



Open Face

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

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God's Amazing Solution

David Clayton



In the main article of the last three editions of the newsletter we focused on the great conflict taking place in the universe, which has continued for thousands of years, and in this article we will continue with this study. In going through these studies, our aim is to understand the nature of this conflict and to find out how we are involved in this colossal battle. It's very important that we get a big picture of what is happening. We can find our true purpose in life and understand where we are going only if we can see the big picture.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT

To grasp the essence of this conflict, we must start at the beginning. At the beginning of everything, there was God, and there was God alone. From God there came forth His only begotten Son,

who became the central figure in the great drama that unfolded in the universe. This Son of God is the key character in the history of the universe, and his importance is second only to God Himself.

The history of the universe took a dramatic turn when one of God's greatest angels, Lucifer, later identified as Satan, led a rebellion against his creator. This rebellion was possible because of the principle of free will, and this emphasizes a fundamental truth: intelligent beings were created with the freedom to choose. This freedom is essential for true happiness and it is also the element that enables us to make independent, genuine decisions. If beings are not free to choose, they are merely slaves in a system that is manipulated and controlled by the slave master. Freedom of choice is what makes us intelligent self-directing beings instead of mere robots.

However, Lucifer's rebellion demonstrates the fact that there was risk involved when God created intelligent beings with free will. His rebellion was possible because he exercised this freedom, choosing to exalt himself and question God's authority. This freedom of choice led to an open rebellion, setting the stage for a cosmic conflict - the great war between good and evil.

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

In previous articles, we identified several foundational truths:

1. The nature of good and evil: Understanding this is crucial. Most people

think of evil as doing bad actions, and they think of good as doing good deeds, but a deeper understanding reveals that wherever God is absent, there is evil, and wherever God is present, there is good. Good and evil can be understood or defined by the presence or absence of God. Goodness is linked to God's presence, while His absence is linked to evil. This simplifies the understanding of righteousness and sin. If one desires goodness, one must seek God's presence.

2. Corporate identity: We all share the same identity. We refer to it as "corporate identity," meaning all of us are part of the same existence. This concept of corporate identity means that our existence and experiences are interconnected. All humans are part of the same existence originating from Adam.

3. Freedom of choice: This gift allows us to choose which kingdom we belong to, but although we can choose our kingdom, we cannot choose our individual rights, because our rights are determined by our corporate identity. For example, if you are an American, you have certain rights that I may not have as a Jamaican. Corporate identity means you function together as one group. In Adam, we

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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inherit the rights and also the liabilities belonging to his kingdom.

4. Sin and righteousness: Sin is not simply the individual wrong actions that we do, but it is better understood as the corporate condition that all of us find ourselves in, as a result of being born into Adam's kingdom. In the same way, righteousness is not to be understood as the good deeds that we do, but it is really a state we inherit because of being born again into Christ, the second Adam.

THE NATURE OF THE CURSE

The rebellion of Adam brought a curse upon humanity. This curse consisted of the disastrous condition of separation from God. The result of this is that those under the curse have an inborn inclination towards evil under Satan's principle of self-rule. A curse, according to the Bible, affects future generations, not just the individual who experiences it, so when Adam accepted the curse upon himself, it was not just Adam who was cursed but his descendants as well.

This curse caused humanity to face an impossible task: The problem is, having gone over to the evil side, man must now return, man must go back to the good side.

He must exercise his free will in moving back to the good side, but he's stuck on the evil side. Why? Because when he's on the good side, he can choose evil, but when he's on the evil side, he **cannot choose good** because you cannot choose good without the spirit of God working in you! Now that he has gone over to the evil side, he has expelled God out of his life. God cannot interfere because God is fair; man has made his choice. Free will has put man on Satan's side, and free will keeps him there because God cannot burst in and break him out contrary to the choice he made. Of course God is the strongest being in the universe, but He respects choice and this is easy to see, because if He didn't respect choice, no sinner would be alive, Satan would be gone, and sin would not exist. But God respects choice. God wants us to come back to Him, but it must be by our own free choice.

Here's the thing: we can't go to God, so **God must come to us** because God loves us. God must find a way to come to us and yet, he has to do this in a way that he does not remove our free-will. He must still respect and honor the choice that we made.

It is true that today we are able to choose God's way, we can do this now. But what we are looking at here is how things were when Adam first sinned, we are looking at what Adam brought upon us originally. Adam demonstrated that he didn't want God's government, which means he didn't want God's spirit to rule over him. He made a choice of his own free will, and so God had to respect that choice. God could not interfere with humanity, he could not intrude into the life of humanity to try to draw us back to himself because he had to respect our choice. This is the dilemma that Adam brought upon the human race, and you have to remember that what Adam brought upon the human race came upon all of us. The consequence of this was that all humanity was separated from God. This is because we all share the

same corporate identity. Everybody belongs to Adam's humanity, so all humanity is separated from God. At least this is the way it was, until Jesus Christ stepped into the picture.

PRINCIPLE OF SALVATION

The great principle of salvation is the principle of **one man**, the principle that one man represents everybody. We can never understand the plan of salvation properly until we understand this. That is the principle upon which the human race fell, and it's the great principle upon which the human race has been redeemed. One man acts on behalf of the entire race.

The focus of Jesus's mission was to correct Adam's fall, not my fall. When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Not sins, plural, but sin, singular. The sin of the world was what Adam did. My problem for many years was that I was trying to fix myself as an individual, but the problem did not lie in me and my behavior, the problem was what I inherited from Adam. I fell as a part of humanity. I was put back on my feet as a part of redeemed humanity, as a part of Jesus Christ. The problem was not me; the problem was the life that I belonged to.

The first Adam, one man, rejected God. The last Adam, one man, chose God. In the first Adam, all men received the cursed life of the first Adam. In the last Adam, all believers receive the restored life of the second Adam. In the first Adam, all were separated from God. In the last Adam, all believers are joined to God. So you see, it's a reversal of Adam's action. What the last Adam does, is for all men, but notice, it is only those who believe who can take hold of this gift of life.

Of course, each individual still has an input; each one still has to make a personal choice to choose. When somebody tells me that every human has the choice to turn to God, this is the truth. But let us not think that this is the natural ability of fallen man. That is where we are because of Christ's interference. Christ

interfered, Christ intervened. That's why we have this liberty now, where we are able to make a choice to go back to God. This did not exist according to the situation in which Adam put us. According to the rules of free choice we should have been there in that place of darkness until we all died hopelessly lost. That's what should have happened. All the human race should have died, lost in Adam.

But the key point is this: You cannot choose to do good, because without Christ you cannot do good. So instead of choosing good, **you choose Christ**. When you choose Christ, good comes into your life. From this perspective, we can understand what it means that Christ is our righteousness.

AN INCREDIBLE SOLUTION

As we examine these facts more closely, we can see that there was only one way of saving humanity. God had an incredible solution to the problem! Not many people understand the amazing reality of this plan of salvation. What God did was that He sent somebody to reverse what Adam did, somebody who was a **divine human**. This is the great key to our salvation, a divine human. He had to be divine, and He had to be human. Nobody could have saved humanity if He was not divine, and nobody could have saved humanity if he was not human. The amazing thing is that God himself could not save humanity because God could never be human. An angel could never save humanity because an angel could not be divine. A human could not save humanity because he could not be divine. The person chosen to save humanity had to be a combination of both humanity and divinity, and the only person who could fulfill this qualification was the only begotten Son of God.

THE PROMISE AND GRACE

In the Garden of Eden, God made a promise. There was a first sign of hope. In Genesis 3:15 God said,

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his

heel. (Gen 3:15)

In that statement, there was a promise. Something was to happen that would reverse the disaster that came upon the planet. This promise was the first hint of grace. Humanity was cursed but because of God's promise, the curse was modified by grace. Planet Earth was under Satan's government. But because of this entrance of grace, there was something different introduced into Satan's kingdom. God's grace covered Earth so that the full effects of the curse did not come upon this planet. A way was opened so that God was able to continue to interact with the human race.

CONDITIONS OF THE PROMISE

The reality was that if somebody could break this curse, then humanity would have the opportunity of coming back



to God. But nobody could break the curse. Adam couldn't break it, Abel couldn't break it, Seth couldn't break it, Noah couldn't break it, Moses couldn't break it. Nobody could break the curse because to break the curse, a person would have to take the condition of the curse upon himself, and that condition is that he would have to be completely separated from God! This is what the curse means! And of course, nobody can be separated from God and

still remain good.

Yet God promised that somebody was going to come, somebody who was the seed of the woman, would break that curse. When God referred to this Saviour as "the seed of the woman," He was indicating that this person would be one of Adam's descendants. So it was not somebody from outside of humanity; it would be a human being, the seed of the woman. Secondly, the person would be able to break the curse, which means that this person had to have an ability that nobody else has. This person had to be able to be put under the curse, separated from God, and still choose what is good. The only person in the universe who can do this is the **only begotten Son of God**. Why? Because He possesses the good nature of God. He Himself is a Divine being. He is God by nature, and if God alone is good, then the Divine Son of God who came from the Father's life is also good by nature. He's the only person who can be separated from God, and yet, still remain good!

DIVINE AND HUMAN

It was a dark and terrible situation, seemingly, without a solution. Mankind seemed lost forever, but out of this darkness, God's incredible solution emerged! The plan involved sending a Divine-Human Savior to break the curse. For salvation to be achieved, specific conditions had to be met. Jesus Christ had to be a genuine human being, taking the curse upon Himself and choosing good despite the separation from God. This act of breaking the curse provided a legal and spiritual basis for humanity to be restored to God.

1. **Divine Nature:** Only a divine being, inherently good, could take the curse of separation from God and still choose good. This unique nature of the Son of God made Him the perfect candidate for this monumental task.
2. **Human Nature:** To break the curse for humanity, the Savior had to be part of Adam's family, experiencing the human condition under the curse. As a human, Jesus shared the

same identity with all of humanity, making His actions representative of all.

Christ had to be human, one of us, a member of the human family in order to break the curse. Let me give an example to illustrate the conditions necessary to break a curse. Suppose in my family there are some bad traits. We have a genetic disposition to be late, and to be lazy. We don't like to work and we're always late for everything. My neighbor's family has the same problem, they are also a family of lazy people who are always late. One of my neighbor's children decides that he doesn't want to be like this, and he's going to change his lifestyle. This child is able to break these bad habits and becomes a disciplined hard-working person, always on time. This is good for this child, but will it affect my family? Of course the answer is no.

In order to break the curse in my family line, It has to be somebody from my family who makes the change. If the neighbor's child does it over there, that's his business; he's a different corporate identity, a different family. But if one of my children is able to make the change, then he can pass it on to his children and through them to his grandchildren as well. The curse will be broken in my family line. So we can understand that whoever is to break the curse of Adam has to be a part of Adam's family. It can't be an angel, it can't be somebody from another planet. It must be somebody from Adam's family. Otherwise, it makes no sense. Genetically that's true, but also legally that's true because this person has to be a part of Adam's corporate identity.

BREAKING THE CURSE

We may view these conditions of the curse in the following way:

*When a son of Adam
Under the curse
Of his own free will
Resists the power of the curse
The curse will be broken*

To be under the curse, the Saviour had to be born as a human being, a true

descendant of Adam. In Galatians 4:4, it says that he was "made of a woman." In Romans 1:3, it says that he was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh." In Hebrews 2:14, it says that since "the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

He had to be made one of us. He had to be a son of Adam, under the curse, and in this situation, of his own free will resist the power of the curse. There on the cross, that is what Jesus did. The power of the curse is separation from God. That's the power of the curse. That's why humanity is doomed without Christ because without Christ, nobody can choose God. Nobody can choose good while under the power of the curse; Without Christ, we are doomed. But the seed of the woman, a descendant of Adam, a human being, took the curse upon himself. He was separated from God. The Bible teaches it very clearly.



In Matthew 27:46 it says,

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matt 27:46)

Jesus knew what is happening to Him. God forsook His son. God separated from Christ. Some say God was there but only hid Himself. In a sense this is true because God is omnipresent. There's no place that God is not, even where Satan is. But in the sense of God's personal presence, He has to choose to be with you. In this moment, He chose to forsake His son. There was no presence of God; there was no grace around Christ. This is what was necessary in order for Christ to take our place. It had to be this way.

If Jesus was not separated from God, it means He did not take the curse.

That's very simple and easy to understand. How could Jesus take my place and not take the curse? If He didn't take the curse, how could He break the curse? So, the people who say that God never really separated from Jesus don't understand the plan of salvation. Jesus had to take the curse. If He did not take the curse, He did not take my place; He did not save humanity.

Equally, Christ had to be divine because only God is good. Separated from God, man is not capable of doing good. The curse is separation from God, and that's where man was. The Saviour had to take the curse before He could break it.

Only a divine being could take the curse and still choose good. That's why the promised Saviour had to be a divine person. So on the cross, Christ took the curse, and He still chose to die for us. He still chose God's way. It was divinity that took Him through, not divine power, but divine nature.

THE CURSE MODIFIED

The Son of God was born into the human race and became one of us at God's appointed time, but in the meantime, what was the situation of the human race? Does it mean that all men were under this curse of total separation from God from the time of Adam till the time of Christ? The answer is, no. Because this person had been promised who would come and do the job, the Earth was not completely under the curse from the moment that Adam sinned. That instant when man sinned, the Son of God stepped in and said, "I will take his place," and on the basis of this promise, God maintained his connection with humanity. So the Earth was never fully under the curse. It was always enveloped by grace, even though the conditions of the curse were upon the planet.

Let us understand that the promise that was made did not mean that salvation had come to humanity. It was a promise, but it was not salvation. People make the mistake of saying that because God promised a saviour, people could be saved from way back then. This is not

true. There could be no salvation until the conditions had been met. What they had was a promise. They had hope, they had the expectation of something to come. They could have faith, and through faith, later on, they could receive the benefit when it came. But until that benefit came, it did not exist. What they had was faith in a promise of something to come in the future.

And yet, because of the promise, there was a postponement of the effect of the curse. What happened was that God put off the conditions of the curse, which was complete separation from God. It was postponed. But what if Jesus did not fulfill the promise? Then the curse would still go into effect. But in the meantime, it was postponed, and man was given an opportunity to have faith and to have interaction with God.

COMPLETELY UNDER THE CURSE

Let's highlight what it means to be completely under the curse. Satan is completely under the curse. That means there's no grace for Satan. Maybe there was grace offered in heaven when he first started to rebel, I don't know, but he maintained his rebellious position until there was no more grace. Satan is completely under the curse; he's separated from God. I suppose we could say that in a sense, there is still a little element of grace extended to him, because he's still alive. All life is from God, and he's still alive. So, in a sense, the grace of God is keeping even Satan alive, but there's no saving element in

Satan's life anymore. He is in complete spiritual darkness and completely evil. There is not a trace of good in him. Someday, there are humans who will come to the same place: the people who receive the mark of the beast. That's why when the seven last plagues come, it's going to be so terrible because they will have life, but they will have nothing of God around them or in them. They will be in the same condition as Satan.

JESUS AND THE CURSE

Four thousand years after Adam's terrible choice, Jesus came and fulfilled the promise that was made in the garden. He became a man, took our condition of separation from God on the cross and it killed him. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, there was a thief hanging there on another cross beside him. The thief on the cross said, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus response was, "I say unto you today, you shall be with me in paradise." The thief was delivered. The curse was no longer upon the thief. He was safe, but guess what? The thief still died. He received salvation; he was delivered from the curse, and yet he still died. Why is this? Because he was delivered, but he was still in a cursed world. We are still in the cursed world. The environment of the curse is still around us, but we are no longer under the curse.

You may ask, why do we still die? Why do we still get sick? Why do we still have problems? It's because we are still

in the cursed environment, but, in spite of this, we may be assured that we have been delivered from the curse because the cross has come into this world, and we have believed in Jesus Christ. Deliverance has come; the head of the serpent has been bruised. We have been set free from the curse. It's just the environment that remains around us. One day soon, this sinful environment will be completely destroyed and then we will be delivered from the full effects of the curse, but until that day, we may rest secure in the reality that the curse of separation from God has been eliminated for every human being who will accept Christ.

TRUE DELIVERANCE

We saw that Satan is completely cursed. We saw that those who receive the mark of the beast will be completely cursed as well. Jesus Christ was also completely under the curse. But up to this point, the only human being who has ever been completely under the curse, is Jesus Christ. Praise God for Jesus. He took the curse so that you and I could be delivered from it. He was in the position where Satan was, completely separated from God. But praise God, He broke that curse, overcame Satan's principle of self and set humanity free! That is why today we can rejoice in our deliverance and the assurance of our salvation.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2Cor 5:21)

Locked in a Box

I was an Ellen White fan(atic) from the very beginning and remained that way for more than 30 years. But I am not a dishonest person, and as I grew in my knowledge of the Bible, I was compelled to take an honest look at my position. I saw that it was not possible for me to remain honest and still retain my perspective on Ellen White. The real problem was that I had come to think of Ellen White as infallible and put her on equality with

the Bible! Thank God, I know both sides of the story! Today, I don't quote Ellen White and I don't regard her as infallible, yet I have never condemned her. Of course that is not enough for those who revere Ellen White, they demand that everyone must bow at her feet or be condemned, it is not enough to say that I won't quote her. The other crime is to dare to contradict her!

Many SDAs are no different than Mormons and Jehovah's witnesses in prin-

ciple, they use the same arguments, close their eyes in the same way and worst of all, in the process they deny the true testimony of Jesus! They reject the true gospel of Jesus Christ and embrace a mongrel hybrid which is no gospel at all, but simple poorly disguised legalism!

Adventism had so much potential, the embryo of critical truths were

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European Report

This year I had the privilege of returning to Europe, the first time since the Covid pandemic shut down the world. I was privileged to have my wife, Jen with me on this trip. Our journey lasted for three weeks and was a great blessing.

We started in Germany, where we spent most of the first week. Then, we moved to Serbia for a weekend meeting from Thursday to Sunday, and finally to Hungary, where we spent the remaining time. In Germany, we had about 30 people at the camp meeting, 40 in Hungary, and nearly 100 in Serbia.

FOCUS OF THE MESSAGES

At most places, I was the only speaker, except in Serbia, where Brother Zdravko



Serbia Campmeeting photo

The meetings in Serbia were particularly impactful, with people from various

Slovakia. Brother Zdravko has been doing amazing work there along with others. They have been printing our books, translating articles, and voicing over videos in their language.

The deep interest in the Book of Revelation was truly encouraging. This journey reinforced my belief that our understanding of these spiritual truths needs to be shared far and wide.

BAPTISMS

In Germany, we baptized three people. One brother came all the way from Bulgaria with a group, and two others decided to join in the baptism. Although I'm not a fan of cold water, I had to perform the baptisms and thankfully,



Baptism in Germany

also conducted a few meetings. The meetings were more relaxed compared to our usual camp meetings. There were morning sessions, breaks, question-and-answer sessions, and evening meetings, giving me plenty of time to rest and rejuvenate my voice.

In all three places, I focused on the Book of Revelation. The interest in these studies was incredibly high. The more I study Revelation, the more I believe it needs to be emphasized, especially now. The way we've been studying and understanding it is unique, and I think we need to share this understanding as widely as possible.

countries like Croatia, Montenegro, and

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Hungary campmeeting photo

How to Die Happily

Daniel Clayton



I want to share a thought with you before we begin. This week, I found myself looking at some old Proverbs and trying to apply them to the Christian walk. One proverb that came to mind was "out of sight, out of mind." I'm sure we are all familiar with that proverb and what it means: usually, when you are unable to see a person, you are not focused on that person and tend to forget about them. In a general sense, this is often true. The challenge of Christianity is to overcome this principle because one of the most important instructions that Jesus ever gave was to "abide in me." In other words, he's asking us not to forget about him and to focus on somebody that we cannot see, which is not really easy for humans to do. This is where the fight of faith comes in.

WAYS TO ABIDE IN CHRIST

What I want to suggest to us this morning is that we have to find ways as beings to make this possible. That's why it's a fight—to focus on somebody that you cannot see. But there are practical and creative ways in which we can do this. I've been trying to come up with little ways myself that I find helpful. For example, this week, as I was reading my Bible, I said, "Lord, please sit beside me and help me understand

this passage." It might sound simplistic and childish, but it worked because it helped me have a mental image of Jesus sitting beside me, helping me. In our limited human minds, things like these are important.

MENTAL RECONDITIONING

When I sat down here this morning to speak, I said, "Lord, please sit beside me and help me." This kind of approach helps us not only to include him in everything that we're doing but also reconditions us mentally. I'm suggesting that we come up with things like these in everything that we're doing for our own good and mental reconstruction. We need to find ways to remind ourselves that even though we cannot see him, he's always there and always waiting to be involved in everything that we're doing. That is my encouragement to all of us as we continue in our sojourn and in our relationship with him.

The topic of my presentation this morning is "How to Die Happily." It might seem like an unusual topic, but I'm sure you can already infer some of the things I want to say.

CATEGORIES OF CHRISTIANS

The Bible teaches us that in the last days, there are going to be three categories of Christians on the earth. The first category is those who go to sleep before the Lord returns. When I say go to sleep, I mean through natural causes. In our fellowship, we have seen a rapid escalation of that in the last few years. So many people that I grew up with and fellowshiped with have gone to sleep. Tomorrow, Sister Tracy has to put her sister to rest, and I know how close they were. In a couple of weeks, Brother L will have to put his wife to rest. I counted how many of our brethren have gone to sleep, and I think I got close to in just a short period of time. I know people always die, but there has definitely been an escalation in recent

times. It's a very difficult thing to deal with because you know that you're not going to see that person in this life again. It's not a long time, but we're not going to see them in this life again.

PRECIOUS IN THIS SIGHT

The Bible told us that this would be one category of people. Psalm 116:15 tells us that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." What God is trying to say to us here is that every one of his children who goes to rest is important to him. In fact, the Amplified version says, "important and significant in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." It's not something that God just says, "well, every day people die, so it's no big deal." Every one of them that goes to sleep is important to him and matters to him. I believe that more of us may go to sleep. I may be one; I don't know. But the Bible says something interesting that I find encouraging in Isaiah. We have looked at this verse many times recently, but I'll quote it again. Isaiah 57:1 says, "the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." What God is saying here is that one reason why his children go to sleep is that he's removing them from the evil that is to come.

COMING EVIL DAYS

This could be applied in every age of the world, as the world has always been an evil place. But I'm suggesting that more than ever, it is applicable now because the evil days that are to come upon the world are going to be unprecedented. Many times, I try to think about the time of trouble and what it is going to be like. I have a lot of ideas in my head, but you really can't come up with something tangible and clear because none of us have ever seen anything like it before. I used to watch movies about

zombie apocalypses, where mindless creatures take over the world with the sole intention of destroying and killing the few sane ones who are left. These people have to run for their lives, hide, and do whatever it takes to survive. I'm not suggesting a zombie apocalypse, but the concept in my mind is similar because there's going to be an apocalypse of evil. The hearts of men will become more wicked than even in the days of Noah, where every imagination of the thoughts of men was only evil continually. They will be mindless slaves of evil because there will no longer be any Holy Spirit to hold back the natural impulses of men. The world is going to become a place where the minions of evil, who have all the resources, money, and power of the world, will channel all those things for the sole purpose of defying God and destroying his people. Evil days are ahead, very evil days.

RESTING FROM LABOR

The Bible says one reason why God's children sleep is that he is allowing them to be taken away from the evil that is to come. Our brethren who are sleeping don't have to worry about that. They have taken a shortcut to glory, as I like to phrase it. I ask myself why God decides to take some and not others. The answer to that is I don't know, but he knows. What we have to do is trust that he knows best in every situation and that everything he does is for the very best. We might look at it and say this person is too young, was not ready to die, or is gone too soon. But this is never the case when we're talking about a child of God because every single thing he does, as long as that person belongs to him, is the best thing in that situation. I believe this is definitely one of the reasons why we are seeing so many of our brethren being put to sleep.

ASSURANCE IN DEATH

Jesus says about them in Revelation 14:13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." In the eyes of Jesus, the death of his

saints is precious, and every one of them who sleeps is blessed. They are now resting from their labors, and the evil days that are to come upon this world they don't have to go through. They are now sleeping, and the good works they did follow them. He is not talking about works in the general sense but the work of choosing him. The record of that work is kept in heaven, and because of that record, their salvation is guaranteed. It doesn't matter how perfect or flawed they were; the record of that choice guarantees their salvation. This is one of the things that encourages me as I think about our brethren who are sleeping. Every one of them that I can think of made the choice to choose him, and that work follows them. All of them are guaranteed that crown of life because of that choice. They are blessed, taken away from the evil that is to come, and resting from their labors. We have to trust him that he knows best.



THREE CATEGORIES

That is one category of Christians in the last days. The second category is those who are translated to heaven without seeing death. These people will go through the evil days and survive them. Revelation 7:13-14 tells us,

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

This group of people will survive the evil days. Revelation 3:10 says,

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

There is clear evidence that there will be a group of people who pass through the evil days unscathed.

FACING DEATH HEAD-ON

Of course, it's not going to be easy. These people are going to face death many times, perhaps put before firing squads, thrown into fire furnaces, or lions' dens. Death will stare them in the face many times, and each time, according to the Bible, they will be rescued from these impossible situations. They are going to be the ones who are un-touchable. Psalm 91 is a passage written mainly for this last generation. Psalm 91:7 says,

A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

They should not be afraid of the arrow that flies by day or the terror by night or the pestilence that walks in darkness. No pandemic or new technology of weapons will be able to touch them. God will miraculously save them from impossible situations.

MARTYRS

The third set of Christians that maybe we don't focus on as much are those who are not going to die naturally but are going to be killed, martyred. According to the Bible, the Beast (believed to be the EU) and the image of the Beast (believed to be the United States) will actually kill people who refuse to accept the mark. Revelation 13:15 says, "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." The powers of the world in the last days intend to kill those who refuse to comply. Revelation 20:4 provides clear evidence of this:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of

them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

UNNATURAL FEAR OF DEATH

Facing death, especially a violent, painful death, can be a frightening and scary prospect. If I were to survey you, I'm sure 99.9% would say they would like to die peacefully in their beds, surrounded by loved ones. Nobody would say they want to be roasted on a spit or beheaded or stand before a firing squad. Death under normal circumstances is traumatic and terrifying.

Here's what the experts say: individuals display desperation, pleading, begging, or attempting to escape, break down, or exhibit physical trauma symptoms, including tremors, shaking, sweating, palpitations, increased heart rate, nausea, vomiting, or dry heaving. Many people collapse or experience seizures. Sorry to be graphic, but I want to make a point. Execution can be very disturbing. I've heard stories of grown men,

seasoned criminals, who are about to face execution, and the way they behave highlights my point. For example, a serial killer facing a firing squad collapsed every time they stood him up and couldn't be executed for several days. Another man clung to his jailer's leg, weeping and begging for his life.

God put something in every one of us called the instinct of self-preservation. It's inside every human being and every animal as well. Living creatures will do almost anything to preserve their lives. Because of this instinct, it is almost impossible for a normal person who is not suicidal to die willingly.

EXAMPLES OF MARTYRDOM

Ever since God has had people on this earth, there have always been attempts to kill them. Anytime God sends a message, Satan's immediate response is to try to kill the messenger. Violent death has always been part and parcel of the existence of God's people. Hebrews 11:35-38 outlines some of the things that God's people have accomplished and achieved, but it also says,

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain

a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

CONCLUSION

Despite the terrifying prospect of execution, the way Christians die is not normal. There are many examples, from Isaiah and Zechariah in the Old Testament to Stephen and the apostles in the New Testament, and even in the accounts of early Christian martyrs. They faced death with peace, courage, and even joy. This otherworldly reaction can only be explained by the presence and power of God. He promises to be with his children in their final moments, giving them strength, courage, and peace beyond human understanding. This supernatural intervention allows them to die happily, and their witness, even in death, draws others to Christ.



A Tribute to Sister Gloria



Gloria, or Jenny as she was known by her close friends, was not just my personal friend but also a cherished member of our spiritual fellowship from the time we first came together back in 1982. Over those years, I came to know her very well, and she became one of my wife's best friends.

We enjoyed many moments together, sharing stories and laughing. One of the things we appreciated about her was her ability to tell stories about herself and laugh heartily at them. When she told a story, we would be in gales of laughter, rolling on the floor. She didn't spare the details, and that's one thing I remember about her—she could laugh at herself, a gift that not many people

possess.

I also remember that she was a part of our little choir. She had a beautifully controlled voice, and as soon as she started singing, you heard the difference immediately. She might not have been widely recognized as a great singer, probably because she was so reserved and shy about her singing capabilities, but she loved to sing. When she did sing, her voice was truly beautiful.

When she got into an accident and went into a vegetative state a few years ago, we all prayed for her recovery. We expected her to one day get up

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The Healing Power of Music

Lenworth Frankson



Music has been a timeless source of comfort and solace during times of distress, offering a unique sense of connection, support, and understanding. Historically, it has played a significant role in healthcare, where it has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and even chronic physical pain. Listening to calming music helps individuals relax and focus on the present moment.

Studies have revealed that music triggers the release of **endorphins**, hormones associated with pleasure and pain reduction. This response reduces stress levels and can contribute to the healing process. Music is frequently used in therapy sessions to create an environment conducive to stress relief and emotional healing. It also serves as a form of self-expression and communication when words are insufficient.

Uplifting music or singing along can boost mood by increasing **serotonin** levels in the brain, the neurotransmitter responsible for regulating emotions and happiness. Research has found that music can stimulate **dopamine** release, a neurotransmitter linked to pleasure and reward, highlighting a strong connection between music and the brain's reward system. Furthermore, musical therapies have been found to enhance cognitive function by stimulating brain areas related to memory recall and learn-

ing. Music improves connectivity between auditory and emotional brain regions, aiding memory encoding and recall.

MUSIC THERAPY BENEFITS

Music therapy, an evidence-based practice, addresses the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals. It has proven beneficial in diverse settings, such as hospitals and hospices, by reducing pain levels, promoting relaxation, enhancing communication skills, and providing comfort during challenging times.

One technique in music therapy involves rhythmical breathing, where patients focus on a steady beat while taking slow, deep breaths. This practice helps relax the body and mind, reducing anxiety, heart rate, and blood pressure, ultimately decreasing pain. Music therapy also serves as a distraction from stressful thoughts or feelings, fostering peace and tranquility.

Research suggests musical interventions may have a pain relieving effect, activating endorphins, the brain's natural pain relievers. For instance, a study in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* showed that music interventions lead to high endorphin secretion, contributing to pain relief by lowering blood pressure and heart rate.

Music facilitates improved communication between patients and healthcare providers or family members, especially when language barriers or illness-related issues impede effective communication. Singing familiar songs or playing instruments together builds connections and ensures everyone feels heard without needing to verbalize thoughts.

During tough times, music offers comfort, enabling individuals to access their innermost feelings beyond words. Listening to favorite songs inspires and evokes cherished memories, similar to

revisiting old friends. For hospice patients, music can be the difference between despair and delight, bridging joy and sorrow, and healing emotional wounds.

HEALING EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

Music provides comfort during distress, allowing for emotional expression without words. It fosters self-reflection, offering insights into personal experiences and helping find meaning in challenging situations.

For those grieving or suffering from trauma or PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) music evokes memories of happier times, instilling hope and optimism even in adversity. This emotional healing often coincides with physical healing; regular music listeners experience improved sleep, lower blood pressure, reduced pain, and enhanced immune function.

For mental health issues like depression or anxiety, music therapy offers effective treatment. Trained therapists use musical activities such as singing or playing instruments to facilitate communication and encourage self-expression through improvisation or songwriting. By exploring emotions through music, patients find it easier to open up without feeling judged or overwhelmed. Music is a powerful tool for healing emotional wounds and restoring hope.

COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Music has long been used as a therapeutic tool, with its cognitive benefits still being explored. It aids cognitive function in various ways, from enhancing memory to improving concentration.

MEMORY ENHANCEMENT

Listening to music stimulates the brain, improving memory recall. Studies indicate that those who listen to classical music while studying remember more than those who don't. Music activates

brain parts associated with learning and memorization. Familiar songs can trigger past memories, benefiting those with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION

Certain music rhythms and melodies help maintain focus on tasks requiring concentration, such as reading or writing. Instrumental tracks without lyrics are ideal for maintaining focus without distraction. Classical works by composers like Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach are particularly effective due to their structured patterns and melodic progressions, promoting mental clarity and task focus.

STRESS REDUCTION

Music's calming effects make it ideal for reducing stress in high-pressure situations like exams or job interviews. Soothing sounds relax muscles and clear distracting thoughts, enhancing success in challenges.

HOSPITALS AND HOSPICES

Music profoundly affects patients' mental and physical health in hospitals and hospices, reducing stress, improving moods, increasing energy, alleviating pain, and even speeding up recovery.

Studies show that classical music significantly reduces anxiety in cardiac surgery patients and helps patients remain calm during MRI scans. Research suggests calming music aids pain management, as demonstrated in a California hospice study where soothing music lowered pain intensity.

Music therapy sessions in hospitals improve cognitive functions like memory recall and language comprehension in elderly stroke victims. Singing familiar songs may help dementia patients remember words better than without musical accompaniment.

Live musical visits provide comfort and solace to patients and families. Live musicians offer meaningful connections through songs, providing emotional support during tough times away from home. Services like Harmony & Healing's live Zoom visits by professional musicians serve as a healing addition

to traditional music therapy, breaking up long hospital days and bringing joy into stressful situations.

Music's power brings joy and comfort to those struggling with illness or grief. Harmony & Healing live musical Zoom visits offer patients and families a safe space to connect through music, providing an uplifting experience that brightens even the darkest days.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

A live musical visit involves a musician visiting a patient's room or family member's home via Zoom or other video platforms. They play requested songs or original compositions, share music stories, and answer questions during the visit.

BENEFITS OF LIVE MUSIC

Emotional Support: Music therapy helps cope with sadness, fear, anger, and anxiety, lifting spirits during overwhelming times.

Connection: Music fosters connections between people, crucial when dealing with illness or grief.

Creativity: Playing music together encourages creative expression and meaningful connections.

Healing: Music reduces stress hormones like cortisol, promoting relaxation and overall well-being.

Live musical visits are a great way for patients and families to enjoy quality time together, a reminder of music's immense power.

Whether used as therapy or enjoyed for its beauty, music helps heal by providing emotional support and enhancing cognitive function. Live musical visits offer hospital and hospice patients, families, and loved ones opportunities to connect through music's soothing and calming abilities. Music helps heal physical, mental, and emotional wounds. Music does help in creating harmony and healing moments for hospital and hospice patients, families, and loved ones. Through live musical visits we can bring joy into the lives of those affected by illness, injury, sadness or pain. If you have a gift for playing an

instrument or a voice to echo sweet notes of comfort, then use this gift to improve the quality of life for others through music that soothes the soul.

And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

1 Samuel 16:23



Sister Gloria Tribute

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and walk out of that nursing home, to recover from that state of convalescence. Unfortunately, that day never came, and we came to accept after a while that this was God's will.

When she finally went to sleep, it was a difficult thing to bear yet, at the same time, it was a bit of a relief to know that her suffering was over. I have confidence that she put her trust in the Lord and that she was a Christian. None of us is ever perfect in the way that we define perfection. But the Bible says that we are perfect in Christ.

By this measurement, I believe Gloria was perfect because she put her trust in the Lord. I'm sure that even in her last moments, she remained focused on the Lord.

I look forward to meeting her again and maybe sharing one or two jokes with her in the world made new.



Europe Report

Continued from page 6

the water wasn't as cold as expected. It was warm in Europe and while we were in Hungary, the temperature soared to 40°C (104°F), something I've never experienced in Jamaica.

In Serbia, there was also a baptism of nine people, while in Hungary, there was another baptism of one person. Overall, we baptized about 13 people during this journey.

LOVE AND HOSPITALITY

The love and hospitality we received were overwhelming. It was heartwarming to see the appreciation for the message we shared. We were able to spend a couple of days with Brother Oliver Meyer and enjoyed our time, even though his wife had to be away on family business.

In Hungary, we stayed with Brother

Lajos and his wife, and it felt like we were at home. At the end when they took us to the airport they stayed with us and saw us all the way through until we were out of sight. This experience made me feel the love and warmth of our extended family in Christ.

Adjusting to different foods was a bit challenging. Each place had its unique cuisine. For example, in Hungary, every meal included peppers—not the hot kind, but sweet peppers. It seems they were a part of every meal. Definitely not the way of Jamaica, but by God's grace, we adjusted and managed well.

THE JOURNEY HOME

We arrived back home on Thursday morning at 3:00 AM after leaving Hungary at 10:00 AM on Wednesday. Yes, it was a long journey—about 30 hours on the road! First, we flew to Germany and spent some time at the airport. Then, we flew for another 10 hours, stopping briefly in Cuba before heading to Ja-

maica. The journey didn't end there because we were on the road for another two to three hours. A truck had overturned on a hill and blocked the main road. We had to take a detour through some rough roads, but we finally reached home safe and sound at 3:00 AM, all thanks be to God.

Locked in a Box

Continued from page 5

given to it, but the same mindless legalism that blinds the eyes of its members has derailed it, perverted its teachings. It makes no progress and those who claim to be "reformers" simply regurgitate the same errors of a hundred years ago! There is no growth, no advancing in light, just a perpetual journey around the wilderness of Sinai!

What a sad, sad situation. It is enough to make a person weep!

Open Face

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