

FROM THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION ...  
SOLA CHRISTO

# The Sabbath Watchman

March-April 2017

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# Without Christ ...

What would the world be like without Jesus Christ? That is a question that seemingly has no right answer but can waste a lot of time and take minds far away from Him and the preparation needed to be ready for His second appearing.

In this second edition of *The Sabbath Watchman* for 2017, we look at one idea related to that question and the Protestant Reformation of 500 years ago—"Christ Alone." He alone gives meaning to life here on planet Earth. From a Biblical perspective, beginning with man's fall in Eden and reaching to the Saviour's incarnation, the promise of His coming defined man's existence. And after He came just 2,000 years ago, time and much of history has been marked out and measured as "in the year of our Lord"—that is, until recently!

For the last two centuries, there have been greater and greater efforts made to have less and less of Jesus—to see the world and life on it as a cosmic anomaly or a materialistic progression. At the same time, religion (belief in God or gods) is proclaimed to be a human invention to explain the unknown, especially what happens after life ends.

I think that one reason why men have desired to explain the existence of life apart from God is because of what professed followers of Jesus have made of Him, not only in their theology and preaching but also in what their lives have taught, contrary to His nature, love, and grace.

If you study early church literature, you find much of Christ and His divine nature and very little of anything else. He is defended there as God in the flesh, the supreme Sacrifice and Example, the great Redeemer, Prince of Peace, heavenly Mediator, and coming King. But as time ticked away, heresies arose, making God vengeful, assigning people to burn in hell forever, etc. And along the way, Jesus was no longer portrayed as God but something less. No wonder unbelievers continue to multiply!

Yet today God is speaking from the rocks of archaeology, the tracks of history, and the research of science. Life cannot be explained by chance and eons of time. It is clear that man and all life are here only because of God's choice and design.

And the violence that is spreading into cultures that were once considered civilized and governed by reason shows that the hearts of even the best of men are innately evil. History tells about such things from the past. Many people may have thought that the world had progressed to a more peaceful way of thinking, but the daily news shows that it is not so.

God's holy word is clear about what human beings are like and why. It also tells what alone can solve the problem of evil and violence: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Ezekiel 36:26; Romans 6:23.

Jesus Christ alone. He is infinite, and so is the power He gives to all who yearn to be part of the heavenly kingdom of peace. Through the Holy Spirit, He reaches down to the depths of every soul, asking to abide in his or her heart and mind. Then the Saviour cleanses every impurity from the soul, not through some magic trick or wave of a wand, but with His own spilled blood, tenderly calling the weary and heavy laden to His infinite heart of love.

We pray that this issue will touch everyone with that blessing that comes exclusively from the throne of grace—and that is the theme of the next issue ...



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Today God is speaking from the rocks of archaeology, the tracks of history, and the research of science.

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

We believe:

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

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# God Manifest in the Flesh

*"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." John 1:14.*

By Ellet J. Waggoner  
Condensed by Larry Watts

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He could not enjoy  
His glory while  
man was an outcast,  
without hope.

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No words could more plainly show that Christ was both God and man. Originally only divine, He took upon Himself human nature and passed among men as only a common mortal, except at those times when His divinity flashed through.

The humiliation which Christ voluntarily took upon Himself is best expressed by Paul to the Philippians: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who being originally in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped [that is, to be clung to] to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, becoming in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5-8, *Revised Version*, margin.


Although Christ was in the form of God, He did not think that to be desired, so long as men were lost and without strength. He could not enjoy His glory while man was an outcast, without hope. So He emptied Himself, divested Himself of all His riches and His glory, and took upon Himself the nature of man, in order that He might redeem him. And so we may reconcile Christ's unity with the Father with the statement, "My Father is greater than I."

It is impossible for us to understand how Christ could, as God, humble Himself to the

death of the cross, and it is worse than useless for us to speculate about it. All we can do is to accept the facts as they are presented in the Bible.

Paul says concerning the nature of that flesh: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3, 4.

A little thought will be sufficient to show that if Christ took upon Himself the likeness of man, in order that He might redeem man, it must have been sinful man that He was made like, for it is sinful man that He came to redeem. Death could have no power over a sinless man, as Adam was in Eden; and it could not have had any power over Christ, if the Lord had not laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Moreover, the fact that Christ took upon Himself the flesh, not of a sinless being, but of a sinful man, that is, that the flesh which He assumed had all the weaknesses and sinful tendencies to which fallen human nature is subject, is shown by the statement that He "was made of the seed of David *according to the flesh*." David had all the passions of human nature. He says of himself, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 51:5.



The following statement in the book of Hebrews is [also] very clear on this point: “For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. [“For verily not of angels doth He take hold, but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham.” *Revised Version*.] Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.” Hebrews 2:16-18.

If He was made in all things like unto His brethren, then He must have suffered all the infirmities, and been subject to all the temptations, of His brethren. Two [texts] will be sufficient evidence on this point: “For He [God] hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:12.

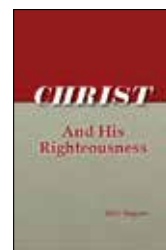
This is much stronger than the statement that He was made “in the likeness of sinful flesh.” He was *made to be sin*. Here is the same mystery as that the Son of God should die. The spotless Lamb of God, who knew no sin, was made to be sin. Sinless, yet not only counted as a sinner, but actually taking upon Himself sinful nature. *He* was made to be sin in order that *we* might be

made righteousness. So Paul says to the Galatians that “God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5.

“In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.” “For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 2:18; 4:15, 16.

But someone will say, “I don’t see any comfort in this for me. To be sure, I have an example, but I can’t follow it, for I haven’t the power that Christ had. He was God even while here on earth; I am but a man.” Yes, but you may have the same power that He had if you want it. He was “compassed with infirmity,” yet He “did no sin,” because of the divine power constantly dwelling within Him. Now listen to the inspired words of the apostle Paul and learn what it is our privilege to have:

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His



Taken from *Christ and His Righteousness*, chapter 5, available from IMS Publishing Assn.

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All the power which  
Christ had dwelling  
in Him by nature,  
we may have  
dwelling in us by  
grace, for He freely  
bestows it upon us.

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Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that *ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.*" Ephesians 3:14-19.

Who could ask for more? Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, may dwell in our hearts so that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. What a wonderful promise! He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmity." That is, having suffered all that sinful flesh is heir to, He knows all about it; and so closely does He identify Himself with His children that whatever presses upon them makes a like impression upon Him, and He knows how much divine power is necessary to resist it; and if we but sincerely desire to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts," He is able and anxious to give to us strength "exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think." All the power which Christ had dwelling in Him by nature, we may have dwelling in us by grace, for He freely bestows it upon us.

Then let the weary, feeble, sin-oppressed souls take courage. Let them "come boldly unto the throne of grace," where they are sure to find grace to help in time of need, because that need is felt by our Saviour in the very time of need. He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmity." If it were simply that He suffered eighteen hundred years ago, we might fear that He had forgotten some of the infirmity; but no, the very temptation that presses you touches Him. He ever lives to make intercession for you.

What wonderful possibilities there are for the Christian! To what heights of holiness he may attain! No matter how much Satan may war against him, assaulting him where the flesh is weakest, he may abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and be filled with the fullness of God's strength. The One stronger than Satan may dwell in his heart continually; and so, looking at Satan's assaults as from a strong fortress, he may say, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.



The oft-repeated declarations that the Lord is Creator are intended as a source of strength. Notice how creation and redemption are connected in the first chapter of Colossians. To get the point fully before us, we will read verses 9-19: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

It is not an accident that the wonderful declaration concerning Christ as Creator is connected with the statement that in Him we have redemption. No; when the apostle makes known his desire that we should be "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power," he lets us know what that glorious power is. When he tells us about being delivered from the power of darkness, he lets us know something of the power of the Deliverer. It is for our comfort that we are told that the head of the church is the Creator of all things. We are told that He upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3), in order that we may rest in the assurance that

*"The Hand which bears all nature up  
Shall guard His children well."* SW



# Creation Proofs

## Scientific and Biblical Evidence for Creation

By Idel Suárez, Jr.

*"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."*  
Romans 1:20.

### Startling American opinion polls

Contrary to popular opinion, statistics reveal a surprising upturn in the number of people who believe divine creation is true. In 2005, *Newsweek* reported "that in the United States, eighty percent of the population believes God created the universe, [and] less than half believe in evolution."<sup>1</sup> But most surprising is that "large numbers of high school biology teachers—from thirty percent in Illinois ... to a whopping sixty-nine percent in Kentucky—support the teaching of creationism." Why, after all these years of evolution being taught in public schools, are we seeing this shift? The answer is simple. Evolution is a flawed theory and cannot dispute the strong proofs that support Creation. In this article, I will present a few of these proofs.

### Following behind Charles Darwin

Off the coast of Ecuador, along the equator, lie the famous Galapagos Islands. I visited this archipelago with my family a few years ago to see where Charles Darwin, the father of modern evolution, made his historic observations. At just twenty-two years of age, Darwin had dropped out of medical

school to take up theology. Finding himself uninterested in theology as well, he accepted a volunteer position with the crew of the *HMS Beagle* on a four-year surveying expedition, one stop being the Galapagos Islands.

Strolling along Galapagos' sandy beaches, Darwin observed unique variations among the tortoises, finches, iguanas, and other creatures inhabiting the different islands. These slight phenotypic variations were what Darwin claimed as evidence for evolution and provided the foundation material for his two classic works: *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*. The publication of these books took the scientific world by storm and surprised even Darwin himself with how readily they were accepted.

Darwin asserted that he observed definite evidence for evolution among the turtles and finches on the Galapagos Islands. However, on my visit to the same islands about 175 years later, I saw no evidence for evolution at all. I did not see multitudes of Galapagos tortoises, massive numbers of finches, large populations of penguins, or hundreds of land iguanas, as these animals existed in Darwin's day.

Rather, I saw evidence and irrefutable proof of extinction. I saw a dead penguin on the beach and George, the last of his species among the Galapagos turtles. George was over 150 years old when we visited the islands and was being held in captivity. His keepers were trying to mate him with other

Galapagos turtles, but to no avail. He has since died.

Touring the Darwin National Park on Santa Cruz Island, I saw informational billboards repeating the story of extinction that I observed. As a matter of fact, in great natural history museums all around the world, as well as in the locations Darwin visited in South America, I have seen much greater proof of the decline of variety, longevity, gigantic sizes, and massive populations. The Galapagos Islands and other places confirm the second law of thermodynamics.

### The second law of thermodynamics

Sir Arthur Eddington (1882-1944) is credited with discovering and explaining the second law of thermodynamics.<sup>2</sup> Ironically, he was a pupil of Sir George Darwin, Charles Darwin's son.<sup>3</sup> Eddington maintained that the second law of thermodynamics holds "the supreme position among the laws of nature."<sup>4</sup>

Unlike the theory of evolution, the second law of thermodynamics states that all things decompose with time. This law argues that structures naturally go from order to disorder, from complexity to less complexity, a downward regression over time, rather than an upward progression. Animals, the environment, and objects degrade. They become disarranged. They disintegrate and are reduced to their smallest, simplest parts. They do not organize themselves, as evolution claims, into more complex systems. Instead, over time, there is a clear and irrefutable downward spiral of degradation and extinction.

"Entropy" (the amount of disorder in a system), according to Eddington, "always increases."<sup>5</sup> "The practical measure of the random element which can increase in the universe but can never decrease is called *entropy*."<sup>6</sup> In other words, with the passage of time, things will become more random and disorganized, rather than more structured, as Darwinian evolution would have us believe. Eddington maintained that the law demands that the universe must have had a beginning, at which point everything was well organized. Everything has worn out ever since and will eventually come to an end.

In fact, it is worth noting that if a "theory is found to be against the second law of thermodynamics," according to Sir Eddington, "I can give you no hope; there is nothing for

it but to collapse in deepest humiliation.”<sup>7</sup> The theory of evolution from its inception is diametrically at variance with the second law of thermodynamics. Therefore, it is due “to collapse.”

Let me give you a practical example. If I take some clothes, put them in a closet, and leave them there for hundreds of years, what will happen? We do not need to be archaeologists or paleontologists to know that those



clothes will simply decompose, degrade, and eventually become dust, unless they are somehow adequately preserved. Yet, no matter how well preserved they are, those old clothes will never be able to refashion themselves into nice, clean, more modern vestures.

Although the Scriptures were not written in scientific language, they contain scientific principles. Both the psalmist David and the wise King Solomon wrote that things “wax old like a garment” and become “dust.” Thus, the second law of thermodynamics with its description of entropy appears in Holy Writ.

“They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed.” Psalm 102:26.

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” Ecclesiastes 3:20.

Sir Eddington made some more powerful arguments that also point to the irrefutable conclusion that the world began through

Creation, not in a “big bang.” He admitted that it was incredible to him, but there was no escaping the idea of a perfect starting point of complete order with no randomness.

“Traveling backwards into the past we find a world with more and more organization ... when the energy of the world was wholly organized with none of the random element in it.”

“Moreover, this organization is admittedly the antithesis of chance. It is something which could not occur fortuitously.”

“It [entropy] has been quoted as scientific proof of the intervention of the Creator at a time not infinitely remote from today.... It is one of those conclusions from which we can see no logical escape—only it suffers from the drawback that it is incredible. As a scientist I simply do not believe that the present order of things started off with a bang....”<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Sir Eddington wrote: “We admit that the world contains both chance and design.”<sup>9</sup> And this leads us to our next creation proof.

### *Intelligent design—order and complexity*

In *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology*,<sup>10</sup> William A. Dembski, who holds two Ph.D.s, one in mathematics and the other in philosophy, supplies the following definition: “Briefly, intelligent design infers that an intelligent cause is responsible for an effect if the effect is both complex and specified.” For example, “a single letter of the alphabet is specified without being complex. A long sentence of random letters is complex without being specified. A Shakespearean sonnet is both complex and specified. We infer design by identifying specified complexity.”<sup>11</sup>

Ellen G. White wrote that the systems and order found in the universe testify of God. It would seem that the entire cosmos was established so that humans could be in the center, in the middle of the macro- and micro-cosmos. God is a God of order, and order in the universe is His signature as its Author.

“System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe. Order is the law of heaven....”<sup>12</sup>

When the natural world is observed with a telescope or a microscope or even the naked eye, intelligent design with its “specified complexity” is a difficult concept to dismiss. There is awesome complexity in

all life surrounding us. The more science penetrates the secrets of the universe, the more questions arise. All living things exhibit intelligent design, not just at the complete organism level, but also at the organ, cellular, and even deep genetic levels. The eye, ear, nose, and skin are just a few examples of organs so complex that they would not function without all their key parts being present.

The blood coagulation cascade, for example, requires so many factors to be present, including Vitamin K and proteins, that, if just one is missing, blood clotting cannot occur. Such is the case with the congenital error of metabolism causing hemophilia, a genetic birth defect in which one small bruise can cause the hemophiliac to bleed to death. This was a death warrant for many of Queen Victoria’s descendants across Europe in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

The psalmist recognized intelligent design in human beings. He wrote: “I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.” Psalm 139:14.

All living things, including human beings, are examples of intelligent design with specified complexity. The anatomy and physiology of each are truly complex, and the organs and cells of each life form are very specific.



Have you ever opened a clock and seen its many wheels and gadgets? The mechanism is quite complex. Little wheels turn smaller wheels, which, in turn, move bigger wheels to finally move the two hands on the face with precision. Imagine someone discovering a clock and insisting that it came into being by itself? Would that not seem illogical and foolish? A clock gives evidence of both a clockmaker and a clock designer.

In the Old and New Testaments, this idea extends to nature. Ezekiel saw the Author of the universe sitting on a throne with wheels within wheels in motion, holding up His

creation. Each wheel was under the supervision of an extraterrestrial being known as a cherub, a living heavenly being.

"Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up." Ezekiel 1:15-19.

Although this reads like a science fiction description, recall that Apple Corporation has invented a phone that talks, shows movies, and delivers email. Some years ago, a company in Israel began research on how to design a wristwatch that could measure drops of sweat and read glucose levels. Just as wheels are proof of an inventor, so creation is proof of a Creator. Under the wheels and the living creatures, there is a "hand" holding it all together. Ezekiel 10:8.

Modern scientists would do well to acknowledge what the ancient Egyptians testified when they beheld the plague of lice. "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God." Exodus 8:19.

Even Charles Darwin could not escape the thought that the order and system witnessed in the natural world could not all be due to mere chance or the result of environmental adaptation. It was too complex, too precise, and too orderly. Although at times he claimed to be an agnostic, in the end he called himself a theist—a person who believes in a God who created and governs all creation.



Darwin wrote about "the extreme difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capacity for looking far backwards and far into the futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity. When thus reflecting I feel compelled to look to a First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist."<sup>13</sup>

Darwin concluded in the last paragraph of his book *The Origin of Species*, that the "grandeur ... of life" must have been "originally breathed by the Creator." The word Creator is spelled with a capital "C." Although he promoted evolution and argued for macro-evolution, he seemed unable to escape the evidence for a Creator because of the order, system, and specified complexity he observed in nature.

"There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one,... from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved."<sup>14</sup>

### The principles of probability

Sir Eddington spoke of both design and chance. The theory of chance is also known as probability. To better understand probability we turn to a French mathematician. Pierre Simon de Laplace, who in 1812 wrote a book titled *The Analytical Theory of Probabilities* and was later titled "the Newton of France,"<sup>15</sup> defined probability as dealing with possibilities.

"The definition ... of probability ... is the ratio of the number of favorable cases to that of all cases possible."<sup>16</sup>

"The measure of this probability ... is thus simply a fraction whose numerator is the number of favorable cases and whose denominator is the number of all the cases possible."<sup>17</sup>

So now we ask what the probability is of taking fourteen letters and, after scrambling them, obtaining the word CONSTANTINOPLE. According to Dr. Dembski, such an inci-



dent would be both specified and complex. Laplace argued that it would be extraordinary if you obtained such an order of letters from such a random process. He would suspect that the word was not the product of chance but rather of someone deliberately spelling and writing out the word.

Laplace wrote: "On a table we see letters arranged in this order—Constantinople—and we judge that this arrangement is not the result of chance, not because it is less possible than the others,... but this word being in use among us, it is incomparably more probable that some person has thus arranged the aforesaid letters than that this arrangement is due to chance."<sup>18</sup>

Let us take a simple red blood cell called an erythrocyte, which contains, not a nucleus, but hemoglobin at its core—a protein with 574 amino acids. What is the probability that "a protein molecule made up of 500 amino acids" could have randomly formed by trial and error? Muslim Creationist Harun Yahya has broken it down like this:

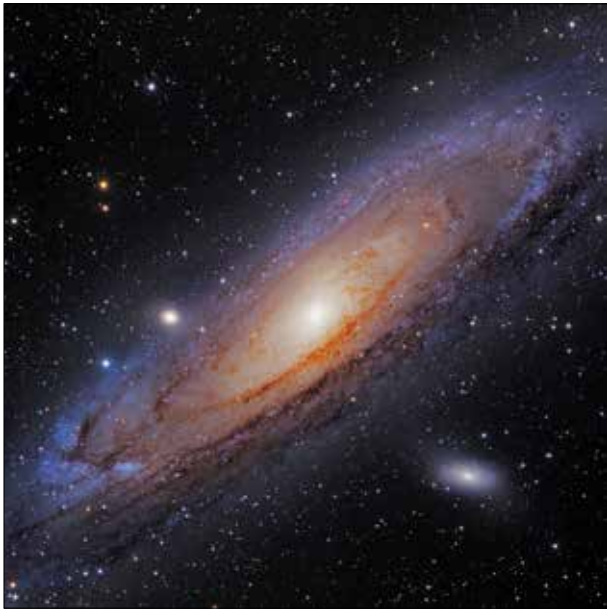
The probability of all of the 500 amino acids being in the right sequence among the 20 possible amino acids in nature is  $10^{650}$ .

The probability of all of the 500 amino acids being left-handed at the same time is  $10^{150}$ .

The probability of the 500 amino acids all combining with peptide bonds is  $10^{150}$ .

Hence, the total probability obtained from multiplying the above is 1 chance in  $10^{950}$ .<sup>19</sup>

"Let us for a minute put aside all the impossibilities we have described so far, and suppose that a useful protein molecule still evolved spontaneously 'by accident.' ... It would need to be isolated from its natural habitat and be protected under very special conditions. Otherwise, it would



There are 60 trillion cells in an adult human body. The odds of this happening [by chance] are 1 in  $10^{2,000,000,000}$ .<sup>21</sup>

That figure is just for one human body. Now add to it the millions of other living species and the billions of living organisms that have previously existed on this planet. What would the probability be for the entire biosphere to have come together purely by random chance? No matter what age is assigned to this planet to have been developed by macro-evolutionary processes, the probability “comes out to be so great that the determined age of the

ability, being a branch of mathematics, sits at the zenith of the scientific hierarchy. When applied to the theory of evolution, it is very revealing in showing that its mathematical predictions cannot be ignored.

Simply put, what is the probability that inanimate matter can produce life? Or, what is the probability that nothing can produce something? Zero! That brings us to the next concept that gives additional proof for Creation and buries evolution.

### Spontaneous generation

From antiquity, great minds like Aristotle, Pliny, Virgil and many other ancients “believed in spontaneous generation.”<sup>23</sup> Up until the nineteenth century, naturalists and scientists considered spontaneous generation an irrefutable fact and passionately defended it. This theory held that life sprang up mysteriously of itself, not from parent species equal to themselves. “The earth was assumed to be pregnant with the germs of all living organisms which were quickened into life under favorable circumstances.”<sup>24</sup>

For example, Jan van Helmont, a Flemish physician of the Sixteenth Century, developed a “recipe” for spontaneously generating mice. It consisted of “putting some dirty linen in a receptacle, together with a few grains of wheat or a piece of cheese.” Then, wait for some time to pass, and, voilà, mice appeared. Similarly, from dead, putrefying flesh, worms were “supposed to begin life spontaneously.”<sup>25</sup> Spontaneous generation

either disintegrate from exposure to natural conditions on earth, or else join with other acids, amino acids, or chemical compounds, thereby losing its particular properties and turning into a totally different and useless substance.”<sup>20</sup>

My uncle, Dr. Rufino Rafael Lorenzo, is a veterinarian. While I was working on my Master’s Degree, he shared the following analogy with me. “Suppose you took the complete *Encyclopaedia Britannica* with its thirty-two volumes and with each volume consisting of hundreds of pages. You decide to tear all the bound pages out of the volumes and then cut out all the paragraphs, then all the words, and, finally, every single letter. You place all the pieces in a large box, shake it violently, and stir all the letters for as long as you wish. When you are finished, you open the box and dump all the pieces of paper on the floor.” He then asked, “What is the probability that all those letters will be so arranged as to recreate the encyclopedia’s words, paragraphs, pages, and volumes in perfect order volume by volume, page by page, paragraph by paragraph, and word by word, as it was originally published? Do you understand how impossible such a feat would be?”

Dr. Scott M. Huse, in *The Collapse of Evolution*, presents this same idea in another striking manner. He states that “mathematicians usually consider any event with a probability of less than 1 chance in  $10^{50}$  as having a zero probability.”

“The human body has 11 extremely complex systems that perfectly operate as one,... over 600 skeletal muscles,... 206 bones....

earth is infinitesimal in comparison.”<sup>22</sup> If you continue calculating and factor in the entire universe with its galaxies and solar systems with their infinite number of animate and inanimate constituents, the probability that it all came about by chance is beyond imagination.

As a doctoral student, I had the opportunity to go to lunch with a Nobel Laureate, Doctor Konrad Block, who was awarded a Nobel Prize in Chemistry for deciphering the cholesterol synthesis in the human body. He mentioned that mathematics is the purest of all the sciences, followed, in turn, by physics and then chemistry. These hard sciences are more precise than biology, psychology, and sociology. I state this to emphasize that prob-



was believed to take place “continuously and universally after death and sometimes during life.”<sup>26</sup> This idea asserted that new matter could organize itself into a new species with new shapes, depending on its environment.

As late as the Nineteenth Century, scientists still believed, just as the heathen ancients did, that living things sprang from nothing. And they conducted experiments to “prove” this theory.

In 1809, “Lamarck, a distinguished French naturalist, was among the first modern scientific men who adopted the theory that all vegetables and animals living on earth, including man, developed [or evolved] from certain original simple germs.”<sup>27</sup> He believed that life “originated in spontaneous generation.” He believed that as animals are placed in a new environment they “gradually” lose unnecessary organs and “engender” new ones. The noted French author, Voltaire, observed dryly that men denied “a Creator and yet attribute to themselves the power of creating eels.”<sup>28</sup>

The psalmist declares that the idea of spontaneous generation existed even in his day. He considered it foolishness to take God out of nature and to deny Creation. The “old one hundredth” Psalm, sung by Christians for generations, declares that the universe did not create itself. “Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.” Psalm 100:3.

Eventually a French chemist named Louis Pasteur showed conclusively that “spontaneous generation” was false. One of the most talented scientists of all time, Pasteur contributed greatly to the saving of lives through his experiments and findings. He demonstrated that microbes cause spoilage and could be prevented from “spontaneously generating” through chemical means.

Pasteur invented “little glass flasks with a long curved neck,” called a swan’s neck flask, inside of which was a liquid containing dead microbes. When the liquid in the swan glass flasks was heated, no spontaneous generation was observed. This was because the air-borne dust, containing living microbes, was not able to pass beyond the curvature of the open-air swan flasks and develop in the liquid inside. When no new life was observed in the liquid inside the flask, the evidence was unmistakable. Life cannot spontaneously generate from something that is not alive.



On April 7, 1864, Louis Pasteur spoke before an audience of scientists at the Sorbonne University in France, and delivered the death blow to the theory of “spontaneous generation.” In his speech, he addressed the questions, “Can matter organize itself?” and “Can living beings come into the world without having been preceded by beings similar to themselves?”<sup>29</sup> Pasteur presented two possibilities: Either there was a “fixity of species” so that the offspring was always similar to its parents, or there was a “progressive transformation of one species into another.”<sup>30</sup> In the midst of the applause, he concluded his lecture and demonstration by stating: “No, there is now no circumstance known in which it can be affirmed that microscopic beings came into the world without germs, without parents similar to themselves. Those who affirm it have been duped by illusions, by ill-conducted experiments, spoilt by errors that they either did not perceive or did not know how to avoid.”<sup>31</sup>

Many accused Pasteur of defending “a religious cause” by demonstrating that germs cannot come from any originator except the same germs. To this the scientist replied, “There is here no question of religion, philosophy, atheism, materialism, or spiritualism. I might even add that they do not matter to me as a scientist. It is a question of fact; when I took it up, I was ready to be convinced by experiments that spontaneous generation exists, as I am now persuaded that those who believe it are blindfolded.”<sup>32</sup>

Can the same be said of those who persist in believing and teaching macro-evolution, and denying the fixity of species? Are they, too, blindfolded by their preconceived ideas lacking experimentation? Pasteur proved that spontaneous generation is a fallacy. Microbes do not evolve into other living things but are similar to their progenitors

and cannot come into being without them. Simply put, inanimate things cannot produce life. It is impossible for them to change into a form of life by themselves, no matter how much time they are given.

### *The fossil record*

When Jesus Christ walked on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a group of Pharisees demanded that He silence the children and youth who were joyously proclaiming Him as the “Son of David.” His reply related to another proof of Creation. He said, “If these [children] should remain silent, the rocks would cry out.”

“And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke Thy disciples. And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” Luke 19:39, 40.

The fossils unearthed by biologists, archaeologists, and common people all speak with a loud voice in support of the Biblical record of creation. But, what are fossils? In simple terms, “a fossil is the remains of a living being that lived long ago and... [was] preserved under natural conditions” on rocks, in petroleum, tree resins, or other natural deposits.<sup>33</sup> Listed below are five basic things that the fossil record teaches us.

The fossil record shows that the animals which exist today are exactly the same as their predecessors that supposedly lived millions of years ago. The animals have not changed significantly. The fossil record testifies of species fixity, degeneration, or extinction, but not of evolution.

Under the pen name Harun Yahya, a Muslim scientist published a three-volume set of books, bearing the title *The Chronicle of Creation*, in which he clearly shows with large photographs and documentation that the fish, birds, mammals, and reptiles roaming the earth today are the same as those that existed “millions of years ago.”<sup>34</sup> The fossil record fails to show any significant change in their basic characteristics; rather, animals in the fossil record look exactly like their modern descendants.

The fossil record shows that in antiquity there was a great variety of species and that these were frequently larger than their modern counterparts. This suggests that macro-evolution has not occurred, but rather that degeneration and extinction have been

massive; many animals that roamed the ancient world have become extinct. The fossils also demonstrate that today's animals are smaller than their predecessors, supporting the second law of thermodynamics that was examined earlier.

Some years ago, I visited the Page Museum at the La Brea Tarpits in Los Angeles, California, which displays more than a million fossils of postdiluvian animals that



were trapped and sank in open petroleum lakes. Their bones were preserved there, showing that the United States was once home to lions, camels, elephants, mammoths, sloths, and horses. These were all giants. Their skeletons are huge compared to the skeletons of today's lions, camels, elephants, sloths, and horses.

The fossil record documents virtually no transitional forms or missing links. If evolution actually occurred as a gradual, random process occurring over long periods of time, one would expect to find fossils of millions of such animals—limbs, heads, legs, eyes, ears, fingers, toes, etc. Why have no rocks containing such things been found among the millions of fossils that have been discovered and that supposedly document “millions of years” of evolution?

The fossil record documents bilateral symmetry in nature, and all living animals have this same characteristic. For example, externally human beings have two arms, two legs, two eyes, and so on. Internally people have two lungs, two kidneys, two sides of the thyroid gland, etc. Each side of the body is nearly a mirror image of the other.

Nature seems to favor even numbers of limbs. Birds have two wings. Cows, horses, sheep, and dogs have four legs. Spiders, scorpions, and octopuses have eight legs.

Bilateral symmetry is seen in much of creation in the past and present.

Why does the fossil record fail to show odd numbers of limbs? Why are intermediate and random forms lacking? The answer is simple: It is because they do not exist. All organisms were created perfect by the intelligent Designer.

Dr. Harry Rimmer, American evangelist and creationist, who had a private collection of ancient fossils, remarked: “Species do not blend into higher and subsequent forms in the record of paleontology.... They arise, perfect for their mode of living, suddenly and dramatically, in a manner to be accounted for only on the basis of specific creation. They persist in their present form,... or else they perish with the same suddenness with which they arose.”<sup>35</sup>

There is virtually no transmutation of species in the fossil record. Species appear suddenly in their fully developed form, and over time they either become extinct or remain similar to their descendants living today. Only a few fossils have been suggested as proof of evolution. The most well known is the horse. In the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, I saw models of horses on exhibit, yet there were many flaws in the bones exhibited. The assembled specimens were actually composites of bones discovered on different continents and not from the same site. Other horse-like specimens were simply not exhibited, because they didn't fit the scheme the exhibitors desired to portray. For example, a horse contemporary with the ancient horse models was “too big,” and was “already a true horse.”<sup>36</sup> Small horses like the diminutive Shetland pony and the giant Clydesdale also exist today, suggesting that through time there were different sizes of horses, as attested to by the fossil record.

On closer examination, “the skulls of the so-called four-toed horses differ from the true horse types, the feet differ, the cervical vertebrae differ, and the teeth bear no resemblance whatever to the horse.”<sup>37</sup> An examination of the teeth indicates that

the diet of these different animals changed between omnivore and herbivore, if they were even truly related.

The fossil record shows that mammals coexisted with dinosaurs. As a matter of fact, there are fossils of mammals with dinosaur bones found inside their stomachs, attesting to the mammals' rapid and violent death while still digesting a meal.

When I was a child growing up in New Jersey, I was taught in school that dinosaurs existed before mammals did and that these two groups did not exist at the same time. It was asserted that dinosaurs had become extinct by the time mammals came into existence. But as I travel around the world visiting different natural history museums, this story line seems to be changing. Dinosaurs and mammals are now known to have coexisted, with dinosaurs feasting on mammals and vice versa.

*National Geographic*, which was established by Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone and an avowed evolutionist, issued a small article caption with pictures of a fossil showing a mammal with a dinosaur inside its stomach. In China, a “cat-sized mammal's skeleton” known as *Repenomamus robustus* was found that contained “the remains of its last meal: a young beaked dinosaur called *Psittacosaurus*.”<sup>38</sup>

“With large pointy teeth and powerful jaws designed for catching and ripping prey, *Repenomamus robustus* show that Mesozoic mammals could compete with the smaller dinosaurs for territory—and food. Its stomach contents ... included a hind limb of the young beaked dinosaur, along with a forelimb and several teeth.”<sup>39</sup>



Please recall that human beings are mammals. If mammals are now believed to have coexisted with dinosaurs, why not humans? A site in Texas shows dinosaur tracks alongside human footprints. In fact, the tracks appear to show dinosaurs being herded by a gigantic human being.<sup>40</sup>

The apostle Paul writes that death did not exist prior to the creation of mankind, so dinosaurs and human beings, along with the other animals, coexisted in the ancient world. Death only entered the world as a result of human sin. The fossil record consists of petrified animal and plant parts, and so all the fossils were formed under catastrophic conditions after the entrance of sin and death.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12.

The fossil record has preserved the final moments of many animals, including dinosaurs. Their forelimbs and heads are often in a position suggesting that death came violently by drowning. Fossils of fish have also been found in high mountains and in places far from today's bodies of water. Whale bones have even been found in the deserts of Egypt. What do these findings suggest? They show that there was a massive catastrophic deluge accompanied by deadly meteorites that extinguished almost all life on the planet. And if such a massive destruction occurred, as attested to both in the fossil record and in Genesis 6-9, then the history of Creation, which appears just a few chapters before, should not be dismissed.

While touring the British Museum with Dr. Eduardo Chang, a skilled surgeon, we stopped at an exhibit of an ancient winged dinosaur, an extinct bird called *archaeopteryx*. Doctor Chang described how it was preserved quickly while in the throes of drowning. Likewise, while touring Egypt, I learned that some large whale bones discovered in the desert sands of Fayoum are on exhibit in the Cairo Museum. The small area within the Fayoum is called "Wadi al Hitan" which means "valley of the whales."<sup>41</sup>

"More than four hundred skeletons of two extinct species of whale have been discovered, along with fossil remains of other marine life such as sea cows, sea urchins, turtles, crabs, rays, shipworms, and mangroves."<sup>42</sup>



### The moral law

Perhaps the most convincing argument in favor of divine Creation in the minds of many is the existence of a moral code. Just as the natural world has fixed laws, God created a moral law for people to follow. Good and evil both exist in the world. God's Ten Commandments define good.

For over 1,000 years, the Israelites had the actual law that God wrote with His finger on two stone tablets and kept it in the sacred tabernacle. In this moral code, God included His testimony that He created the earth, the heavens, and all that is in them. "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 20:11.

The weekly cycle of seven days has its origin in Creation. There is no physical explanation for a seven-day week. By contrast, the year is defined as one rotation of the earth around the sun; the month comes from one rotation of the moon around the earth; and the day is equal in time to one revolution of the earth on its axis. But the week has no such physical origin. The seven-day week with its Sabbath rest is a testimony of Creation.

Furthermore, the existence of a law mandates a lawgiver. James, the stepbrother of Jesus Christ, stated this in his epistle: "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy:..." James 4:12.

If good and evil exist, then there must likewise exist a code or moral law to define this. And if a moral law exists, then a law-

giver and judge must also exist. That judge is God the Creator, and that law is the Ten Commandments. This law, encompassing altruism, conscience, voice, and love, cannot be explained by any evolutionary process.

The head of the genome project, Dr. Francis Collins, shares his testimony of how the principles of the moral law and its implications moved him to abandon his agnostic views and become a theist. "What we have here is very peculiar: The concept of right and wrong appears to be universal among all members of the human species ..." throughout time. Throughout cultures, there are "denunciations of oppression, murder, treachery and falsehood." "Consider a major example of force we feel from the Moral Law—the altruistic impulse, the voice of conscience calling us to help others even if nothing is received in return."

"When we see that kind of love and generosity, we are overcome with awe and reverence."<sup>43</sup>

Dr. Collins equated the moral law in its simplest and noblest phase with "*agape*," or "selfless altruism," which "presents a major challenge for the evolutionist." It does not follow the tenet of evolution known as "survival of the fittest."<sup>44</sup>

"It cannot be accounted for by the drive of individual selfish genes to perpetuate themselves. Quite the contrary: It may lead humans to make sacrifices that lead to great personal suffering, injury, or death, without any evidence of [personal] benefit."<sup>45</sup>

The apostle Paul wrote to the Romans that God had placed His law in men's consciences and minds and written them spiritually in their hearts to give them a sense of duty and responsibility to Him and to society.

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Romans 2:14, 15.

### A conversation with my cousin

My cousin Niels is an art dealer specializing in modern Cuban oil paintings; he owns a gallery in Miami, Florida. A little while ago, he and his family visited our family in Georgia and spent the Sabbath with us. As the sun was setting, we were walking in a park and

admiring the lake. I said to him: "Let us suppose that God does not exist. Let us imagine that when we die, it is the end of everything and there is no life after death. In that case, I do not regret having lived as a Christian and having followed a self-sacrificing lifestyle. However, if God does exist, and there is life after death, then if you do not believe, you have lost everything, and I will have gained everything." Is it not worth believing?



The great French mathematician and physicist Pascal put it this way. "Let us weigh the gain and loss in wagering that God is," he wrote. 'Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation, that He is.'"<sup>46</sup>

In 1870, an Irish physicist, Professor Tyndall, commenting on the denial of Creation and the promulgation of macro-evolution, stated: "Suppose we give up everything.... Suppose we thus give up our morals and religion, all that ennobles man and dignifies his existence, what do we gain?... Nothing." "The evolution hypothesis does not solve ... the ultimate mystery of this universe. It leaves that mystery untouched. At the bottom, it does nothing more than 'transpose the conception of life's origin to an indefinitely distant past.'" "Whence came [we]? would still remain to baffle and bewilder us." "If we admit... [that it took] billions of ages in the past, why should it be unphilosophical to admit it now?" By evolution, God is made to be everything, and "everything acts as God."<sup>47</sup> Thus evolution is actually a type of pantheistic force.

In conclusion, let us return to the words of the apostle Paul declaring that God created the world *ex nihilo*. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed

by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Hebrews 11:3. **SW**

- <sup>1</sup> Jerry Adler, "Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Scientist," *Newsweek*, November 28, 2005, p. 57.
- <sup>2</sup> Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, *The Running-Down of the Universe*, pp. 565-580.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 562.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 572, 573.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 572.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 573.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 579.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 574.
- <sup>10</sup> William A. Dembski, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology* (Intervarsity Press, 2002), p. 47. Accessed July 4, 2016: <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Sd8I7U3ryKAC&oi=fnd&pg=PA9&dq=intelligent+design&ots=5o6XjEy-j5b&sig=JmmKxlLoiRR8WQD1TF16-mebNw4#v=onepage&q=intelligent%20design&f=false>.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 29.
- <sup>13</sup> Francis S. Collins, "Life on Earth," *The Language of God* (New York: Free Press, 2006), p. 99.
- <sup>14</sup> Charles Darwin, "Recapitulation and Conclusions," *The Origin of Species* [1859] in *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 49, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), p. 243.
- <sup>15</sup> Robert M. Hutchins, Mortimer J. Adler, and Clifton Fadiman, eds., "Pierre Simon de Laplace," *Gateway to the Great Books*, vol. 9 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1963), pp. 321-324.
- <sup>16</sup> Pierre Simon Laplace, "A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities," in *Gateway to the Great Books*, vol. 9, eds. Robert M. Hutchins, Mortimer J. Adler, and Clifton Fadiman (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1963), p. 330.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.
- <sup>19</sup> Harun Yahya, *The Atlas of Creation*, vol. 1, p. 702.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 703.

- <sup>21</sup> Scott M. Huse, *The Collapse of Evolution*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., in Jim Pinoski, *A Creationist's View of Dinosaurs and the Theory of Evolution* (Roseville, CA: Amazing Facts, 1997), pp. 16, 17.
- <sup>22</sup> Peter W. Stoner, "Scientific Problems Discussed," *Science Speaks: Scientific Proof of the Accuracy of Prophecy and the Bible* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963), p. 60.
- <sup>23</sup> Rene Vallery-Radot, *The Life of Pasteur* (New York: The Sun Dial Press, Inc., 1937), p. 89.
- <sup>24</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systemic Theology*, vol. II (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), p. 4.
- <sup>25</sup> Vallery-Radot, *The Life of Pasteur*, p. 89.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- <sup>27</sup> Hodges, *Systemic Theology*, vol. II, p. 11.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106, 107.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111, 112.
- <sup>33</sup> Harun Yahya, *Atlas of Creation*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Global Publishing, 2007), p. 18.
- <sup>34</sup> Yahya, *Atlas of Creation*, vols. 1-3.
- <sup>35</sup> Harry Rimmer, *The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1935), p. 96.
- <sup>36</sup> Rimmer, *The Theory of Evolution*, pp. 102, 103, 106, 107.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 111.
- <sup>38</sup> "Dino Becomes Dinner," *National Geographic*, August 2005, pp. 94, 95.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- <sup>40</sup> Henry M. Morris, "Figure 27: Contemporaneity of Men and Dinosaurs," *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), p. 354.
- <sup>41</sup> R. Niel Hewison, "Wadi al-Hitan," *The Fayoum: History and Guide*, rev. ed. (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2001), p. 66.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup> Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God* (New York: Free Press, 2006), pp. 22-25.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> Robert M. Hutchins, Mortimer J. Adler, and Clifton Fadiman, eds., "Charles Sanders Peirce," *Gateway to the Great Books*, vol. 9 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1963), p. 341.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.



# CHRIST ALONE

**T**he privilege of being sons and daughters of God is given to all human beings; but only those who will accept Jesus as their personal Saviour and make a personal experience with Him can tell you the taste of Christ in their life.

"In his sinless state, man held joyful communion with Him 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.'" Colossians 2:3. But after his sin, he could no longer find joy in holiness, and he sought to hide from the presence of God. Such is still the condition of the unrenewed heart. It is not in harmony with God, and finds no joy in communion with Him. The sinner could not be happy in God's presence; he would shrink from the companionship of holy beings. Could he be permitted to enter heaven, it would have no joy for him. The spirit of unselfish love that reigns there—every heart responding to the heart of Infinite Love—would touch no answering chord in his soul. His thoughts, his interests, his motives, would be alien to those that actuate the sinless dwellers there....

"It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' Job 14:4; Romans 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His

grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness....

"But in vain are men's dreams of progress, in vain all efforts for the uplifting of humanity, if they neglect the one Source of hope and help for the fallen race. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift' (James 1:17) is from God. There is no true excellence of character apart from Him. And the only way to God is Christ. He says, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.' John 14:6....

"Oh, let us contemplate the amazing sacrifice that has been made for us! Let us try to appreciate the labor and energy that Heaven is expending to reclaim the lost, and bring them back to the Father's house. Motives stronger, and agencies more powerful, could never be brought into operation; the exceeding rewards for right-doing, the enjoyment of heaven, the society of the angels, the communion and love of God and His Son, the elevation and extension of all our powers throughout eternal ages—are these not mighty incentives and encouragements to urge us to give the heart's loving service to our Creator and Redeemer?...

"Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. All we have and are is consecrated to Him. We long to bear His image, breathe His spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things....

"There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first ... is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring

*By Hildon Mbogela*

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*"If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him."*

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themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility.... It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy.

"The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption....

"It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

"More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure....

"So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us....

"Jesus teaches the same thing when He says, 'Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.... Without Me ye can do nothing.' John 15: 4, 6. You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him

you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water....

"It was thus that the early disciples gained their likeness to the dear Saviour. When those disciples heard the words of Jesus, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him. They were with Him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were with Him as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from His lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to Him, as servants to their master, to learn their duty. Those disciples were men 'subject to like passions as we are.' James 5:17. They had the same battle with sin to fight. They needed the same grace, in order to live a holy life....

"When Christ ascended to heaven, the sense of His presence was still with His followers. It was a personal presence, full of love and light. Jesus, the Saviour, who had walked and talked and prayed with them, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, had, while the message of peace was still upon His lips, been taken up from them into heaven, and the tones of His voice had come back to them, as the cloud of angels received Him—'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Matthew 28:20." —*Steps to Christ*, pp. 17, 18, 21, 58-60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 72-74.

When Jacob tried to flee from the wrath of his brother, Esau, after stealing the birthright of the firstborn, Jacob's only hope was to turn to God.

"And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;" "And,

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"We have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation."

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behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Genesis 28:10-13, 15.

"But God did not forsake Jacob. His mercy was still extended to His erring, distrustful servant. The Lord compassionately revealed just what Jacob needed—a Saviour. He had sinned, but his heart was filled with gratitude as he saw revealed a way by which he could be restored to the favor of God." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 183, 184.

Because "the sin of Adam and Eve separated earth from heaven, so that man could not have communion with his Maker" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184), a bridge was needed to reconnect fallen man with his Maker.

Jacob's vision reveals our need of Christ. "The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. Had He not with His own merits bridged the gulf that sin had made, the ministering angels could have held no communion with fallen man. Christ connects man in his weakness and helplessness with the source of infinite power." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184.

It is through the merits of Jesus Christ that we can obtain an audience with the Almighty Father.

There is no other name given among men whereby we can reach the Father. "Through Christ alone can man now find access to God. And through Christ alone will the Lord hold communication with man." —*Review and Herald*, February 24, 1874.

"Though Him alone can sinners come to God just as they are. Never can they come through any man's mind. The human agent must never interpose between the heavenly agencies and those who are suffering." —(Manuscript 105, 1901) *Mind Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 706.

"Moral and spiritual perfection, through the grace and power of Christ, is promised to all. Jesus is the source of power, the fountain of life. He brings us to His word and from the tree of life presents to us leaves for the healing of sin-sick souls. He leads us to the throne of God, and

puts into our mouth a prayer through which we are brought into close contact with Himself. In our behalf He sets in operation the all-powerful agencies of heaven. At every step we touch His living power.

"God fixes no limit to the advancement of those who desire to be 'filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.' Through prayer, through watchfulness, through growth in knowledge and understanding, they are to be 'strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power.' Thus they are prepared to work for others. It is the Saviour's purpose that human beings, purified and sanctified, shall be His helping hand. For this great privilege let us give thanks to Him who 'hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.'" —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 478.

"In Him, through Him alone, we have forgiveness of sins. Through faith in His blood we have justification in the sight of God." —*Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895.

"All that Christ was to the disciples, He desires to be to His children today; for in that last prayer, with the little band of disciples gathered about Him, He said, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.' John 17:20." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 75.

In summary:

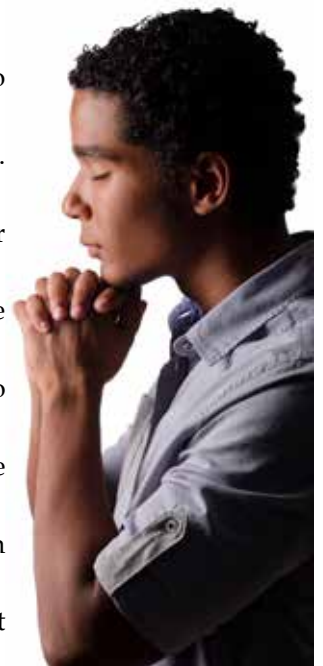
- Without Christ we could not find access to the Father. John 17:3.
- Without Christ our sins could not be forgiven. Acts 10:43.
- Without Christ there would be no hope for eternal life. John 6:54.
- Without Christ there would be no hope to see God face to face. Revelation 22:4.
- Without Christ there would be no way to heaven. John 14:6.
- Without Christ there would be no hope of the resurrection. John 11:25.
- Without Christ there would be no new heaven and new earth. Revelation 21:1, 5.

May the Lord bless all who wish to let Christ be the theme and center of their lives. **SW**

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"It is the Saviour's purpose that human beings, purified and sanctified, shall be His helping hand."

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# Should We Keep the Feasts?

What does this question have to do with Jesus?

By Larry Watts

## There was and is a problem

A movement has been adrift lately, mostly among Sabbath-keeping Christians, regarding feast keeping. To bolster their ideas, leaders of this movement have turned to Colossians 2 and reinterpreted this passage to support their view for observing the feasts that God gave to His people in the wilderness after they left Egypt.

When we read any passage in the Bible, it is always best to take it at face value, letting it interpret itself. Only in prophecy, which is clearly symbolic, can we take the passage to mean more than is on the surface. But Colossians chapter 2 is not prophetic, and therefore we need to let the passage speak for itself and not make it say something other than what the writer intended.

In context, Colossians 2 is a warning against getting involved in ritual practices, especially those related to the ceremonial law. But some people are giving the chapter an entirely opposite meaning, especially verses 16 and 17. They assert that these verses say, "You **SHOULD** keep the feasts, but don't let anybody judge you in the **WAY** you keep them." This requires

that key words be reinterpreted to mean something other than their literal meaning. Is that justified?

The passage in context provides the theme and exactly what the apostle Paul is writing about. For this, we have to start with the beginning of chapter 2. In verses 1 and 2, Paul expresses his deep concern for the brethren in Laodicea and Colossæ, especially those who do not know him personally (face to face), that they might be knit together in love in their understanding of "*the mystery of God and of Jesus Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*" Verse 3.

This is a continuation of his previous thoughts in chapter 1, where he speaks of "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**" Colossians 1:26, 27.

This mystery—"Christ in you the hope of glory"—was the central theme of his life. This is the reason he is writing to the believers: *Don't let anyone beguile you!* Colossians 2:4.

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*"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."*  
Colossians 2:16, 17.

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Then he turns to the main point and focus of the Christian life: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6, 7.

Some in the church of Galatia had an attitude similar to that of the believers living in Colossæ, and so Paul had asked them: “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Galatians 3:2, 3.

After coming out from under the types and shadows into the full light of the gospel through the revelation of Jesus Christ, were they to be made perfect by again going back into the shadows? No! Never! After receiving life in Jesus, they were to be rooted and built up in Him, abounding (Greek, *to super abound and excel*) with thanksgiving in the same way they had been taught and brought to the light.

Therefore, in this context, he again warns: “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Colossians 2:8.

The apostle defines worldly ways as 1) Philosophy, specifically *Jewish sophistry*, 2) vain (*empty*) deceit (*delusions*), and 3) the traditions (*ordinances*) of men. The word translated “traditions” (Greek, *paradosis*) could have been translated “ordinances,” but that is not the same word that is translated “ordinances” in verse 14 (which is the stronger *dogma* in Greek).

None of these things—*philosophy, empty delusions, and human ordinances*—are to be mingled with Christ. They are the *rudiments* or *elements* of the world. The word translated as *rudiments* here (Greek, *stoicheion*) is defined as “something orderly in arrangement..., fundamental, initial..., proposition” (figurative). And truly the Old Testament ordinances were orderly and foundational. They were the foundation of the spiritual structure of the kingdom of grace. But to return to them is to leave Christ, who fulfilled them. They came first, and this was necessary. “Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that

which is spiritual.” “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” 1 Corinthians 15:46; 13:10.

### Dangerous ideas

The ordinances that were acted out in the physical (natural) world all pointed forward to how God’s fundamental principles were to be lived in the spiritual kingdom of grace. All through the New Testament, the one issue of contention (see Acts 15) was the issue of the law. In Galatians 2, the apostle Paul laments that even Barnabas and Peter were affected by the Judaizers (verses 13, 14): “... Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” verse 14, last part. The term for “to live as do the Jews” is *loudaizo* and means “to become a Judæan,” or a “Judaizer.” Paul says that those who did this preached “another gospel.” Galatians 2:4, 14; 6:12; Philippians 3:2.

What did the Jewish Christians teach? They sought to induce the Gentile converts to observe Jewish religious customs: These “Judaizers” sought to regulate the admission of Gentiles into the covenant people of God through circumcision and the keeping of the ceremonial law. “Unless you are circumcised,... you cannot be saved.” Acts 15:1. These “believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees” (Acts 15:5) posed a threat to the gospel of grace and the universality of the Christian mission. There was no other issue in the early church that caused so much contention.

In fact, it was Paul’s compromise on this very point when he returned to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey that caused him to become a prisoner. He went against his own conscience under pressure from church leaders to make peace with his Jewish brethren, and they all paid the price of his lost freedom and eventual death because of that compromise. Acts 22, etc. And all he did was agree to participate in the closing ceremonies of a Nazarite vow, a seemingly benign thing. The fact that he was recognized in the temple and captured before he actually carried out the ritual shows that God kept him from denying his faith in Jesus, which would have set an example with far-reaching negative consequences for the early Christians.

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(In Scripture, what doesn't happen is often as important as what does.)

### The flesh vs. the spirit

Continuing in Colossians 2, Paul points to Christ, not ceremonies. *"For in Him [Jesus Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power."* Colossians 2:9, 10.

Look carefully at Paul's point: In Jesus dwells ALL the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete IN HIM, lacking nothing! This is Paul's main theme. Because we are complete in Him who fulfilled all things, we deny Him and His perfect sacrifice if we go looking for something else as if something of our own works adds to our salvation. When we have Christ, we have everything. Those who are not fully with Christ try to fill the void with something else. Whatever that something is, it rivals Christ; and anything that rivals Christ is an idol and antichrist.

How could Paul make any clearer our relationship to the law of ordinances and our position in Christ than this? *"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses."* Colossians 2:11-13.

Notice how the apostle contrasts the rituals of the flesh with the realities of the spirit, and he begins with circumcision. The ritual of removing the physical foreskin has only physical value; what is supremely valuable is the spiritual renewal of the heart and mind. The first is an outward act. The second is a change of motive "through the faith of the operation of God." Although we were once dead in the flesh, we are now made spiritually alive with Him, because He has forgiven us all our trespasses.

Paul makes it abundantly clear that the genuine Christian experience is not based on anything outward-rituals or otherwise—but on

Christ living within. And then he says: *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* Colossians 2:14, 15.

Taking the passage in context cannot support keeping the Old Testament feasts as having any salvific value. But people do just this, and they do it by saying that what was nailed to the cross was the record of our sins. In this they "wrest ... the ... scriptures ... unto their own destruction." 2 Peter 3:16. Paul writes clearly that "the handwriting of ordinances" were nailed to the cross. The word "ordinances" is translated from the Greek word *dogma*, and it means "a law" (civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical). The meaning cannot be sins, because sin is the transgression of the law, the exact opposite of law. And God will turn upside down all who pervert His word in such a way. They will be brought to confusion, as if they are not already confused; their word is not to be trusted.

### Symbol vs. reality

To explain further, Paul is not focusing on the forgiveness of sin, although he mentions it in passing. He makes Christ the center and stresses that His sacrifice is sufficient. The old is gone, making way for the new. In most credible translations, the passage says that "the handwriting of ordinances" is what was taken away. That is, Jesus took the ritualistic system of the ceremonial law away, nailing it to His cross "For Christ is the end [the goal, or purpose] of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10:4. "Wherefore then serveth the law?" "What was the purpose of the law?" some will ask. "It was added because of transgressions, **till the seed should come** to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." Galatians 3:19. It was there until the Seed-Jesus-came. The ceremonial law was confined to a definite time frame. It was present truth then only, but not since. The "law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Galatians 3:24, 25.

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When you have the reality, why do you need the symbols? Once you have the house, what becomes of the architect's drawings? To focus on the symbols is an indication that one does not have or see the reality. Thus this issue is not just an innocent or trivial thing to be unconcerned about. Just as sin in the life is an indication that Christ is absent, so self-righteousness and self-promotion in all their forms reveal that Christ is missing from the life. When we need a photograph, an idol, a symbol, a representation, or a better or more correct pronunciation of "YHWH" to make us satisfied with our religion, it is because we don't have the real thing. And then it is "our religion," not "God's religion"!

If the people stressing observance of the symbolic feasts were offering animal sacrifices, many would rise up in protest; but since such things are not the issue, the tendency is to say that observing symbolic ceremonies is not a matter that concerns one's salvation, so leave their advocates alone. But are such teachings really harmless? Are we to believe that the sacrifices ended but the feasts did not? And, as shown above, the apostle Paul states clearly in Colossians 2:16 that the feasts were the ordinances that ended at the cross, while he did not mention the sacrifices. When we examine the descriptions regarding how the feasts in the Old Testament were observed, we find that they were connected with and have no significance without the animal sacrifices. They go together.

"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." Leviticus 23:37. See also Ezekiel 46:17.

And the word for "feast" itself in Hebrew, Greek, and English means that something is eaten in connection with these "holidays." What was eaten? Offerings brought by the people—sacrificial animals as well as the bounties of the earth—"meat offerings."

It is clear in Scripture that the feast days required specific sacrifices. In fact, it is also exactly specified that those feasts had to be held in a specific place: "But thou must eat them

before the Lord thy God **in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose**, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto." Deuteronomy 12:18. (See also Deuteronomy 14:23; 15:20; 16:2, 7, etc.)

So, one would expect the advocates of feast keeping to carry out all of the instructions if they are going to keep some of them. In fact, many who begin with the feasts eventually end up becoming Jews, because that is were all of these ideas logically lead—to a denial of the Messiah. Those who preach the feasts are in denial that Christ fulfilled all the law and the prophets, both the shadow or ceremonial laws (which were temporary symbols) and the moral law (which is eternal and the transcript of the character of the eternal God).

So, why would one want to turn back to these symbols when Christ made an end to them? Why should any "turn again to the weak and beggarly elements?" Why return to those things that "can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect?" Galatians 4:9; Hebrews 10:1. Why? Because one begins with a false assumption and builds on it.

Paul reminds us that "... the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." 2 Corinthians 3:6. The letter kills but never makes anything perfect: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Hebrews 7:19. Note that the writer of Hebrews calls this "a better hope." The law also has never produced life: "... If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Galatians 3:21.

In the Old Testament, God showed His way to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by giving them the sanctuary, but now He has provided a better way in Jesus Christ. This way is called "a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." And it is by THIS WAY that we can have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," who is the "high priest"

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In the Old Testament, God showed His way to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by giving them the sanctuary, but now He has provided a better way in Jesus Christ.

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and “mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” Hebrews 10:19; 8:1, 6.

Continuing the overview of Colossians, we read: “*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*” Colossians 2:16, 17.

This is the passage advocates of the feasts use to say, “Don’t let anyone judge you about how you keep the feasts. Only the church, or the body of Christ, is able to do this.” This, however, is a gross distortion of what the passage is actually saying! It says, “Let no man therefore judge you....” What is the word “therefore” there for? It means, “In light of the things already said, this is the conclusion!” What did the apostle say before this? That Jesus “Christ is all, and in all!” Colossians 3:11. He is everything! His children are complete in Him! He is the fullness of the Godhead!

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### Lay hold on Jesus

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The weekly Sabbath, when it was instituted, was a shadow of nothing, so the reference by the apostle Paul cannot mean the weekly Sabbath. God set the seventh day apart for man to spend undivided time with Him.

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Do not let anyone judge you “*of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come;...*” The word “days” is supplied, so the passage says, Don’t be judged by the keeping of [yearly] sabbaths—the seven yearly special sabbaths which all Israel was required to keep IN Jerusalem. These sabbaths were “*a shadow of things to come,*” and they were all—not just some of them—taken out of the way. The only other thing that could possibly be meant is the weekly Sabbath. But that is not possible, because it was instituted before sin and is a memorial of creation. It was not originally put in place as a result of sin, or as a shadow of things to come. If the text referred to the weekly Sabbath, it would have to say, “which was a shadow of a day to come....” Then it could mean that the Sabbath was nailed to the cross so that Sunday could be instituted. In fact, that is exactly what some enemies of God say. But the Scriptures say no such thing! The weekly Sabbath, when it was instituted, was a shadow of nothing, so the reference by the apostle Paul cannot mean the weekly Sabbath. God set the seventh day apart for man to spend undivided time with Him.

Furthermore, the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments has a meaning in and of itself and

cannot pass away. It will be in the new earth. Therefore, the only other possible meaning of the word “sabbath” in the above text is the ceremonial “sabbaths, which **were** a shadow of things to come. “But the body is of Christ.”

Here is a clear contrast between two things—“shadow” and “body”! Every body casts a shadow, but the shadow is not the substance. A shadow is a vague image of the real thing; only the body has substance. The vain philosophy and traditions of observing the feast days today is a deception designed to fragment the body of Christ and drain from it the energy it needs to preach the present truth—salvation in Christ Jesus demonstrated by obedience to God’s Commandments. It is His authority that is being challenged. It is His law that is being denied and neglected for the self-exalting ideas of keeping feasts. “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Hebrews 10:1.

This passage assumes that the reader knows that the laws concerning sacrifices were abolished because they could never make anyone perfect. The apostle points out that these were shadows of good things **to come**. It is the body of Christ, the church, that is the substance.

I do not need a photograph of my wife when I have my wife with me. I need one only when I am without her. It is then that I need a representation. And it is the same with Jesus. When we have Him, we do not need a symbol of Him. If I spend time looking at a picture of my wife when I have her with me, there is something wrong with our relationship. And it is like that with Christ.

“*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*” Colossians 2:18, 19.

Again Paul speaks about Jesus Christ, saying, Do not let anyone distract and disconnect you from the Head of the body through a false humility and self-righteous piety. The apostle is talking about those who carry their religion as a badge

of their acceptance with God. Like the Pharisees, they fast and pray and make long speeches. "They have their reward." Matthew 4:16. Like Jehu, people say, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." 2 Kings 10:17. They "pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." Matthew 23:23.

The "worshipping of angels" simply means worshipping the messenger and praising him rather than focusing on the message. The Greek *aggelos* means "messenger" and implies a preacher or bringer of good news. When the messenger puts his impressions and speculations above the word and considers his conscience the voice of God, he is "puffed up by his fleshly mind." Again Paul points to the Head. It is only in Him that there is unity and an increase in the knowledge of God.

*"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" Colossians 2:20-22.*

*"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Romans 14:17.*

*"Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." Colossians 2:23.*

But, and *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Colossians 3:1-3. SW*



## A Similar Situation Today

"The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel. Success had attended the ministry of the word in that place, and there was danger that the disciples would linger there too long, unmindful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. Forgetting that strength to resist evil is best gained by aggressive service, they began to think that they had no work so important as that of shielding the church in Jerusalem from the attacks of the enemy. Instead of educating the new converts to carry the gospel to those who had not heard it, they were in danger of taking a course that would lead all to be satisfied with what had been accomplished. To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them. Driven from Jerusalem, the believers 'went everywhere preaching the word.'

"Among those to whom the Saviour had given the commission, 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations' (Matthew 28:19), were many from the humbler walks of life—men and women who had learned to love their Lord and who had determined to follow His example of unselfish service. To these lowly ones, as well as to the disciples who had been with the Saviour during His earthly ministry, had been given a precious trust. They were to carry to the world the glad tidings of salvation through Christ.

"When they were scattered by persecution they went forth filled with missionary zeal. They realized the responsibility of their mission. They knew that they held in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world; and they were constrained by the love of Christ to break this bread to all who were in need. The Lord wrought through them. Wherever they went, the sick were healed and the poor had the gospel preached unto them." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 105, 106.

# News to inspire



Services are held in the newly constructed chapel in Monrovia, Liberia

## Liberia building project and baptism

By the grace of God, a church building has been erected in Monrovia, Liberia. Both volunteers and paid workers helped bring the project to completion. Elder Golden Kayawa Hingabantu and his family have been in Liberia for several years, and they have endured many very difficult things. They will return to Zambia soon. To have the church completed and services being held in the building are great blessings.

Four people were baptized recently, and our prayers rise to heaven for their safety and many spiritual blessings. We rejoice to see faithful people being joined to the ranks of God's cause to help bear burdens and be His instruments to reach many others.

## Activities in Myanmar

Brother Suan Kam Thang, who has been a foreign missions worker in Myanmar for a few years, sent pictures of a building that may be a possibility for the church to purchase in Matupi.

He also sent pictures of people in another brother's village as they sing during a Bible study meeting. May God bless the efforts of Brother Suan and others as they share their blessings with those who long for a connection with Heaven.

## Opening a new area in Cameroon

Sincere Christian greetings from the Yaounde church with Matthew 25:36: "... I was in prison, and ye came unto Me."

The church in Yaoundé was given the opportunity to visit the prison in the Mfou neighborhood of Cameroon. This was part of the missionary activities

that have been conducted in the area for more than three months, with the goal of opening a new branch.

We are thankful that we have contacted over 20 souls, among whom are five families with whom we are having regular studies.

A week ago, we visited the Mfou District Hospital and gave drinking water to the patients. The hospital administrator has given us permission to visit the patients every Tuesday and Thursday.

When we visited the prison, we were given permission to return every Monday. We hope to open a branch in the prison, as has been done in the Bafoussam prison.

We are very grateful to God for opening the doors for us to visit the sick, those in prison, and those who are lost. It is a privilege to walk in the steps of Jesus Christ. Please continue to remember us in your prayers.

—Gamaleu Nsienye  
Christophe Arsene

## Changes and activities in Namibia

In the message below, Elder Tadious Chipiro mentions some places where there are groups

in Namibia. The following information from Wikipedia gives some geographic information: Rundu is the capital of the Kavango-East Region in northern Namibia, on the border with Angola on the banks of the Kavango River. It is about 3,000 feet (1,000 meters) above sea level. Otjiwarongo is a city with a population of about 70,000 in the Otjozondjupa Region. Windhoek is the capital city in the country's central highlands. After some years of service in Namibia, Elder Tadious Chipiro is preparing to serve in West Africa. He writes the following note:

"Greetings in the the name of our Lord. Please be informed that on January 3 I will be leaving Namibia. We visited Rundu, where we recently opened a new branch. We also visited Otjiwarongo and Windhoek. These groups are very new in the faith, so my prayer is that they will be taken care of after I leave for West Africa. I will go to Zimbabwe on January 4 to begin making some arrangements."

—Tadious Chipiro

## Wonderful progress in Vanuatu

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Isaiah 45:22, 23.

Before my third trip to Vanuatu, I was glad that I had a chance to see my brethren again in Epi Island, Vanuatu, remembering the wonderful experience when we first established the church in Vanuatu two years ago. Since that time, I was glad to keep



Singing together at a Bible study for interested people in Myanmar



Prison ministry in Mfou, a new area being reached in Cameroon

in touch regularly with Brother Tony William, the leader of the newly established church in Vanuatu. He was very active in the Lord's work not only in the Vanuatu Islands but also in introducing the true Reformation in the Solomon Islands. I am very thankful to our Lord that the church there is not only standing firm on the foundation of Christ but also progressing very well, which is the meaning of the name "Vanuatu." It is derived from the word *vanua* ("land" or "home"), which occurs in several Austronesian languages, and the word *tu* ("stand"), literally "Vanuatu is standing."

It is not so simple to go and come from Epi Island. From Sydney I had to travel to Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu, and then catch a rare flight to Epi on a very small aircraft that carries just 6-8 passengers! It is even more exciting to sit behind the pilot during windy and rainy weather and then to watch the pilot struggle to stop the plane on the wet grass just a few meters before the end of the landing strip! It is good that we have such a wonderful Saviour who takes care of us so we do not have to worry, no matter what the circumstances are.

On the second part of the trip, we traveled in a four-wheel-drive vehicle, which cost more than the flight. We spent a few hours driving past beautiful beaches, rivers, plantations, jungles, and villages until we reached the place where Brother William lives and the church is located. I was very pleased to see that the landscaping around the church was very much improved. There were extra buildings for guests, and there is a plan to build a nice new chapel as well.

I was happy to see not only our brethren but also many new precious souls whom I had not met before. Some of them were from another Island called Malakula. One of the brothers is one of the main chiefs there. He made the decision to be baptized and is eagerly waiting for Brother William to come and baptize all of his family. So, there are now officially two groups in the two islands of Vanuatu.

The weather was very rainy, but we felt the rain of the Holy Spirit; and blessings were showered upon us as spiritual presentations were given on different topics in seminars, spiritual discussions, spiritual examinations, the baptism of eight new souls, and a wedding. The Lord's Supper was held, and the

Vanuatu Field delegates met for elections, etc. All these activities were accompanied with many, many songs and spiritual joy.

At the end of our meetings, very early in the morning, I traveled to another airport in Epi. I was so thankful to our dear Lord for His great blessings, kindness, and care for His honest children in Vanuatu, in the Pacific, and all over the world. Vanuatu is a new field, but it is a well-established, central place from which the final Adventist Reformation message may spread to other Pacific islands that are located at the ends of the earth. Now is the time when God is clearly appealing, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Now is the time to wake up, for we are at the turning point for the nations and the church.

"There are periods which are turning points in the history of nations and of the church. In the providence of God, when these different crises arrive, the light for that time is given. If it is received, there is spiritual progress; if it is rejected, spiritual declension and shipwreck follow." —*Bible Echo*, August 26, 1895.

—Anton Salavyov, President,  
Oceania Division

## Missionary trip to The Gambia

*May the peace of God be with you. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psalm 34:8.*

I apologize for giving this report very late. I had no time to rest since I came back from The Gambia. I worked hard until I got sick. But all is well now.

The work in The Gambia is going very well, except that the

Field Secretary resigned from his position and from the church. I tried to visit him, but he found every means so that would not happen. Brother Christian had tried several times before to speak to him, hoping he would change his mind, but that did not work. What I understand is that he was disappointed that we did not send him to the missionary school in Ghana. Now he is working with a Sunday-keeping church.

We had to ask the Treasurer to act as temporary Secretary until we can convince the brother to return or replace him officially, according to church order. It is too much work for the Treasurer, who is a very busy lady, but she accepted the task.

We have made contact with Elder Senghor, a very dynamic minister from the Baptist Church. He is a Senegambian, meaning that he has both the Senegal and The Gambian nationalities. This is very common for people near the border, especially on the Senegal side. He has a large church that he serves in Mediana. He took us there for Bible studies and health lectures one Sunday. We took all the Sunday services that day.

He then put us in contact with other pastors, who are also now interested to have Bible studies with us after we had health studies with them. Brother Christian is working on that with them. We pray and hope that we shall win some of them for the truth.

Elder Senghor has already gone through our Principles of Faith. He fell in love with the truth it contains. He told us that he did not know about 75 percent of the truths that it contains and asked if we could allow him to use the book to teach in his church, to which we answered

# News to inspire



*A wonderful group of believers with Elder Anton Salavyov in Vanuatu*

yes. He told us that the only difficulty is to teach the Sabbath, for he fears that his people will see him as lying, since he had taught them that Sunday was the Sabbath. We encouraged him to take it step by step, and we showed him what to do before he reaches the Sabbath truth. We hope that this will work for him and will bear much fruit.

There is also medical missionary work going on in Gundju village, and we hope that it will bear fruit in a new branch church. There are no souls ready for baptism yet, but there is a lady there who has been having Bible studies with Brother Christian and me. She is almost ready. I hope that she and others will be ready for baptism on my next trip, which will be in a couple of months.

I conducted the Lord's Supper, and most of the members attended. It was quite an experience for those who participated in it for the first time.

We are trying to see how I can get a work permit in The Gambia so I don't have to pay for visas every time I travel there. Please keep praying for the work in The Gambia, because the interest is growing. May God be with you!

*—Judicael M. Luboya  
The Gambia Mission Field  
President*

## Pushing the work forward in Nigeria

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus with James 1:2-4. My gratitude goes out to God Almighty for giving me His grace to be among the living. I also thank Him for everything that he is doing in our lives. We are still hoping for your support in remodeling the church in Sabon Barki, as this is very important for the work to progress and also to meet the requirements of the government. We pray that God will touch your heart to see what we are seeing.

The work has been going forward, with presentations and seminars being held in different places. We thank God for supporting His work. There are calls from different church branches, but the distances are great. As God has opened the way, we have held seminars in Mai Fara Moto, Abuja, Lagos, and Ogun and have held lectures in Delta State, Plateau, Sabon Barki, Rim, and other places.

In August, Elder Pablo Hunger wrote to me about Mr. Adebayo Gbenga. When I called him, he said that the General Conference gave me his number. He was very happy and requested Bible studies. I took the opportunity to visit him and have

some Bible studies with his family and also with others. We have been in communication with the people in Ondo State ever since, calling and also having Bible studies online. We are planning more Bible studies and seminars there. This man is in love with our message. However, it is difficult to travel so far.

Before that, someone called me to come to Abuja to help them with natural treatment. We spoke quite a bit before I learned that he wanted to gather people in Abuja so I could give them lectures and a seminar on health. I used that opportunity to give them God's plan and also visited them three more times. I taught them about complete health from a book that I am writing. I will send you the PowerPoint presentations that I use in the lectures. They were very happy, and one person paid my way so I could present the same program in Ogun. He told some people from Lagos about it, and they also made it possible for me to visit them twice.

There is a school in Plateau Dogo that was built by a man to help some children, because their parents were killed by the Muslims. In fact, in that place, there are only children; sometimes they have no help or even

food. A friend called me to see if I could do something to help, so we organized a seminar and lectures for the school for a week. The children were very happy. I ask you, please, to forward to the proper department a request to help these children in any way possible. They will be very happy even if they receive just books, pens, and markers.

Here is a summary of what is happening in the churches. In Sabon Barki, the people are doing fine. Many people would like to worship together, but they worship in a home; they also need a building to be erected there for worship. We have conducted many programs there.

The believers in Jos are doing well, but they need our prayers.

The believers in Mai Fara Moto are especially to be respected, for even though they are not good in English, they organize many programs and seminars, using very generously whatever they have. May God continue to bless them.

The church in Rim is doing well, and we have conducted programs there. They need a place for worship.

The believers in Ekuku Agbor are all fine. They have a church building.

In Abavo and in Asaba, the church is doing well. They also need a place to worship.

We held a three-week program in Imo, and the people are doing well.

In Abia, we need to do something for a chapel, because the people cannot worship in their homes; it is a problem for the community. It is not possible to continue there without a chapel.

Timothy and the two sisters in Lagos and East Nigeria are well,



*Six souls were baptized in Togo in January 2017*

but they need a place of worship. If Timothy can be helped, I will help. We have been talking about plans for the church, but there is no money to carry out the plans. It is not good for Timothy to be alone for long.

There are so many more things to say, but this will suffice for now. God bless you all.

—Christian Danboyi

NOTE: Elder Ikokoh E. Moses, a graduate of Gilead Adventist Missionary Institute in Ghana, is also serving in Nigeria now. A total of nine people were baptized in December 2016 and January 2017.

## From Samoa ...

On a beautiful, warm Sabbath in October 2016 in the village of Letui on the main island of Savaii, Western Samoa, ten new members were called to testify, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried

with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:3, 4.

It was a long journey for them, but "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13. This was the firm testimony in the hearts of an entire family of eight as well as of two young sisters from another family who made the decision to devote their lives to the world's Redeemer. Elder Anton Salavyov had given a spiritual introduction to the congregation, and especially to these new souls, to make sure they understood very well what it meant to be baptized into Christ. The Holy Spirit was there to set the seal in their hearts and minds.

After the baptism, the new members were officially accepted into the church and the Lord's Supper was held. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also

ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." John 13:14, 15. Everyone felt the necessity of true humility and washed each other's feet. Reconciliation one with another is the work for which the ordinance of feet washing was instituted. God was exalted and praised for the marvelous work He had done in the lives of all whom He had called to serve Him on this island.

This was followed by the election of officers of the Samoan church, led by Elder Salavyov. God brought into the church those who were truly converted and desirous of serving Him in this world. We were very thankful and appreciative for our heavenly Father's presence on this special weekend. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.

Our prayers are with the new members and the young couple who have been blessed in the faith. Let us also pray earnestly for the spirit of service to take possession of the entire church so that everyone will labor for the Master according to his ability. May God bless His church in Apia and Savaii, Samoa.

## Greetings from Malaysia

May the peace of the Lord be upon you! Praise the Lord for the good health and blessings which He has bestowed upon each of us. I am very thankful in doing this missionary work. You will find missionary activity reports for August, September and October attached as well as some pictures.

Please help me and advise me, especially how to conduct missionary outreach. I am always willing to learn more and gain more experience in this service.

—Pusung Robby Maluhai



*The young missionary in Malaysia with friends*



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