

Youth **Messenger**

The cover features a composite image of Earth, the Moon, and the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) against a starry night sky. The Earth is in the upper left, the Moon is in the lower left, and Big Ben is on the right side, extending from the bottom towards the top.

**Lessons From
the Past**

APRIL-JUNE 2001

VOL. XX, NO. 2

Predestined to Victory

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

Out in the yard of the college, a girl was weeping uncontrollably. All words of comfort were of no use. She had lost. She was defeated. It was over; there was no more chance to change anything. On the list of the results of the final exam, her name was below the red line. So she was weeping and weeping. . . .

When such a loss occurs you think of the years, days, moments, and millions of opportunities to prepare that had been passed by. Oh, if at least two minutes could be recalled, how different would we use them? But now it is too late. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20).

Yes, we have an exam to pass. Praise the Lord, we are still before, not after it. We still have some time left. How will you decide to use it? If this would be the last day in your life, what would you like the report to say? Are you ready for the exam?

This exam will not be based on what you know, but rather who you are—a summary of your experience with the Lord. If you are fully in Christ, you will gloriously pass the exam. So, the only one question will be, are you in Him? Only this! Isn't it simple?

"By His perfect obedience [Christ] has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. . . .

"We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute."—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 113.

This is the privilege that we have. To be admitted at the exam as Christ! What more could we desire? "Through His Son, God has revealed the excellency to which man is capable of attaining. And before the world God is developing us as living witnesses of what man may become through the grace of Christ" (*Our High Calling*, p. 108). Isn't it amazing? Jesus declares, " 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth' (Matthew 28:18). This unlimited power it is your privilege and mine to claim," (Ibid.), to be predestined to victory. Let us win!



Of Calling, Choosing and Covenanting

True security comes through commitment to God

4

Youth Meetings to Start Off the Year

News from eastern Europe and South America

8

Quick Bible Studies (2)

There is only one "Lord's day" in the Bible

12

Youthful Reformers From the Land of Luther

Following in the footsteps of the great Reformation

13

Lessons From the Past

We can learn a lot from history!

15

Puzzle

Quiz yourself on what you just learned

18

A Journey to Japan

When vacationing, always remember "the Great Commission" (Matthew 28:20)

20

In His Footprints

A poem to ponder

24



Editor: Radu Ionita
Associate Editor: Barbara Monteiro
Design/Layout: Shi Lee

Illustrations: Front cover composition by Shi Lee, PhotoDisc on pp. 15, 18-20, 21-24, Corel Photo on p. 22.

Subscription rates as follows:
Annual donation requested
United States US \$ 5.95
foreign (surface mail) US \$10.00
foreign (air mail) US \$14.00
single issue US \$ 2.95

The Youth Messenger ® (USPS 765-030) is published quarterly by the Young People's Department of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference as an educational service for our youth worldwide.

Web: <http://www.sdarm.org>
e-mail: gc@sdarm.org
It is printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association. Manuscripts, inquiries, address changes, subscription requests, and donations should be mailed to the address below. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Youth Messenger, P. O. Box 7240, ROANOKE, VA 24019-0240.

Of Calling, Choosing and Covenanting

by Lesley Johnson

Writing from North Carolina, U.S.A.



For many are called, but few are chosen.” “Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (Matthew 22:14; 2 Peter 1:10).

Have you ever been overlooked? Left out? Not chosen? The seeds of rejection reap a harvest of loneliness and despair, especially if your attempt to be among those chosen was the result of serious effort. What went wrong? What more could you have done to make it work? Probably nothing, for human selections are made most often by the whims of those in charge.

Christ is familiar with this type of rejection. He wept over Jerusalem when the beautiful city refused His salvation (Matthew 23:37). What more could the Son of God have done? Fortunately, Christ does not treat us as He was treated, as we are prone to treat each other.

Calling. But of necessity, there will come a time of rejection by Christ for many, even the majority. On two different occasions He explained how many are called, but few chosen. Both times were in relation to a parable.

The first one is about the eleventh-hour workers who received the same pay as those who had worked the full day (Matthew 20:1–16). Those who had worked the longest felt that they should have gotten more even though the agreement they had made did not say so. They felt rejected by the denial of their request for more money, thinking that the employer was unfair.

The second parable tells of a man who was rejected from the wedding feast because he had not put on the proper clothing, the “wedding garment” which each guest was required to wear. He was cast out into outer darkness for not conforming with the requirement (Matthew 22:11–14).

Unlike our personal experiences of rejection which often seem to be without reason, these parables teach that if you are obedient to the conditions set down by the Lord, you will surely receive the reward of salvation—of being chosen, for “whosoever will” may come (Revelation 22:17). Essentially, all are called.

Choosing. God does not want anyone to have to perish (2 Peter 3:9). Everyone is called out of darkness into “His marvelous light” to become part of His spiritual family (1 Peter 2:9). So why are there only “few chosen”? Because of failure to accept the conditions set forth by God. James 2:5 says, “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” Those chosen are “an afflicted and poor people”

(Zephaniah 3:12) who love God supremely and trust in His name. He has chosen them, but they are unattractive to the world. The powers that be would not choose them. While “poor” may very well apply to material possessions, it more significantly applies to humbleness of spirit, esteeming others better than yourself. This principle is but slightly understood by the unrenewed heart. Humility is equated with low self-esteem, a character trait without value. Yet to the Christian it is a most desirable quality, helping us recognize sin in our life, opening our eyes to the need for serious help. A humble person can be a chosen person because he does not believe he knows it all. Those who are to be joint-heirs with Christ are humble, not subservient, and this ensures their adoption by God.

Adoptive parents usually pick one child; at times, two; three or more has been done on occasion. God adopts as many as will hear and follow Him. No one needs to be unchosen, to suffer rejection, except by his or her own decision.

“And [I] will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:18). Adopted by God! Heirs of the kingdom! Can you imagine?

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).

Covenanting. The promise is the covenant. What is the covenant by which we become heirs of the kingdom? What is a covenant? An agreement, yes, but more than that,

a solemn and binding agreement. It is also a testament which Webster's Dictionary states as one meaning "a covenant between God and man." Another definition is "a will." Here we place the Bible in a deeper position as the Old and New Testaments, God's "will"—the most solemn and binding agreement ever entered into. And rightly so, for the legacy is priceless—eternal life with God. The basis of the covenant is the moral law of Ten Commandments. In Romans 6:2 we learn that the recompense for sin is death, e.g., the wages for breaking the moral law is death, for sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). But God has promised in that same verse eternal life as a gift, an inheritance. This must be the gift to those who keep the law, for there is no other alternative.

As previously mentioned, God, want-



ing all mankind to know Him (which, according to John 17:3 means eternal life), summed up His conditions in the Ten Commandments. This was the covenant that Christ made with His people. The speaking of the commandments by God from Mount Sinai could be called the reading of the will. Then the law was placed in a special container called the Ark of the Covenant (Numbers 10:33).

In the new covenant, the ark bearing God's law is a special container called the heart. Ancient Israel lost the ark and its contents through indiscretions. They broke the covenant many times—and, spiritually speaking, into many pieces. Today, in symbol, the ark is taken away from those whose hearts are at odds with God.

Ellen White described as follows: "The truth, I saw, had had but little effect. When it was talked, there seemed to be no power to stir up the depth of the soul. A death-like stupor has hung upon the professed people of God, and the reason is that the ark is not with them, for its holy commandments have been violated, and God has taken it away in His anger."—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 322.

The significance of these two covenants is that the old was written on tables of stone by God's own finger and can never be changed. It was tangible. The new is vis-

ible by one's behavior. The law in stone cannot change a person. The law in the heart does. But the conditions—the Ten Commandments—remain the same, all ten of them. Ancient Israel also had them written in their hearts when they were converted. The promise does not change, and the way to salvation does not change, for Christ is still in charge.

When there is a will, it must be ratified—completed and put into effect by the testator's death. Christ fulfilled this condition. It was sin (transgression of the law) that called for the blood of the Lamb, for without shedding of blood there is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). It had to be His blood, for it was His law. No other being could substitute for Him, for they did not own the gift of eternal life. You cannot bequeath what you do not own (1 John 5:11, 12).

The Sanhedrin in Christ's day thought they could usurp the gift. They wanted to kill the Heir to steal His inheritance (Matthew 21:38). But this is impossible. If you were to kill an heir, you would receive a fit punishment and the inheritance would be given to the next of kin. This is essentially what has happened to the rebellious Jews, and the Gentile converts have become heirs along with the faithful Jews.

Were there executors of Christ's will to mankind?

"Before ascending to heaven, Christ gave His disciples their commission. He told them that they were to be the executors of the will in which He bequeathed to the world the treasures of eternal life."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 27.

Conclusion. This covenant between God and believers like us continues, for Christ is alive! And He will return promptly for His people, those who keep His Ten Commandments in their hearts so that it is seen in the life. But until He returns, He has given us something very precious—fellowship, someone with whom to wait, His church.

"All who believe are to be gathered into one church" (Ibid.). Doesn't this make sense? All believing the same, encouraging each other in the faith, exhorting (Hebrews 10:25), fulfilling the gospel commission together (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Yes, there is more to becoming a child of God than hearing His voice calling. That is just the first step. Many hear Him speaking to them and settle back in comfort saying, "I believe in God, for I heard His call. Now I am saved." But the second step requires action on our part. Eli instructed young Samuel that when God would call his name the fourth time, that he should ask the Lord to speak, confirming that he would be the Lord's servant from that time onward. Servants have things to do for their Master.

The covenant has been written. The will has been ratified. The gift is at hand. There is still time to listen for and respond to the call of God, to present yourself before Him as His servant. Then you will know what to do, and there is much to be done. Heirs of the kingdom, oh, why do we linger? "And they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17:14). You are called; be sure you are chosen!

Youth Meetings to Start Off the Year

by Radu Ionita
Writing from Romania

Ukraine. In the last days of the past year, the young people of the East European Union had a wonderful convention in Chernovtsy, Ukraine. Many young people—about 150—came from all sides of Ukraine, including the far end of Crimea (or Zakarpathia), Moldavia, Russia, and Romania. The themes presented and discussed were about fighting the good fight of faith, and obtaining the promised victory, based on 2 Timothy 4:7, 8. The three days of convention proved to be a very blessed occasion with many musical items, large participation in the workshops, and everything enveloped in a warm, enthusiastic atmosphere. The participation of the students who had just completed their training at the missionary school added an extra touch of encouragement and joy.



Some of the young people in Ukraine



Youth choir of Chernovtsy, Ukraine



The modern Ukrainian version of David's harp

Yugoslavia. During the first weekend of this year, the Yugoslavian Union held in Stara Pazova a Youth Seminar on the precious truth of Christ Our Righteousness. The ongoing wrath of the enemy of souls against this subject was proven anew, by the unexpected refusal of the border patrol officers to allow the group of Romanians to enter the country, under the pretext of carrying religious materials. Each member of the group took this opportunity to pray and review his or her own relationship with the Lord, and to wait. Praise God that they were able to enter the country.

We spent a wonderful time studying the Word of God, sharing experiences, singing and discussing. The subject is extensive, and we hope to continue to deepen our understanding of it on future occasions as well.



Some who participated in the seminar in Stara Pazova, Yugoslavia



Two missionary families praising the Lord

Chile. From January 22–28, the youth in Chile had the opportunity to come together in a very blessed convention in the southern part of the country on the Pacific coast. In



"Triumphant in Christ," participants in the Chilean convention

a lovely natural landscape in the school of a small village, Bahia Mansa (Peaceful Bay), the meetings were held under the general title, "Triumphant in Christ." From all parts of Chile, the young and young-at-heart came to worship the Lord and gain courage. A very friendly atmosphere was established by God's grace, and every moment of the convention was spent under the impression of His special blessing. At the conclusion of a wonderful week, everyone returned to their homes with new desires and goals.

Argentina. The following week, the young people of Argentina had their convention in Buenos Aires, at the Ciudadela Church, where the headquarters of the Union are located. This was almost the fourth week spent by the youth



Argentinian youth choir



Break time between meetings in Bolivia

in spiritual meetings. During the first three weeks all of the brethren had been instructed in a seminar on missionary work, and this fourth



Young people attending the Bolivia Youth Convention in front of the missionary school in Jorochito, Bolivia

week was dedicated especially to programs for the youth, under the title "Renewal and Victory." The youth choir practiced and sang beautifully. The team of instructors did a good job as well. Day by day they rediscovered the sweetness of the gospel as it applies to our practical needs.

With tears of joy and thankfulness, with new decisions in their lives, those who participated could hardly bear to separate and depart to their homes on Monday morning.


Bolivia. Around 30 miles from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in the village named Jorochito, the young people of the Bolivian Union had a wonderful convention. Just as they were spending time with the God of heaven, at the exact same time the people in Santa Cruz were celebrating their carnival, meeting with their "god" (with tragic results as often happens: 36 wounded, 3 very severely, and so forth). The believers assembled in Jorochito had the opportunity to thank and praise the Lord for the peace and blessing of this convention. Not only did the young people come, but also many adults did not want to lose the chance to take part. Many of the brethren of Santa Cruz were traveling daily, with the earnest desire to gain as much as possible. The question-and-answer time was delightful as ever, and all of us were very thankful to the Lord for the time spent with Him. A special dedica-



Students of our college in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia

tion in behalf of the very little ones was requested.

In addition, the Youth Department leaders of the entire South American Region joined those in Bolivia for their own seminar. The work in behalf of the young people was considered and new plans were made. It was an excellent occasion to build friendships and promote teamwork in laboring for the same goal—the best for the South American youth! The only shadow was that not all the countries of the continent were represented and the time was relatively short, in comparison with the agenda.

Conclusion. This is briefly what I witnessed personally together with my young brethren in Christ. I know that in many other parts of the world, God's children have also had wonderful experiences in bigger or smaller meetings. I'm very thankful to the Lord for everything He has done for us. May He help us to "press together" as He has pleaded for us to do, and to develop a strong, personal relationship with Him, is my wish and prayer! 

Quick Bible Studies

PART II

By Lesley Johnson

Writing from North Carolina, U.S.A.

Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15). Here is a quick Bible study that you can give to anyone, if the chance should arise unexpectedly. Remember, if you pray for opportunities, the Lord will provide them!

THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH

- Genesis 2:2, 3 The seventh day was set apart for a holy purpose at creation; God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.
- Exodus 16:14-30 He reminded them of the Sabbath at the giving of the manna 2500 years later.
- Exodus 20:8-11 He included it in the Ten Commandments repeated at Sinai, identifying Himself as the Creator and the rightful ruler of the universe.
- Ezekiel 20:12, 20 The seventh-day Sabbath is a sign that we know the God of heaven who sanctifies us.
- Matthew 5:17-19 Christ said that all of the moral law of Ten Commandments should be kept, that no part was to be destroyed.
- Mark 2:27 The Sabbath was not made merely for the Jews, but for all mankind, for our benefit.
- Luke 4:16 Christ, our Example, worshiped on the Sabbath.
- Matthew 12:8 Christ is Lord of the Sabbath.
- Luke 23:56 After Jesus died, His disciples still kept the Sabbath.
- Acts 17:2; 18:4 The apostle Paul and the early Christians kept the Sabbath.
- Acts 13:14, 42-44 The Gentile Christians kept the Sabbath just as the Jewish believers did.
- Revelation 1:10 The Sabbath brought spiritual blessing to the apostle John. Other than the seventh day, there is no other day in all of the Bible specifically blessed as the Lord's day.
- Isaiah 66:22, 23 The Sabbath will continue to be a memorial in the earth made new.

Youthful Reformers

From the Land of Luther

By Bruna Tuleu S.

Writing from Germany

Compared to some other countries, Germany is a rather small nation. So you can imagine that the number of members and youth in our churches is also not very large. Many of us are scattered all over the country. For this reason we decided to have at least three youth conventions yearly.

During the December break there is always a youth convention parallel to a seminar for the adults. We had many visitors at our last meeting, December 23-27, 2000. Some came from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Romania, Russia, and Switzerland. The youth had a separate program, but some studies, such as the ones

on health, current world events, and the sanctuary message, were held together with the adults.

Our morning and evening worship meditations were held by the youth. The topics were based on Christ's temptations, betrayal, sufferings, death, and resurrection, and His love for us. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1, 2). The Spirit of Prophecy says that



Youth Convention in Germany


every day we should study and ponder what Christ has done for us.

After lunch on Sunday, we visited two homes for the elderly in order to sing songs that we had practiced earlier in the morning. It was amazing to see how several nurses and even some of the elderly stood next to us and tried to sing with us.

“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.” — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83.

We passed out little cards with Bible verses on them to each resident. In one of the homes a geriatric nurse told us that they were actually expecting the usual Christmas songs, yet they enjoyed our songs a lot. We were invited to come again to both places at the next opportunity (perhaps this spring).

During the day we had interesting studies, walked, and had different activities. In the evenings we sat by the fireside and sang songs, made Bible quizzes, or just shared experiences with one another.

This is just a brief picture of how our youth conventions are. But to get a general idea you should come to Germany. We would be very happy to have you join us. See you in Germany! 

P.S. Don't worry about the language. The German youth speak (or at least understand) English.

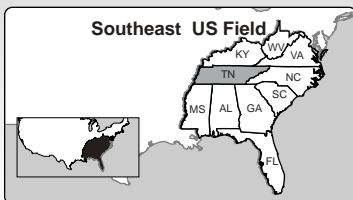
Coming soon . . . Make plans now to attend!

Youth Convention

WHEN: July 29–August 5, 2001

WHERE: Tennessee, USA

CONTACT: SEUSF Office
(770) 266-0072
or sdarmseusf@aol.com



International Youth Congress

WHEN: August 5–12, 2001

WHERE: Mogyorod, Hungary

CONTACT: Bro. Raducu
ar_ionita@yahoo.com
or raduionita@xnet.ro



Lessons From the Past

Part I in a series

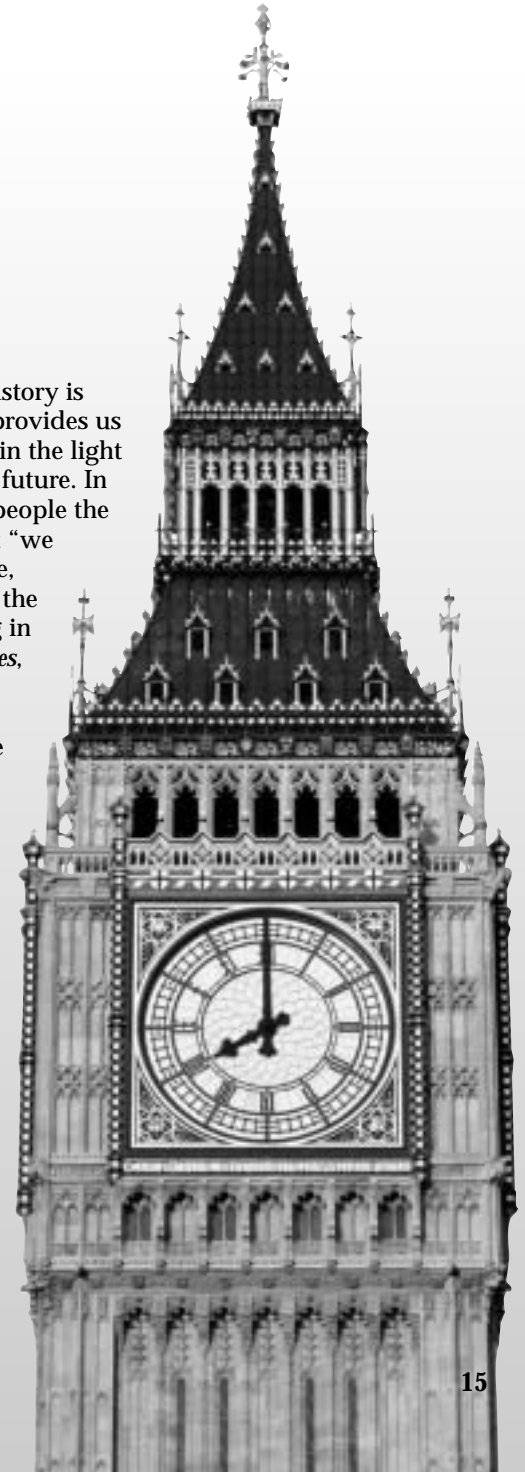
by David Zic

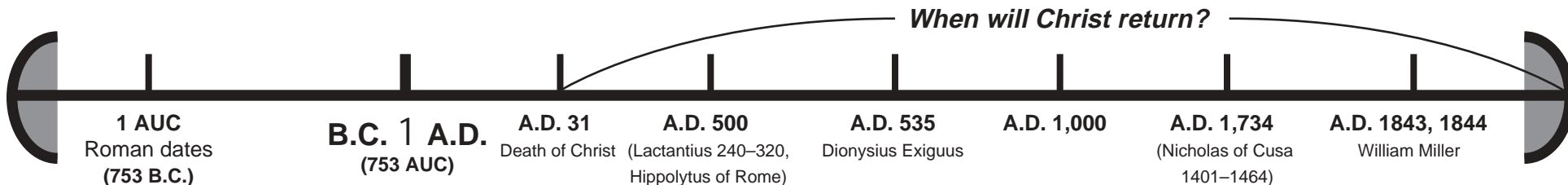
Writing from Virginia, U.S.A.

The Importance of Time. History is one of our great lesson books. It provides us with the means to study the past in the light of the present, with a view to the future. In speaking of the history of God's people the Spirit of Prophecy comments that “we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history” (*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p.162).

All the events of the past that remain in the historical record are preserved there so that you and I can learn lessons from the actions of those who came before us. In this new series of articles we will examine the nations, peoples and events of times past. We will answer questions like: Who were the Medo-Persians, the Romans, the people of Cush, and the Vandals? What was their experience? Did they redeem their time? What prophecies did they fulfill?

The Bible informs us that “to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Solomon informs us that





“the thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us” (Ecclesiastes 1:9, 10).

Dating. Before we can begin our studies into history, we must first begin by talking about dates. History is based on understanding when events of the past happened. To do this we must have a common reference point from which to conduct our study.

In ancient times, there was no set system for numbering years. Each kingdom and region had its own custom for telling time. In many places the years were numbered by the rulers of the kingdom or province. “In the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar” (Jeremiah 32:1). The Romans originally called the years by the names of the two leaders (called consuls) who held the position that year. “In the consulship of Gaius Marius and Catulus Caesar.”

Eventually the larger and more important nations found it convenient to find some important date in their early history and count the

years from that. The Romans chose the date when they said the city had been founded and started counting the years from that date. (The traditional date of the founding of Rome is 753 B.C.) They would give a date like 260 as 260 years “ab urbe condita” (AUC), meaning “from the founding of the city.”

Unfortunately other nations and cities used other systems of counting, and this makes for considerable confusion in trying to figure out when ancient events occurred. Still, when some particular event is recorded in the annals of two different regions under two different systems of dates, we can tie those two systems together.

Dionysius Exiguus. Today we have a more universal system. This system is based on the birth of Christ. Around A.D. 535 a Scythian scholar, Dionysius Exiguus, produced evidence showing that Jesus was born in the year 753 AUC. Today we know that this date is too late by at least four years, as Jesus was born while Herod was king of Judea and Herod died in 749 AUC. Nevertheless, Dionysius’ date has become the standard. We use his calculation to determine these dates.

Starting with that year we call the years A.D. 1, A.D. 2, and so on. “A.D.” is an abbreviation for “anno

Domini,” which is Latin for “in the year of our Lord.” The years before A.D. 1 are numbered B.C. 1, B.C. 2, and so on. “B.C.” is an abbreviation for “before Christ.” The important thing to remember about B.C. dates is that they run backward. That is, the smaller the number the later the year. Thus 200 B.C. comes after 201 B.C.

We will be using the system of Exiguus outline here in all our studies, so you must remember two very important points: 1) He was wrong on the date for the birth of Christ, so when we study prophecies concerning Christ later on, you will find that Christ was not born in the year B.C. 1, 2) There is no year 0. When the year 1 B.C. finished the year B.C. 1 began.

Prophecy. The study of history inevitably produces the desire for eschatology (the study of last events). And the Bible is full of prophecies, not the least of which is the prophecy that Christ will return. I am sure that you often hear the phrase “we are living in the time of the end.” Today, more than ever before we can see the validity of this statement, but it is not a new statement. Ever since Christ left the disciples and ascended into heaven, men have predicted His return and they have used

dates as the primary means for making their determinations.

As time went on, waiting became a permanent feature of Christianity. History shows us that there were many people and groups which were waiting for this coming, and some even set dates for this event. Most of these specific dates for Christ’s return were based on time prophecies, especially those of Daniel and Revelation, such as the 1260 days or years, the 2300 days, 490 years, and other time periods found in the Bible.


Lactantius (A.D. 240-320) adopted the commonly accepted idea that Christ’s return would occur at the end of 6,000 years. According to his study of Old Testament chronology, he figured that Christ had been born 5,500 years after creation, thus putting His second coming around the year A.D. 500. Another early church father, Hippolytus of Rome, accepted the same logic. Others chose the year 1000 because it was a nice round figure. Still others said Christ would return in the year 1260, based on the 1260-year-prophecy. Christopher Columbus believed very strongly that Christ would come 155 years after his time, and this fueled many of his explorations.

Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464), a prominent medieval scholar, set

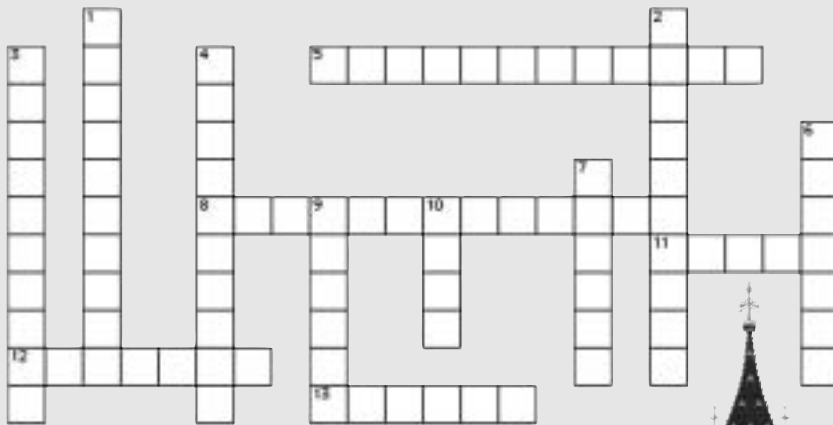
the date at 1734 based on the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel, but of course he was mistaken on the starting date of that period. William Miller used the same prophecy, but as he had more reliable historical dates he predicted 1843 or 1844. He had the correct date for the start of the prophecy, but a misinterpretation of the events at its conclusion. We will

study this prophecy in detail later in this series. Today we study the past to learn from it, and to prepare for the future, but we will not set any times for future events. "The great test on time was in 1843 and 1844; and all who have set time since this great period marked in prophecy, were deceiving and being deceived" (*Life Sketches* (1888), p. 222).

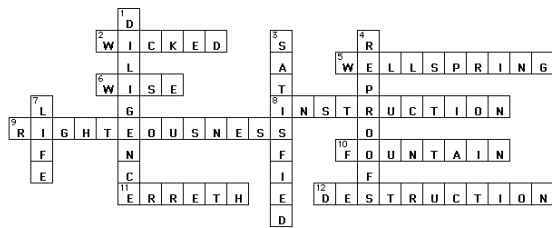
Redeem the time. Today remember that everything you do is part of history. It is being recorded in the books of heaven. What are you doing with your time? Are you being an example to those around you. Time is one of the greatest talents which we possess. "But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can

redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being coworkers with God in His great plan of redemption" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 342). It is my prayer that as we commence our study we will understand the deep importance of the time in which we are living. In the next issue we will begin to study the history of Egypt. 

PUZZLE Lessons From the Past



Answers to last issue's puzzle entitled, "Life"



Across

5. B.C. (two words)
8. Roman system (3 words)
11. Country we will study in the next issue
12. Founder of modern system
13. "To everything there is a _____"

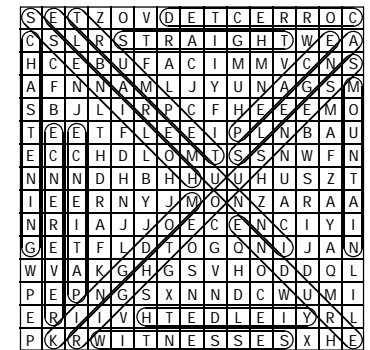
Down

1. A.D. (two words)
2. The tenth year of Zedekiah

3. "Time _____ can never be recovered"
4. _____ said Christ would return in A.D. 500.
6. One of the great lesson books
7. _____ said Christ would return in 1844.
9. Ancient kingdoms numbered years by them.
10. _____ said Christ would return in 1734.

Answers to last issue's wordsearch entitled, "Hebrews 12"

The words to find were: witnesses, patience, chastening, endure, corrected, reverence, yieldeth, righteousness, holiness, peace, trumpet, mountain, innumerable, angels, kingdom, straight.



A Journey to Japan

by Vanessa Brostovski
Writing From Virginia, U.S.A.

In December 2000 and most of January 2001, my family and I visited Japan for six weeks. It was truly an inexpressible experience. But in the best way I can, I will tell you about Japan and the work that our church members are doing there. . . .

It takes almost 14 hours to fly from Washington, DC, to Tokyo, Japan. For those of you who have not had the privilege of flying from America to Japan, it is a very beautiful flight, especially if it is on a sunny day. We were flying west toward the international date line, and it never got dark because of our constant movement in that direction. Upon reaching the "Land of the Rising Sun," we could already see it was vast. Formed by four larger islands and numerous smaller ones, it

is a very large country with 47 prefectures (what we in America or Canada would call states or provinces).

During the week we were in mainland Japan, we were able to visit many places of interest. One such place is Saitama-ken [prefecture], where there are many mountains and winding roads. It is truly beautiful. We experienced "living" in Saitama-ken for one week. We stayed with our minister working in Japan, Brother Chang, and his family. It was a blessing to be able to see them and also to visit our church on Sabbath and worship with our brethren. On Sabbath, I was "tickled" by the idea of taking my shoes off to go upstairs to the sanctuary. This is the traditional way of the Japanese. So, we removed our shoes. We also sat with our knees bent on cushions with small tables in front of us. The floor was covered



Believers in Japan

with "tatami" mats which are made of straw.

Although I am limited in my ability to speak Japanese, I was able to enjoy the church service very much. My dad gave the study which was translated by Brother Chang. The brethren in our church in Japan are working very faithfully in the Lord's vineyard and have a deep interest in sharing the truth with others. They are working very hard in their missionary efforts. They pass out large numbers of pamphlets and tracts about our faith. This should be an encouragement for us all. Though Japan is a land where there are many different kinds of religions, their main traditional religion is Buddhism. It is challenging to witness to someone of the Buddhist faith, who believes in good principles (such as kindness to others, cleanliness, purity) but doesn't believe in God.

At this point in time, our members in Japan are renting a place in which to worship. But a few miles away from that site, they are building their own chapel. It is located on a large tract of mountainous-wooded-land, in a very beautiful spot. The project has been started a few years ago and, with God's help, it is coming along well. The members in Japan are of good cheer and continue to work to build the chapel.

Besides visiting our church and meeting many of our members in Japan, we also had a chance to visit Tokyo. This is a very extensive city, with over 8,000,000 people residing there. There are numerous subways and taxis, as well as mini-cars. Traveling by train was quite interesting, but quite tiring after sitting for hours with many stops along the way. After arriving in Tokyo by train, we had to get on the subway





to get where we needed to go. We visited Ginza, one of the most famous shopping areas in the world. We saw many tourists there. We were also able to visit Shibuya, another section of Tokyo that attracts many young people. What was most strange for us to visit was Akasaka, an area where there is a large temple and many statues and small monuments. It was sad to see how many people are so devoted to their religion—a religion that can not bring them hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Instead, they pray to a god who is dead, and cannot hear them. The Bible says we worship a risen Saviour, Jesus, who paid the price for our sins and is now alive, pleading on our behalf to His Father. Truly, we have been entrusted with great light that needs to shine to the rest of the world.

Some Buddhists are very devoted to their religion. They attend services at the temple every day, and pray nearly all the time. They also believe in a fountain of “holy” water in which they dip small ladles and wash their hands or even drink of it. After drinking, they place the ladle back in its place and another

person comes along and drinks. They believe that it is sacred. Imagine how much they would love God and be willing to serve Him if only they would believe in the truth! They are a people which God has not forgotten, and whom we must reach with His love.

After staying a week in mainland Japan, we were able to fly south to its 47th prefecture, Okinawa. Okinawa is a small island located about 900 miles south of mainland Japan and about 400 miles east from China. This 47th prefecture includes some 160 tiny islands under and around Okinawa. Many of the people of Okinawa are a mix of Chinese, Taiwanese, or other cultures as well as Japanese. Before being owned by Japan, Okinawa was the “Kingdom of the Ryukyus” (which is reflected in the name of this distinct 47th prefecture of Japan, “The Ryukyu Islands”). They have their own singular culture which is different from that of mainland Japan. It is highly influenced by China. Although Okinawans speak Japanese, they have their own dialect which is mainly used in the

traditional singing and dancing, and by older folks.

It takes about 4 hours to drive from the southernmost tip of Okinawa to the northernmost tip. On one side of the island is the beautiful East China Sea, and on the other side is the lovely Pacific Ocean. Located in the southern part of the island is its capital city, Naha. With over 300,000 residents, it is certainly a very crowded city.

Okinawa’s landscape is beautiful. As you travel north, there are more beach areas and resorts. The water is clear, turquoise, and it sparkles. The many resorts attract a large number of tourists from mainland Japan. The weather is usually mild and sunny in the winter. In the summer it is very hot and tropical.

There are many Adventist churches in Okinawa. In fact, Okinawa has more Adventists than mainland Japan does. However, there is no SDA Reform Church in Okinawa yet. The Adventists in Okinawa are very sincere and are working hard in their missionary efforts also. Some of them are even open to the Reform message. We believe that someday there will be

an SDA Reform Church in Okinawa!

I have only given you a brief summary of mainland Japan and Okinawa, and I will leave the rest for you to find out for yourselves, if someday you decide to go there.

It was indeed a wonderful trip and a great experience for me and my family. We were encouraged by the church members in Japan, and were also glad to have an opportunity to share the truth with friends and family. It is my hope that you all keep this special country in your prayers, because God has a great work for us to do there. *Sayonara!*





In His Footprints

There's an endless charm of beauty
In the pleasant path of duty
Which our Saviour has marked for us in
Footprints of His own;
We may see those charms unfolding
If we only keep beholding
All His footsteps, which lead upward to
His bright, majestic throne.

If we only learn to follow
In His steps, and leave the hollow
Human footsteps, which vain mortals
Have marked out for us below,
We shall, in a way surprising,
See our pathway rising, rising,
To a higher, nobler summit than we ever
Thought to know.

God is constantly appealing
To our hearts. He keeps revealing
Such sweet glimpses of His beauty,
Which by faith alone are seen.
O, the joy of only knowing
God has placed His glory, growing,
In the path of life and beauty—flowers,
and trees, and grass so green!

Have you ever heard the story
Which the Lord of life and glory
Is repeating in the path of life He asks
us now to take?

Hear it now, and prove His treasure
Is beyond all earthly measure,
Walking only in the footprints which
our Saviour loved to make.

—Harry Armstrong

MOVING?

Please let us know.

PERIODICAL
POSTAGE PAID
ROANOKE,
VA 24022

Youth Messenger
P.O. Box 7240
ROANOKE, VA 24019-0240
Address Service Requested