or demoralizing (Letter 47, 1889, Battle Creek, Michigan).

Counter Culture

The New Age counter-culture revolution of the 50s, 60s, and even 70s directly opposed the values of European and North American Christian laws and ideals. Free love, free sex, and rebellion against the established value system became the order of the day. Although it is true that the existing status quo was flawed, it at least was established upon Biblical morals and values.

The chosen vehicle of expression was music that proclaimed that generation's angst and their overwhelming desire for new freedoms and a new way of doing things.

How was it possible that a seemingly neutral medium such as music contributed to radical moral and political change? Let's begin by reviewing some comments by great thinkers and philosophers of bygone years. Their opinions clearly contradict present notions about music.

Aristotle made these observations regarding music and its ability to change the emotional states of humans:

*Music directly imitates the passions or state of the soul... when one listens to music that imitates a certain passion, he becomes imbued with the same passion; and if over a longtime he habitually listens to music that rouses ignoble passions, his whole character will be shaped to an ignoble form.*³

Not only did Aristotle recognize that music communicated emotion, but he believed that those exposed to music that

encouraged impure passions would be molded in a similar way. Socrates held an identical view:

*When modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state always change with them.*⁴

Ellen White also wrote about the profound influence of music. Regarding its effect on the youth, she says this:

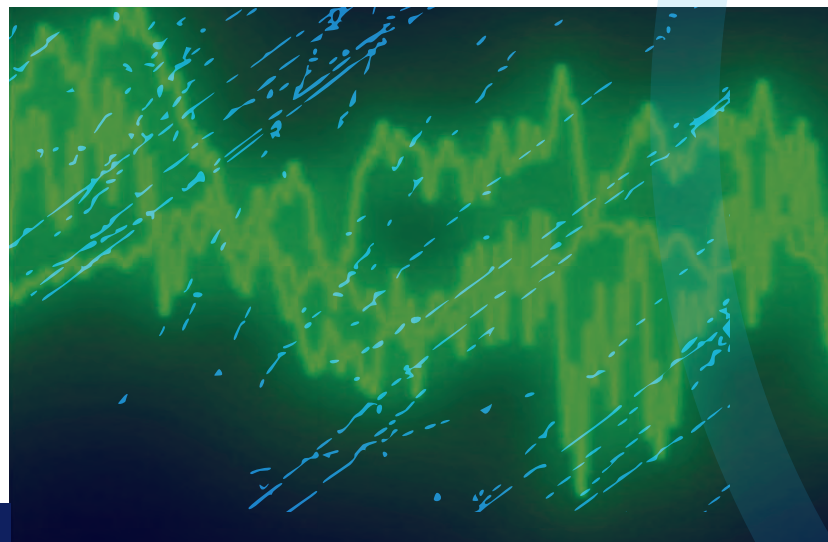
They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for divine knowledge, for a growth in grace, are wanting... Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace while humbly making known his wants and, with strong cries and tears, pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of the evil one. Satan is leading the young captive. Oh, what can I say to lead them to break his power of infatuation! He is a skilful charmer luring them on to perdition (Adventist Home, 407-408).

It is quite clear that Ellen White did not think music was a neutral medium of communication. She understood Satan's ability to "infatuate" and "charm" the mind and by so doing to lure the youth to "perdition." She also advised that music could be a curse by the way in which it is played.

The events that unfolded at an Indiana camp meeting, and her concerns about what would again be repeated in the future, prompted Ellen White to say this:

Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted... God's work is ever characterized by calmness and dignity (2 Selected Messages, 36-38).

This belief that music has the ability to indoctrinate may be considered the delusion of ancient philosophers and an





outdated prophet. But, when we consider the current research, it becomes apparent that not much has changed. The musicians of our present age—those who sculpted the musical vehicle of the counter-culture—certainly seem to believe that the power of music is beyond the ordinary.

The ways in which sound affects the human organism are myriad and subtle. The loud sounds and bright lights [of today's music] are tremendous indoctrination tools.⁵

This statement by musician and counter-culture philosopher Frank Zappa expresses a common belief held by secular musicians. However, while this understanding of the power of music is generally held by the non-Christian music world, the Christian music world implicitly denies it.

The amazing thing is that the secular music scene intentionally used the language of music as a counter-culture tool and unashamedly expressed these intentions. For example, MTV made no bones about the fact that they were aiming at

changing the way teenagers think. Consider this line from one of their advertisements:

MTV, aggressively reorganizing your brain.⁶

Even in the early years of MTV, they boasted this:

At MTV, we don't shoot for the 14-year-olds, we own them.⁷

MTV's founder, Bob Pitman, clearly understood the emotional power of the music-media combination to capture the minds of the teenagers:

The strongest appeal you can make is emotionally. If you can get their emotions going, make them forget their logic, you've got them.⁸

Pitman knew that music can cause people to lose control of their reasoning faculties.

How does this relate to Christian music and worship?

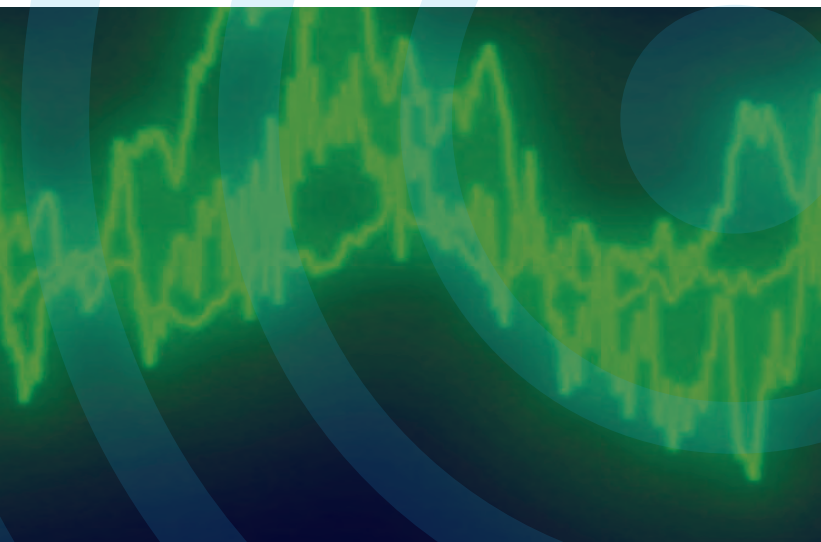
Jesus tells us that His children will worship God in “spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

The comments in the New Testament and in the *Testimonies* regarding Christian worship consistently suggest that the Biblical worship experience should be a spiritual and intellectual exercise, rather than a predominantly physical and emotional state of being. This does not suggest that our worship experience should be devoid of any emotion or expression. Rather, emotion and expression are to flow from the intellectual and the spiritual, instead of the other way around.

It almost goes without saying that the principles that should guide a Christian, in all the choices they make, should conform to the criteria spelled out by Paul in Philippians 4:8 and 1 Corinthians 3:16-19:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.



The wisdom of today's world suggests that if it feels good, do it. Less than 50 years ago, public pornography would have elicited an immediate outcry. Today we are surrounded by pornographic advertising and entertainment, and, even mature Christians hardly blush or bat an eyelid when confronted by it in its various degrees.

Likewise, it would have been repugnant, even to the rebels of 1954, if instead of Elvis Presley or Little Richard, they had been bombarded with the sounds of Metallica or Marilyn Manson. At that time, many politicians and spiritual leaders denounced even Elvis' music as "the devil's music." Today, Elvis and other 50s-style rock have become kindergarten music. Indeed, many churches are even incorporating heavy metal and other styles of extreme contemporary music into their worship repertoires.

Any thoughtful Christian who will not admit that we have been profoundly desensitized through harmful music and media is either blind or in a willful

state of denial. What a price we are paying for allowing our youth and ourselves to enjoy sin without guilt.

Let us plead with God for spiritual eyesalve so that we will see our lost, wretched condition before it is too late. ■

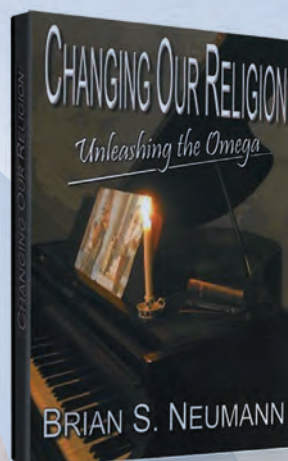
This article is adapted from *From Rock'n'Roll or Rock of the Ages* by Brian Neumann, and just scratches the surface of this crucial discussion. To learn more about secularism, the media, and the beauty and dangers of music, visit www.amazingdiscoveries.org.

1. As quoted in *The New American* (April 8, 2002): 16.
2. Ibid.
3. Aristotle, *The Politics* (340 BC).
4. Aristotle, *The Politics* Book 8 (340 BC): 466.
5. As quoted in *The New American* (April 8, 2002): 11.
6. MTV advertisement, as shown on *Hells Bells* video series, part 2.
7. MTV's *Rock Around the Clock*, *Philadelphia Enquirer* (November 3, 1982).
8. Bob Pitman as quoted by Eric Holmberg on *Hells Bells* video series, part 2.

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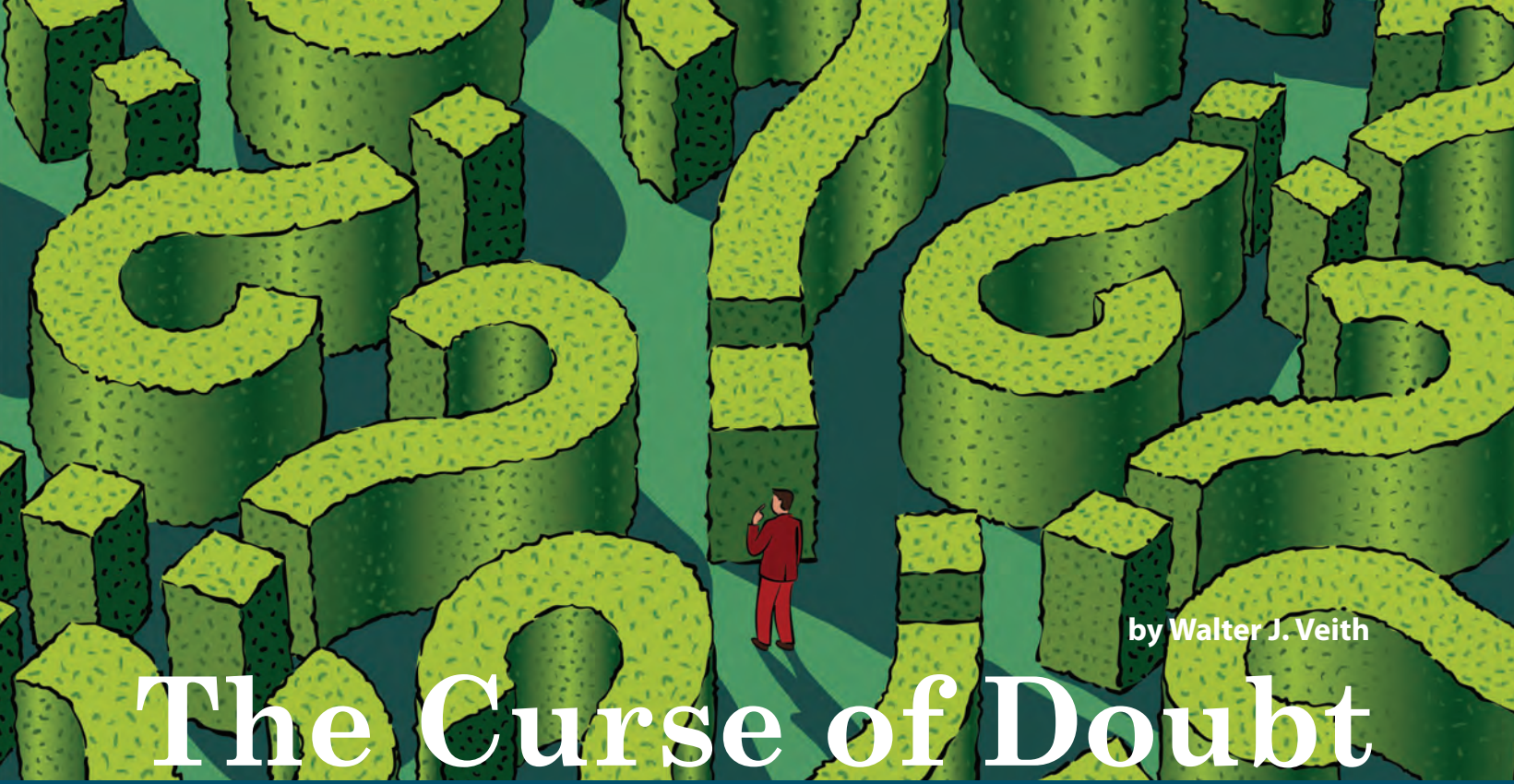
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The Curse of Doubt

by Walter J. Veith

We are happy to print this abridged version of Walter Veith's Curse of Doubt article series, originally published in 2006.

Untold millions have been poisoned by the curse of doubt. The consequences are seen in both the secular and religious world, where new theories and religions continue to spring forth at an ever-increasing rate. Thus, confusion and chaos result.

Seeds of Doubt

Human doctrines and traditions have been placed above Scripture, and most Protestant churches today have become the “hold of every foul spirit.”

Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:2-4).

Babylon is called the “mother of harlots.” Her daughters are the churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.

The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon, applies to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt.

Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it is given in the last days. Therefore, it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that Church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in Revelation 18, the people of God are called to come out of Babylon. For God’s people to be able to come out of Babylon, they must still be in Babylon. And most of the followers of Christ are found in the churches professing the Protestant faith.

At the time of their rise, these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the Gospel. But these churches did not continue in the truth. The prophets said this:

And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD. Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown (Ezekiel 16:14-15).



But they fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel—the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly (GC 382.3).

Doubt in the Mind

We have been tricked by false doctrines. Lies told about the Scriptures watered the seed of doubt until it grew into a mighty weed that encompassed the world. The damage is mostly found in education, for this is where the war rages for our minds. The battle also rages in the places where the Bible is widespread, for the Word is under attack.

Doubt turns into scoffing and scoffers tread upon sacred ground with no regard for the fragile seedlings that spring forth:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this

they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water (2 Peter 3:3-5).

Thousands have gone to their ruin through the influence of skeptics and philosophers who taint people's hearts and minds with the poison of doubt. Satan works through such means to carry out his purposes of ruining souls.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (Matthew 18:6).

An example of such erroneous teachings is found in the book *Die Belofte van Sy Wederkoms* by theology professor Dr. Lemmer:

The Old Covenant was annulled with the betrayal of Judas... Those who still try to keep the law are not spiritually of age and have not yet received the Holy Spirit. If the law is still read these days, it must be for people that are not of age, that is for unbelievers. This is the only sense in which the law is still applicable today. Believers live through the Spirit and are not under the law... Christians who today try to keep the ten commandments hinder the work of the Holy Spirit and undermine the pure essence of the New Covenant.ⁱ

Those who truly search the Scriptures and understand God's Word will not be led astray by such blatant falsehood, for the Bible is the only rule of faith. Unfortunately, most people today look to the physical realm for their belief system.

We know that in His Word, God has clearly outlined His law, and that law will judge us. There is not an ounce of Biblical support to condone the law being done away with. This is yet another toxic poison emanating from Satan, the father of lies.

ⁱ Dr. Lemmer, *Die Belofte van Sy Wederkoms* (2003): 158, 162.

In a world where truth is being attacked and undermined on every side, let us remain firmly rooted and grounded on Bible truth:

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

Faith: Doubt's Antidote

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord (James 1:5-7).

We need faith in God and in His Word. In a world of skepticism and uncertainty, we need to show what it means to have a living and intelligent faith.

This faith is developed through careful study of God's Word, which gives us the knowledge to understand His promises, and the conditions upon which these promises are fulfilled. When we understand the true will of God, and fulfill the conditions of His promises, we will have the confidence to come before His throne with an unwavering faith, doubting nothing.

E. G. White writes this:

God is behind every promise, and we cannot dishonor Him more than by questioning and hesitating, by asking and not believing, and then by talking doubt. If you do not immediately receive what you have asked for, will you go on in sullenness and unbelief? Believe; believe that God will do just what He has promised. Keep your prayers ascending, and watch, work and wait. Fight the good fight of faith. Say to your heart, "God has invited me to come. He has heard my prayer. He has pledged His word that He will receive me, and He will fulfill His promise. I can trust God; for He so loved me that He gave His only-begotten Son to die for me. The Son of God is my Redeemer" (FE 299.2).

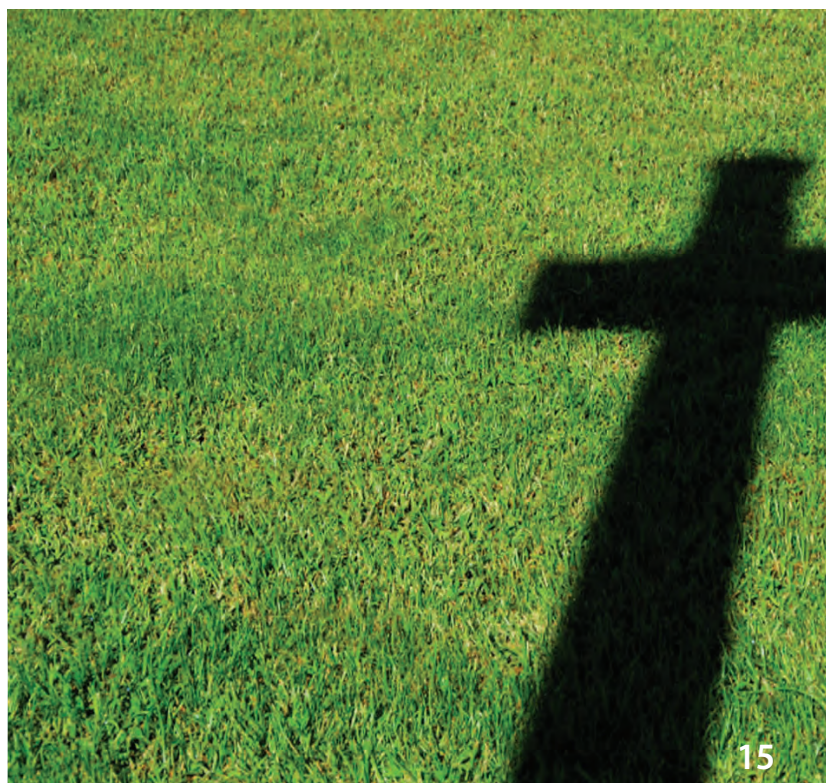
We are told in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he

is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Without first obtaining the faith of the Gospel, we cannot come to a knowledge of God and His Word. Without the knowledge of God, we cannot fully comprehend His will, thus we will not live according to His precepts and our faith is powerless.

We cannot serve God without an unwavering belief in every word that comes from His mouth. Knowledge of the truth will expel all doubt in our souls, producing living and intelligent faith.

From God, the fountain of wisdom, proceeds all the knowledge that is of value to man, all that the intellect can grasp or retain. The fruit of the tree representing good and evil is not to be eagerly plucked, because it is recommended by one who was once a bright angel in glory. He has said that if men eat thereof, they shall know good and evil. But let it alone. The true light shines from Jesus Christ, who "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." From the Holy Spirit proceeds divine knowledge. He knows what humanity needs to promote peace, happiness, and restfulness here in this world, and secure eternal rest in the Kingdom of God (FE 437.1).

This is the knowledge and wisdom to seek after, for it leads to light and life eternal. When Christ came to Earth, only those who sincerely desired truth and light from heaven received Him with gladness.



Faith in Sanctification

In the second letter by Peter to those who had obtained “like precious faith” with himself, the apostle sets forth the divine plan for the development of Christian character. He writes this:

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity (2 Peter 1:2-7).

Speaking about this passage, E. G. White writes this:

These words are full of instruction, and strike the keynote of victory. The apostle presents before the believers the ladder of Christian progress, every step of which represents advancement in the knowledge of God, and in the climbing of which there is to be no standstill. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are the rounds of the ladder. We are saved by climbing round after round, mounting step after step, to the height of Christ’s ideal for us (AA 530.1).



If we truly wish to obtain victory over sin, we must stop doubting what God can do for us. Lack of faith is what causes weakness in Christianity, and failure to live victoriously for Christ. He sets the standard. It is only by our lack of faith that we fail to reach that standard.

God expects us to build characters in accordance with the pattern set before us. We are to lay brick by brick, adding grace to grace, finding our weak points and correcting them in accordance with the directions given. When a crack is seen in the walls of a mansion, we know that something about the building is wrong. In our character building, cracks are often seen. Unless these defects are remedied, the house will fall when the tempest of trial beats upon it. God gives us strength, reasoning power, time, in order that we may build characters on which He can place His stamp of approval. He desires each child of His to build a noble character, by the doing of pure, noble deeds, that in the end he may present a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by man and God. In our character building we must build on Christ. He is the sure foundation—a foundation which can never be moved. The tempest of temptation and trial cannot move the building which is riveted to the Eternal Rock (CG 165-166).

Preparing for War...with Faith

How are soldiers prepared for war? They must endure difficult training and face all challenges head-on, so they may have a chance in a day of strife. Likewise, we are entering into the final stage of the battle between good and evil, and we are called upon to put on the whole armor of God. This is what enables us to fight valiantly for our High Commander, Jesus.

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 spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Ephesians 6:11-13).

When the servants of Christ take the shield of faith for their defense, and the sword of the Spirit for war, there is danger in the enemy’s camp...The work of conquering evil is to be done

THE GENESIS CONFLICT

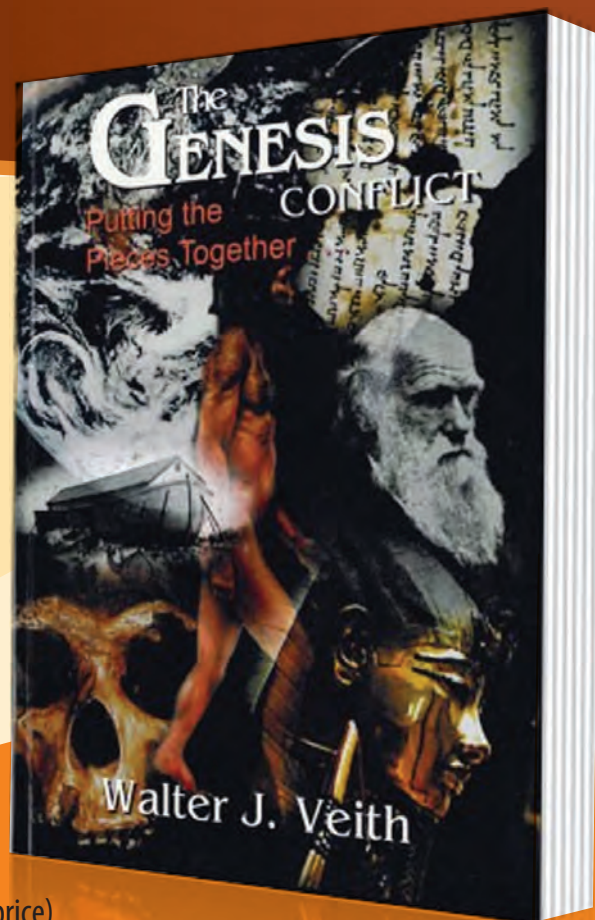
by Walter J. Veith

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through faith. Those who go into the battlefield will find that they must put on the whole armor of God. The shield of faith will be their defense and will enable them to be more than conquerors. Nothing else will avail but this—faith in the Lord of hosts, and obedience to His orders. Vast armies furnished with every other facility will avail nothing in the last great conflict. Without faith, an angel host could not help. Living faith alone will make them invincible and enable them to stand in the evil day, steadfast, unmovable, holding the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end (God's Amazing Grace, 25-26).

Oh, that we could understand that God has not changed. We are the ones who have changed. He is still our High Priest, but we have forgotten how to approach Him. We have forgotten how to pray the prayer of faith, because the world is choked with the brambles of doubt and worry.

No wonder the Lord has to permit trial and affliction, so that our need will expel our doubt. Then we may put forth

fervent and effective prayers to God, and take hold of His divine power, that we may be ready to stand in the last great conflict. The curse of doubt must be transformed into a living faith, for without faith it is impossible to please Him.

The signs of the end are fast fulfilling. The time of trouble is very near us now. We are to be brought into strait places in a way in which we have not been brought heretofore. The time of trouble is near, and we are to awake to a realization of this. We are to be sure that our feet are in the narrow path. We need an experience that we have not yet had, that we may have the assurance that the God of all grace is a very present help in time of need (Letter 54, 1906, E. White).

We have forgotten how to pray the prayer of faith. May we obtain a living and unshakable faith, that we may experience the wondrous things God has in store for us! ■

Pure Water

by Lorelei Erho

Water. It is one of the most vital elements of our existence. All life depends on it. God provided rich sources of this essential liquid nutrient for us, but it has become spoiled through sin and is a far cry from His original provision. Because it is so crucial to our health and well-being, our water should be of the best quality possible.

Contaminants

Good water is hard to come by these days. Though our urban water systems provide water that is safe for human consumption, this water is not necessarily good for you—or at least not the best. Water from our cities' sources almost always contains chloride, fluoride and even contaminants such as lead, hormones, and pesticides.

The growing use of chloramine disinfectants instead of chlorine is even more cause for concern. Chloramine-treated water tastes better than chlorine-treated water, but chloramines are no better for the health than chlorine.

Carbon filters and other filtration systems help reduce the levels of these contaminants except for chloramines, which are more difficult to remove.

Alkalinity

Another aspect of water quality that most people do not consider is water pH.

Our bodies maintain a delicate balance between acidity and alkalinity. This is a huge juggling act, considering most of the foods we consume today form an acidic ash and create waste in the body. Add to that the stress most of us live under, and the environmental pollution and toxins we're constantly exposed to, and the mix becomes a major recipe for ill health. Disease takes hold, and even thrives, in an acid environment.

To counteract this dilemma many people are turning their focus to eating more alkaline-based foods and making lifestyle changes. Another way to improve the pH of your body is by using alkaline water.

Alkaline water is created with an alkalizing, ionization unit that uses an electrolysis process to split the water into two streams: alkaline and acid.

.....
The alkaline water is refreshing, pure, clean, and loaded with antioxidants and bio-available minerals. Its micro clusters make it six times more hydrating than conventional water, and more easily absorbed by your cells.
.....

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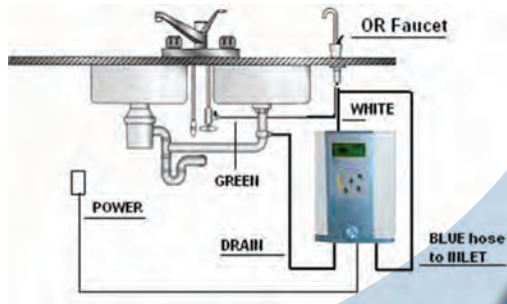
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Diet and Destiny?

The now-and-forever benefits

Health reformer Ellen White tells us that even our eternal destiny is influenced by what, how, and when we eat! Are we paying attention?

There are but few as yet who are aroused sufficiently to understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their characters, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny (1 Testimonies 488–489).

Our loving Lord has sent us health reform principles to prepare us for eternal happiness with Him, but also to relieve human suffering:

The work of health reform will go forward; for it is the Lord's means of lessening the suffering in our world, and of purifying His people (Counsels on Diet, 38).

In this text, the love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for us is revealed. The work “will go forward.” Willing hearts and minds will be found to spread the principles of health that can alleviate the pain we feel on this Earth.

If God's plan is to ease human hurting, and to prepare a people who will inherit the earth made new, what becomes of those who reject the dietary principles God has provided in plain language and detail in these last days?

.....
Those who refuse to be purified by God's health principles will neither share these principles with others, nor receive their benefits for themselves.
.....

What a tragic loss, both for all heaven and for the individuals involved. But perhaps the focus has been too much on the negative consequences associated with rejection of health reform, instead of on encouraging people to obey.

This article, therefore, discusses recent research into the wonderful and exciting benefits of the health reform diet. We can begin to understand our Creator's unsurpassed brilliance when we see the human body's response to the diet He intended for us. This reaffirms our faith in Him, assures us of His love, and inspires our cooperation with all His efforts on our behalf.

Therefore, consider the following studies proving the truth behind God's health message:

Lifestyle and Genetics

Comprehensive lifestyle changes including a better diet and more exercise can lead not only to a better physique, but also to swift and dramatic changes at the genetic level, U.S. researchers said on Monday.

In a small study, the researchers tracked 30 men with low-risk prostate cancer who decided against conventional medical treatment such as surgery and radiation or hormone therapy. The men underwent three months of major lifestyle changes, including eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and soy products, moderate exercise such as walking for half an hour a day, and an hour of daily stress management methods such as meditation.

As expected, they lost weight, lowered their blood pressure and saw other health improvements. But the researchers found more



of health reform

profound changes when they compared prostate biopsies taken before and after the lifestyle changes. After the three months, the men had changes in activity in about 500 genes—including 48 that were turned on and 453 genes that were turned off. The activity of disease-preventing genes increased while a number of disease-promoting genes, including those involved in prostate cancer and breast cancer, shut down, according to the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The research was led by Dr. Dean Ornish, head of the Preventive Medicine Research Institute in Sausalito, California, and a well-known author advocating lifestyle changes to improve health. “It’s an exciting finding because so often people say, ‘Oh, it’s all in my genes, what can I do?’ Well, it turns out you may be able to do a lot... In just three months, I can change hundreds of my genes simply by changing what I eat and how I live? That’s pretty exciting,” Ornish said. “The implications of our study are not limited to men with prostate cancer.”¹

What’s so incredible about this research is that the health reform steps those men took changed them at the DNA level! This shows that God’s genetic engineering method is more comprehensive, successful, and safe than humankind’s genetic engineering.

Nutrition and the Brain

In another article on diet’s direct effect on the brain structure and chemistry, we read,



Most conventional Western diets imbalance the membranes [the nerves and linings of the blood vessels of the brain] not only biophysically but also biochemically.²

That means that not only are the membranes’ physical structure negatively impacted, but the chemical processes by which the mind operates are also affected.

.....
Bear in mind that depression, an increasing cause of suffering in America, is usually a chemical imbalance in the brain.³
.....

This bad news can actually be good news! Simply put, if we make just one change in our lives—if we avoid a Western diet—we can avoid many of the physical and mental consequences

associated with it. Changing eating habits is not as difficult as it sounds. And imagine that positive effect throughout an entire family: lower health bills, fewer days lost from school and work, happier and calmer personalities—the benefits are numerous.

To the Israelites in the wilderness, whom the Lord was trying to purify with His diet of manna, God said, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee” (Exodus 15:26).

I would guess that the Exodus participants never truly understood how beneficial to their health God’s provisions were. God, in His wisdom, knew what was best to cleanse them from the idolatry and pagan practices they’d been exposed to for 400 years.

We are told in Inspiration that, “mental and moral power is dependent upon the physical health.”⁴ God’s health reform at that time in history had mental and moral purification in mind as much as physical—just as it does today. In the same way that God was preparing His people to enter





earthly Canaan—in part through health reform—today He is preparing a people for heavenly Canaan.

Nutrition and DNA

In yet another study on genetic engineering via nutrition rather than physical gene manipulation, the conclusion was that “it is likely that differences in DNA methylation, and resulting changes in gene expression, are due to dietary variations in humans. This promising new area of investigation promises to enhance our understanding of how nutrition modulates [changes] the milieu [environment] in which biochemical and genetic mechanisms operate.”⁵

.....

Once again we see a positive correlation between a diet of fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts and our health, beginning at the intercellular level.

.....

In that context, nutrition during gestation now becomes especially important. In Duke University animal studies, pregnant Agouti mice, bred to be obese for laboratory experiments on obesity, were given a single nutrient in addition to their usual diet. They “gave birth to pups that stayed slimmer as adults. Mice that did not receive [the same nutrient] in utero were much heavier as adults—double the weight,” in fact. In addition, the typical yellow coat of Agouti mice reverted to the normal brown of non-Agouti mice, “demonstrating that a single nutrient can have a widespread systemic impact.”

The Duke scientists said their results lend support to the “developmental origins of adult disease” hypothesis, in which an individual’s long-term health is influenced by prenatal factors.

*“We are increasingly finding that our parent’s and even our grandparent’s nutritional status and environmental exposures can regulate our future risk of disease,” said Randy Jirtle, Ph.D., professor of radiation oncology and senior author of the study. “In other words, it may not only be the hamburgers and fries we are eating, but also what our parents consumed or encountered in the environment that predisposes us to various conditions.”*⁶

The study also shows that such effects need not be passed on “to the third and fourth generations of them that hate me” by not obeying divine health laws. Informed and dedicated parents-to-be can, to some extent, reverse genetic damage in their own children that might otherwise have been passed on to them according to the laws of heredity.

Apparently, a higher law motivated by compassion has made it possible to overcome at least some of our genetic predispositions for illness. What a wonderful God we have!

Clearly, the health reform diet has immense potential for prevention of disease and for restoration, improvement, or maintenance of health. In ways previous generations were not able to understand, we can now see more of the benefits of obedience to the health reform diet, which is nothing more than the “fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts” set forth so frequently in Inspiration on our behalf. ■

¹ Will Dunham, “Healthy lifestyle triggers genetic changes: study,” *Yahoo!News*, yahoo.com, June 16, 2008.

² Bernell E. Baldwin, “Nutrition and the Brain,” *Journal of Health and Healing*, Vol. 17 (2000), No. 3, 31.

³ That connection is well recognized by Dr. Neil Nedley, author of *Depression: The Way Out*. He knows from his research and professional experience that what we eat affects how we think. Therefore, his book and 18-day programs emphasize mind-healthy foods in conjunction with other lifestyle changes. His clients enjoy a 95% recovery rate.

⁴ Ellen White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 1, 61.

⁵ “DNA ‘methylation’ is increasingly identified as the trigger for environmentally-caused gene alterations. During this process, a person’s exposure to chemicals, nutrients, or even a behavioral experience such as nurturing can elicit a change in how a specific gene behaves—but without altering the genetic sequence in any way.

Rather, the exposure or event prompts a quartet of atoms or ‘methyl group’ to attach to the regulatory region of a gene, where it acts as a switch to activate or silence the gene. Such an effect is called ‘epigenetic’ because it occurs over and above the gene sequence without altering any of the letters of the gene’s four-unit code, said Jirtle. Micronutrients can change the extent of DNA methylation by directly donating methyl groups or by altering the efficiency by which DNA methylation is modified.” See endnote 6 for source of this information.

⁶ *Science Daily*, March 30, 2006. Adapted from materials provided by Duke University Medical Center.

Results of the study, funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Cancer Institute, are published in the April 1, 2006, issue of the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

by Gregory Koukl

The Secret: A **Fatal** Attraction

Oprah's Got a Secret

Oprah Winfrey is the “pastor” of the largest church in the country. “The Church of O,” *Christianity Today* noted, has a congregation of 22 million vigorous, faithful, evangelistic members, making Oprah Winfrey “one of the most influential spiritual leaders in America.”¹

Oprah's theology is based on a secret. That secret is in a book: *The Secret*, by Rhonda Byrne.² Oprah and Byrne think their secret is consistent with Christianity, as do tens of thousands of their followers. Many of them consider themselves Christians.

The Secret, though, has no kinship with Christianity. It is something completely different. It trades on Christian language and Biblical prooftexts, but uses them to construct a view of reality that is totally foreign to the worldview of Jesus. In fact, the secret of *The Secret* is that it is not the deep wisdom of the universe, but the oldest lie in the universe.

What Is “The Secret”?

The Secret, introduced in the book by Rhonda Byrne and 24 other “teachers”—and aggressively promoted by Oprah—is what Byrne calls the “Law of Attraction.”

According to the authors, the universe responds to each of us according to an inviolate natural law that works like a magnet in reverse (p.7). With magnets, opposites attract. According to this secret law of the universe, though, “like attracts like” (25, 157).

Think good thoughts and good things will happen because you attract them to yourself. Like a genie who always says, “Your wish is my command” (46, 59), or a catalog you flip through

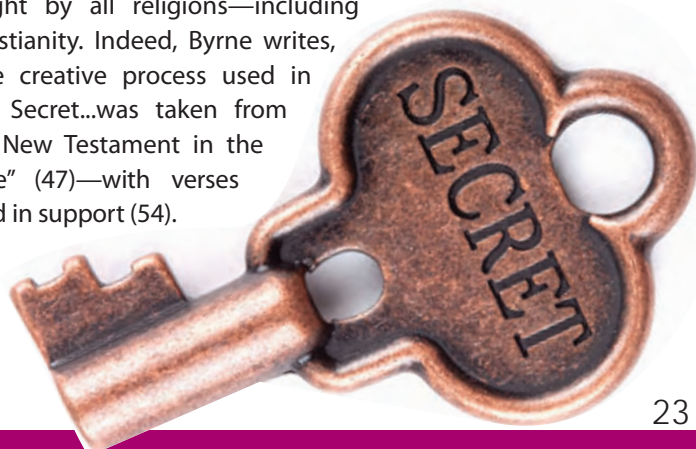
and point to the person, product, or experience you want (48, 101), the Law of Attraction discharges on your every desire.

Think bad things, though, and bad things find you just as easily. If you are poor, it's your fault because you “are blocking money from coming to [you] with [your] thoughts” (99). If you are in a car accident, you have no one to blame but yourself because you attracted it (27-28). For good or for ill, the Law of Attraction is at work creating your reality from the thoughts and images you give it to work with.

The Secret endows its user with virtual omnipotence: “There isn't a single thing you cannot do with this knowledge,” Byrne writes. “It doesn't matter who you are or where you are, *The Secret* can give you whatever you want” (xi).

According to this book, the greatest thinkers and the finest creative minds in history have known *The Secret*, from Plato to Lincoln, from Galileo and Newton to Shakespeare and Beethoven, from Carnegie to Emerson, Einstein, and Edison. You alone, it seems, have been left behind.

And this, Byrne claims, is the same secret known and practiced by all great religious masters—including Jesus—and taught by all religions—including Christianity. Indeed, Byrne writes, “The creative process used in *The Secret*...was taken from the New Testament in the Bible” (47)—with verses cited in support (54).



Even Mother Theresa knew, understood, and practiced the “Secret” (143). Therefore, the “Secret” is consistent with Christianity.

But is it? To answer this question, we need to answer two other questions. First, what is the worldview of Byrne’s book *The Secret*? Second, what is the worldview of Christianity? Armed with that information, we can make a side-by-side comparison. To help with the assessment, I want to give you a simple tool that I’ve found invaluable for this task.

Which Worldview is Biblical?

Worldviews are like maps of the reality. They tell us the lay of the land, so to speak, what the world is like. Every worldview “map” has four elements that help us see what the structure of reality looks like according to that view.

“Creation” tells us how things began, the source of our origins, and what ultimate reality is like. “Fall” identifies the problem, describing what has gone wrong with creation. “Redemption” gives us the solution, the way to fix the problem. “Restoration” describes what the world would look like once the repair is in place.

Let’s use this worldview tool to help understand how *The Secret* maps reality. What is the worldview of *The Secret*? Here we are immediately faced with an ambiguity.

At first blush, Byrne et al, seem to say that the universe is God and we manipulate Him (it?) with the Law of Attraction to get what we want. Note: “You are the master of your life, and the Universe is answering your every command” (146). “The Universe offers all things to all people through the Law of Attraction” (150). “Trust the Universe” (57). “Allow the Universe to do it for you” (51).

Other times Byrne seems to say each of us is sovereign over our own reality, using the “Secret” to create our own universe:

“The Secret means that we are creators of our universe” (113).


“You know that nothing comes into existence from the outside, and everything first comes from thinking and feeling it on the inside. Your mind is the creative power of all things” (148).

So, is the universe God, or are we God? The mystery is solved when the authors of *The Secret* describe their view of ultimate reality. As it turns out, both are true:

All that exists is the One Universal Mind, and there is nowhere that the One Mind is not. It exists in everything. The One Mind is all intelligence, all wisdom, and all perfection, and it is everything and everywhere at the same time. If everything is the One Universal Mind, and the whole of it exists everywhere, then it is all in You! [sic] (160-161).

So whichever way you look at it, the result is still the same. We are One. We are all connected. And we are all part of the One Energy Field, or the One Supreme Mind, or the One Consciousness, or the One Creative Force. Call it what you want, but we are all One, (162).

This worldview is an ancient one. It is called “monism” (“one”-ism). There is a single reality, and that reality is a perfect, undivided unity: “Divine Mind is the one and only reality” (161).



I hope it's beginning to dawn on you that this is a problem. Hinduism and Christianity are completely different religions. They are competing, not compatible, worldviews. How do I know? By comparing their worldview maps.

Jesus saw the world very differently from Oprah, Byrne and their ilk. The worldview of Christianity can be outlined with five words: God, man, Jesus, cross, and resurrection. These five concepts interconnect with the four basic elements of worldviews in this way:

The Worldview of Jesus

- **Creation:** God created the world and is therefore the rightful sovereign over all.
- **Fall:** Man rebelled against his sovereign, becoming guilty of sedition and sin.
- **Redemption:** God became a man in Jesus, died on a cross, and rose from the dead to make payment possible for the guilt of man's rebellion.
- **Restoration:** In the final resurrection of all men at the end of history, those who received God's pardon will enjoy the perfect life in friendship with Him that He intended at the first. Those who continue in rebellion will perish.

So now, **a short quiz.** In the worldview of Jesus, who is the creator and sustainer of the universe? God. Who is the Lord, the master of the universe? God. Who is all powerful? God. Therefore, who is the center of the universe? God.

By contrast, in *The Secret* who is the creator and sustainer of the universe? You (your "creative power" is the Law of Attraction). Who is the Lord, the master of the universe? You. Who is all powerful? You. Therefore, who is the center of the universe? You.

Lest there be any doubt, notice Byrne's celebration of our divinity at the close of *The Secret*.

The earth turns on its orbit for You. The oceans ebb and flow for you. The birds sing for You. The sun rises and it sets for You. The stars come out for You. Every beautiful thing you see, every wondrous thing you experience, is all there, for You. Take a look around. None of it can exist, without You. No matter who you thought you were, now you know the Truth of Who You Really Are [sic]. You are the master of the Universe. You are the heir to the Kingdom. You are the perfection of Life. And now you know The Secret (183).

Can you see **the contrast** between the worldview of *The Secret* and the worldview of Jesus?

Therefore, God is everything and everything is God. Indeed, you are God:

You are God manifested in human form, made to perfection, (164).

You are God in a physical body. You are spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as you. You are a cosmic being. You are all power. You are all wisdom. You are all intelligence. You are perfection. You are magnificence. You are the creator, and you are creating the creation of You on this planet, (164).

The idea that god is everything is called "pantheism" (literally, "everything-god-ism"). The worldview of *The Secret*, then, is pantheistic monism. It is nothing more than an Americanized, romanticized, prosperity-driven version of an ancient religion called Hinduism.

The Worldview of *The Secret*:

- **Creation:** god. Period. god is, and god is all there is. god is an undivided unity. The particulars are illusions. Ultimately, you and I don't exist at all as distinct individuals. Brahman is atman and atman is Brahman: pantheistic monism.
- **Fall:** We forgot we are god.
- **Redemption:** We remember we are god and that we are the masters of the universe.
- **Restoration:** We exercise our divinity, creating our reality using *The Secret*.

Everything the Bible says God is, Rhonda Byrne says you are. The Bible and Christianity are not saying the same thing as The Secret, but just the opposite.

Does this sound like compatibility? Notice that when you have a clear fix on the truth, seeing the lie is pretty easy.

The Oldest Lie

So let me ask a final question. In Genesis 3, what was the specific temptation facing our human parents, the carrot Satan offered Eve that caused the original breach between God and man? Here it is: “You surely will not die. For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God...” (Genesis 3:4-5).

Rhonda Byrne (and Oprah, *et al*) are offering to those who employ *The Secret* the very thing the serpent offered Eve: Their eyes will be opened and they shall be as God (or, more accurately, they’ll realize they already are God). Byrne is peddling the oldest lie in the world, with the same materialistic payoff Satan offered Jesus:

And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory, for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours” Luke 4:5-7.

Just “bow down” to *The Secret* and everything shall be yours, no strings attached.

And no moral restrictions spoiling the party, either. Byrne concludes, “Now that you have learned the knowledge of The Secret, what you do with it is up to you. Whatever you choose is right. The power is all yours” (184, emphasis added).

This same lie comes in many guises. It rears its head in most New Age beliefs, certain Eastern and “metaphysical” religions, and

in Mormonism. Even atheistic humanism is a variation, putting man at the top of the heap as master of his own fate and captain of his own soul.

Why Does the Secret Seem to Work?

Generally, no spiritual lie is pure falsehood, but rather a clever example of truth twisted. There is always some legitimacy in even the darkest deceptions. That’s what makes them so appealing. It’s also what makes them so nefarious. *The Secret* is no exception.

The smidgen of truth found in *The Secret* is this: If you mentally focus on some end, you are more likely to accomplish that end.

Note Byrne:

The reason visualization is so powerful is because as you create pictures in your mind of seeing yourself with what it is you want, you are generating thoughts and feelings of having it now. Visualization is simply powerfully focused thought in pictures, and it causes equally powerful feelings (81).

Byrne is right on this. Thoughts can cause feelings. Words can translate into action. Visualization can influence behavior. Athletes know this, and a host of positive mental attitude (PMA) advocates have successfully put this into practice. Words, reflections, and imaginations do affect reality, but not for the reason Byrne says:

When you are visualizing, you are emitting that powerful frequency out into the universe. The Law of Attraction will take hold of that powerful signal and return those pictures back to you, just as you saw them in your mind (81).

This is nonsense. Images are inert. They have no power in themselves to beckon things into being. Visualizing doesn’t send out any vibes that the Law of Attraction can “take hold of.” There is a better explanation for why the Law of Attraction sometimes seems to bear fruit.

Humans are teleological beings. This means we are designed by God to pursue certain ends, certain purposes. We are also designed to create our own ends—our own goals—and God has given us mental tools that help us pur-

sue our goals to completion. He has formed our souls such that vivid thoughts, precise words, and clear images help focus our wills to accomplish the ends we desire.

This is why Scripture warns us to be careful what we fix our minds on:

- “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things” (Phil. 4:8).
- “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing your mind” (Rom. 12:1-2).
- “Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Col. 3:1-2).

We must also guard our speech:

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. (Eph. 4:29)

David’s prayer captures both ideas: “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer” (Ps 19:14).

Incidentally, “As a man thinks in his heart, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7) is not one of those verses. This passage is frequently distorted by people both inside and outside the church. Both groups would

do well to follow the rule “never read a Bible verse” and read the full context of this proverb (23:6-8):

Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, or desire his delicacies, for as he [the selfish man] thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, “Eat and drink!” but his heart is not with you. You will vomit up the morsel you have eaten, and waste your compliments.

This passage is a warning. It speaks not of any man, but of a particular kind of man—a selfish, deceitful, double-dealing person. It warns of the dangers of duplicitous people, not the virtues of positive thinking. Note Proverbs 26:24-25, which gives the same warning about duplicity:

He who hates disguises it with his lips, but he lays up deceit in his heart. When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart.

The Fatal Attraction

The Secret is a lie because what it teaches is false. It’s appealing because it takes something true (the ability to use thought and language to focus our wills to accomplish important goals) and twists it into something poisonous by grounding it in a lie: You are God.

You are not God. You are not the creator of the universe. You are not the center of reality. The Earth does not turn on its orbit for you. The oceans do not ebb and flow for you. The birds do not sing for you. The sun does not rise and set for you. The stars do not come out for You.

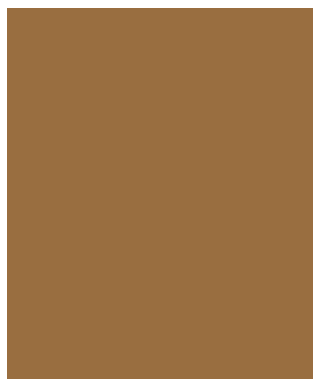
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~~Lies~~
Truth

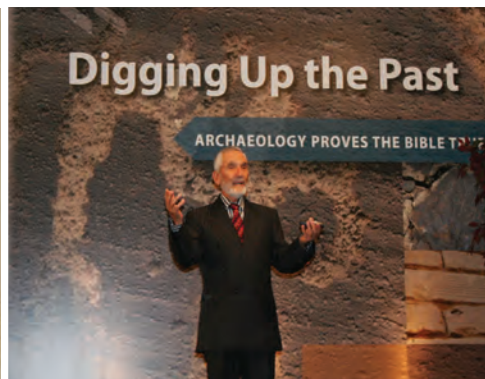
DIGGING UP THE PAST

Archeology Proves the Bible True

On September 3, 2010, we began our first public seminar series at the new Amazing Discoveries Presentation Theater. The speaker was Pastor Francois DuPlessis from South Africa, whose work in the Middle East's archaeological excavations and historical sites have helped him uncover gems of truth about history and the Bible.

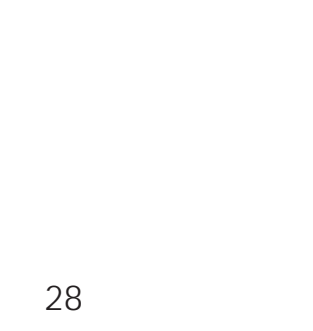


Pastor DuPlessis shared his many findings that uncover secrets of the past—Biblical characters whose histories had been hidden in the sands of time. Pastor DuPlessis shared over 30 presentations about heroes such as David, Abraham, Moses, Uriah the Hittite, Esther, and more. But Pastor DuPlessis not only gave us facts about history, he showed how the daily personal struggles of the people of the past are no different than the personal struggles we all face today.



One thing has always remained the same throughout history: God's love for humanity despite our failings, disappointments, fears, and faults. The message of God's personal love for each individual soul shone through the week of archaeological discoveries, and made a deep impression on the hearts of those who attended.

Pastor DuPlessis' seminars will be available soon on DVD. Stay tuned!



WHY? Questions That Demand Answers

On September 24 - 26, Amazing Discoveries was delighted to host another weekend of special presentations at our facility featuring Dr. Samuel Koranteng-Pipim. In each of eight inspiring lectures, Dr. Pipim presented the audience with a question that challenged the listeners to rise above mediocrity and live a life of success and happiness, fulfilling God's plan for each life.

In the lecture "Why are you here, when there is a better place?" listeners learned that the only place of safety and joy was in the place where God has sent us. In "Why dwell on a written past, when you can write the future?" Dr. Pipim taught that we don't have to be held hostage by the past, but that tomorrow can be a better day.



In "Why make a dumb decision, when you are so smart?" he shared with the audience in a humorous way how making careful decisions based on God's Word is the best way to ensure happiness; and in "Why be a chicken when you can be an eagle?" Dr. Pipim challenged listeners to rise above the shallow mediocrity of just getting by.



Dr. Pipim's lectures are inspiring and practical—particularly for young people.

This series is now being aired on ADTV Satellite and is also available on DVD as an 8-DVD set, and in mp3 format. See page 6 for details.

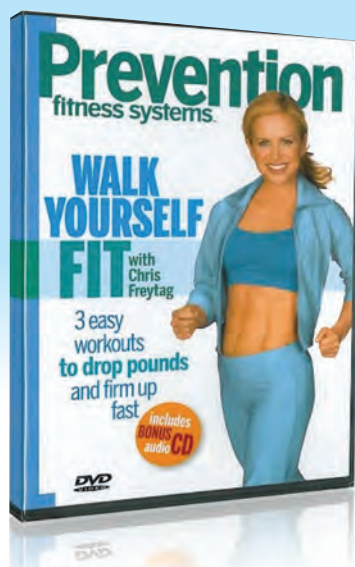


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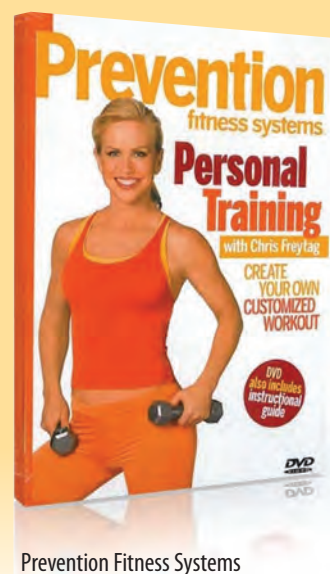
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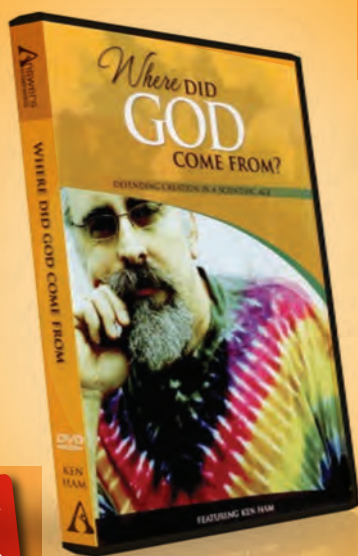


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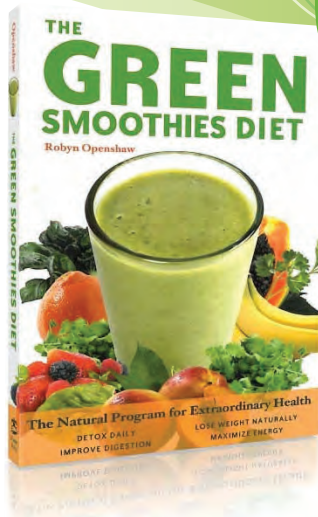
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nutritious

they're
easy
to digest

they're a
complete
food

they're
easy
to make

Continued from Page 27

Rather, God is the Creator of the universe. God is the center of reality. We are His rebellious subjects. We are under His judgment. And unless we surrender, we will not spend eternity with Him in the mansions He has prepared for us.

Oprah Winfrey's and Rhonda Byrne's so-called secret "Law of Attraction" is a fatal attraction. No power of positive thinking will rescue anyone from the power of the Lord Jesus when He "will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

The truth is no secret. It is being proclaimed from the rooftops by Jesus' faithful followers. There is rescue for rebels, forgiveness and eternal friendship with God for those who lay down their arms and appeal for peace on God's terms.

And the only "law of attraction" in operation is the one that flows from the cross: "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:32).

This article by Greg Koukl is excerpted from Solid Ground, the newsletter of Stand to Reason. Reprinted with permission www.standtoreason.org.

¹ LaTonya Taylor, "The Church of O," *Christianity Today*, April 2002.

² Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret* (New York: Atria Books, 2006).

This book by Ken Ham, **The Lie**, is an eye-opening look at the harmful effects of evolutionary thought on modern culture and religion. The author uses his years of teaching and ministry experience to expose the false teaching that is destroying children and families.

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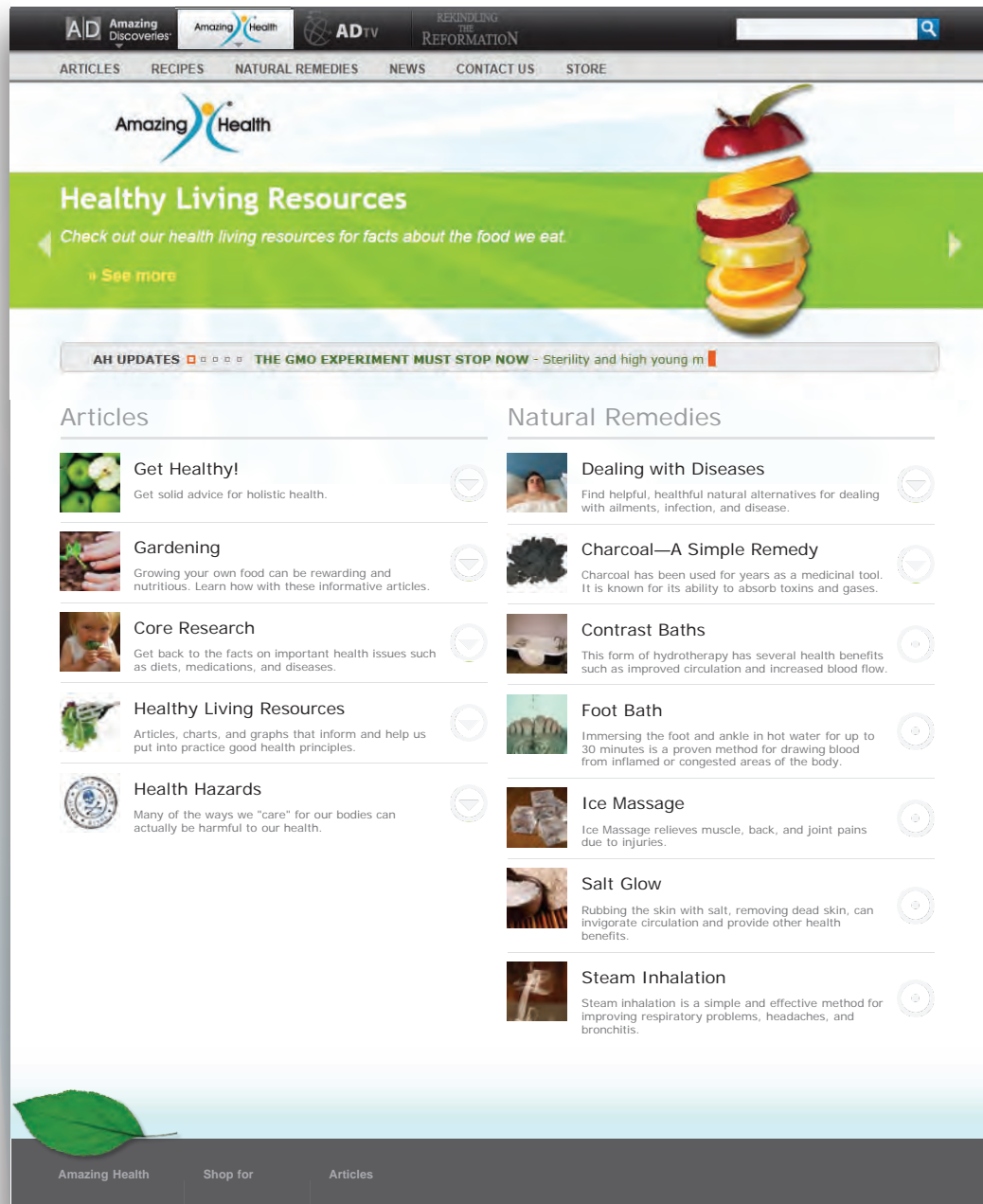
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