

West African Advent

messenger

Voice of The West African Union Mission of Seventh-Day Adventists

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PRAYER

Prayer changes things, prayer changes you.
It changes people and the things they do.
Prayer is the key to the storehouse of God,
Opening new ways He would have you trod.

Prayer is the stairway to heaven above,
The most direct route to His wonderful love.
Prayer is important, we need it today.
Prayer is a privilege — so why don't you pray?

By Edith Wood



PREPARE YOURSELF

for

THE WEEK OF PRAYER

November 7 — 14





The Worldwide

WEEK of PRAYER

The annual Week of Prayer in the Adventist Church means a week of emphasis on spiritual refreshing and revival. From year to year our Church members and others who have attended the meetings of this week around the world have received grand spiritual blessings. Our members have taken time to devote to meditation and prayer, and this has brought a new spiritual vision for the ensuing year. Hundreds and thousands have, as it were, taken inventory of the influence of their lives on their neighbours and friends, they have evaluated anew their devotion to the cause of Christ, and have had time for introspection of their personal relations with their God. The Weeks of Prayer have contributed to the upbuilding of a vital Christian experience on the part of laity and the ministry.

The Week of Prayer for 1959 has come. It presents a privilege and a challenge in victorious spiritual living. There is imperative need for special prayer to God at this time, by all who profess the name of Christ. Let us pray that God in His tender mercy and love will hold for a little while longer the winds of commotion and uncertainty in this old, disillusioned world till the work of the Gospel shall be finished. Let us beseech our God to strengthen the bonds of spiritual unity in the church in all the world. Pray, brethren, in all lands, for personal piety. Think of your brethren in the remote parts of the world who may be suffering persecution and hardship for the name of Jesus. There has never been a time when we needed to pray more for the evangelization of the earth's multitudes than now. On our

knees before God we should present earnest supplications that He will make bare His mighty arm in opening to the Gospel some of the territories yet closed. Pray that the ministry of the remnant people may be endowed with the power of Pentecost for the preaching of the Word in time's closing hours. As we pray let us remember the following:

"The same compassionate Saviour lives today, and He is willing to listen to the prayer of faith as when He walked visibly among men. The natural cooperated with the supernatural. It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."—*Great Controversy*, page 525.

As we receive the blessings of the Week of Prayer, let us study how to retain them and share them. After the week passes let us continue our fervour and earnestness in private prayer, devotion and meditation. Read the Bible regularly and take time to think about the grand truths God has given us. Let us lay hold with a firmer grip of faith than ever in the past on the "great and precious promises" of God's Holy Word. Diligence in continuing our missionary work and Christian service for others will help us in a substantial way to keep the blessings of the Week of Prayer. Let us be aware of the fact that we are drawing near to the end of time when Jesus our Lord shall appear. Let the hope of His coming and the promise of life eternal be a constant light on our pathway. May God bless the Advent people around the world in the 1959 Week of Prayer! — *General Conference Officers*

FROM TRAVELS IN NIGERIA

By H. J. Welch

DURING THE MONTH of August, it was my privilege to visit all the missions and institutions in the three mission fields of Nigeria. It was a happy privilege to see how work is progressing in this large territory.

In the East Nigerian field, Pastor A. J. Dickay, the President, took us on a tour of the districts in the River Province. This included Ekpeye, Ogba, Elele, Etche, Abua, Ogom and Nchia Eleme districts. We found our people in these areas loyal to the message and anxious to see the work go forward. This is a needy area and my visit made me very aware of the need for funds for further development. It is here that our work first started in East Nigeria.

We were happy to see the progress made at Ahoada Hospital. Dr. Harold Cherney has made a real contribution to the work in developing a very fine hospital. We greatly enjoyed the hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Goude who now have charge while Dr. Cherney takes a well earned furlough.

From the River area we journeyed to Calabar to spend the week-end with Brother and Sister Roy Hulbert and the fine company of new believers in that place. As we left Calabar we met the members at Oron where we enjoyed an hour of worship together. The Lord is certainly blessing the workers in the Calabar district.

On the college compound at Ihie we found a good spirit. Most of our time there was taken up with a College Board in studying problems of the Training College and the Secondary school. Pastor Mueller is head of the entire institution while Brother E. C. Christie is on furlough. The Training College is directed by Brother Michael Moses and the High School by Dr. Riley. At Ihie we also met Brother Watson from Ife Hospital, who was at Ihie assisting them to get their books in order.

In Aba, at the East Nigerian Headquarters, Brother R. Simons welcomed us to his house. Sister Simons and the children have gone to America to enable the children to continue their education. Brother Simons is of course a bit lonesome for his family but is

carrying on the financial direction of the mission in a very excellent way. In Aba it was our privilege to meet all the East Nigerian ministerial workers who were assembled for a three day workers meeting. Pastor Dickay and his committee had set up a good programme and we are sure it resulted in real blessing to all the workers. We sensed in the meeting a strong spirit on the part of the ministry toward a more aggressive evangelism. Much was said about utilizing the enthusiasm and talents of the laymen in soul winning.

A few hours by plane and we landed at Jos in North Nigeria to enjoy the more bracing atmosphere of the 4,000-foot latitude. Brother Roberts, the President met us and took us to Jengre where we spent nearly a week meeting with the workers and counselling with various boards and committees. Mr. and Mrs. Turnbull of the hospital staff were packing to go on furlough. Dr. D. I. Peterson and his wife were preparing to take up the heavy load in the hospital. Many of our overseas workers carry tremendous loads of work while their associates are on furlough.

The Lord is blessing the work in North Nigeria and definite plans are underfoot for expansion into new areas. A rapidly growing feature of the work is the newly developed Publishing Department. Nine Colporteurs are now busy distributing our books.

From Jos we flew to Kaduna and from there to Ibadan. Pastor G. M. Ellstrom met us at the airport. He is happy again to have his wife and family with him. They had spent the last year in America where the children could have school privileges. We had the privilege of meeting Pastor and Mrs. Eijkelenboom, who had just arrived from Holland. He is to be Secretary-Treasurer of the West Nigerian Mission.

(Turn to page 8)

It is always a pleasure to visit Ile-Ife Hospital, the "front line" on the mission battle-field.



FOR MANY YEARS our churches throughout the world have dedicated a week near the close of the year to special spiritual uplift. This week is known as the annual Week of Prayer. Special readings are published to be read in all our churches. All the members of the church are urged to attend the meet-

We seek in this yearly week a new and ever more enlightened discernment of what is right and what is wrong; and it is the plan that each church member pray for a fresh recognition of the preciousness of sins forgiven through Jesus Christ and for individual sanctification through His grace.

In a special sense we hope through the meetings of this week, and through our individual meditations and devotions, to be led into a fuller knowledge of the Holy Spirit and His last-day ministry in the life of each one individually and in the corporate life of the church. We hope that those who are directing the meetings of the Week of Prayer will be especially mindful to see that the announcement reaches the newly baptized and those interested in the Advent message.



PREPARING

In the history of the people of God in a large number of instances, before entering upon a very important project of the kingdom or before pouring out a special blessing, God has admonished His people to make preparation. When the Israelites were about to cross over Jordan for the conquest of the Promised Land, He sent this message to them: "Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." (Joshua 3:5).

As the great Ezra began the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem with the returning contingent of Jews, he urged the people to prepare, and called a fast. "Then I proclaimed

a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance."—(Ezra 8:12.)

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus. He came to prepare the people for the coming Messiah, and his message was:

ings, together with those of their neighbours and friends who are interested in spiritual matters.

The purpose of the Week of Prayer is to promote the attainment of a higher and still higher spiritual plane of Christian experience, to gain the fullest vision possible of God's will for each one of us, His children.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mark 1:3). The Jews generally did not heed this message and therefore were not prepared to receive the Messiah.

The disciples of the Lord were assigned to a world-wide mission, and a preparation was needed for this great task. Jesus instructed them: Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The disciples evidently knew what was meant by this instruction, for we read that they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Then came the wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

So in our day—in the twentieth century—we must give thought to our lives so as to receive the fullness of God's blessings.

It is true that by grace, and grace only, are we saved, yet we find in Holy Writ the principle of individual responsibility concerning our own salvation. The apostle Peter

relations. I would like to suggest that we be careful to review our relations in the home. As fathers and mothers, have we been all we could be or should have been? How can we make our homes more attractive and inspiring to our children? As sons or daughters how have we treated mother and father, brother and sister? The home is fundamental in all our experiences in life and therefore deserves special attention.

Let us recall in detail our past experience in our church. Have differences arisen between us and some of the brethren, which have destroyed cordial, brotherly relations? In some cases we may find that our spirituality has grown cold because we have allowed certain differences to go on for weeks, months, or possibly years. Come what may, we must somehow be faithful to the principles of the Scriptures as regards our relations with others.

As our failings are revealed to us by the still, soft voice of the Holy Spirit, we should

FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER

tells us of the "great and precious promises" that are given us so that we may "be partakers of the divine nature"; and then he writes that we ourselves are to give "all diligence" in cultivating Christian virtues. In the same apostle's first epistle he exhorts us to do our part, in these words: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope" (1 Peter 1:13).

Our first duty in preparing for the coming Week of Prayer is to give some time to meditation concerning our past and present Christian experience. Let us take time in the quiet of our own home to think about what has been our past and what, by God's help, we can be and do in the future.

I would suggest that we ask ourselves these questions: Do I love God supremely or are there other "loves" in my life that put Him in second or third place? If Jesus were to come tonight, would I be ready to receive Him? Have I been faithful in returning to God the tithe and offerings from the money He has so graciously placed in my hands as one of His stewards?

In the same way let us examine ourselves in our relations with others in the home, in the shop, in the office, in all our personal

seek God earnestly for forgiveness. When that voice is heard, its summons should be obeyed as quickly as possible. We may be in the office or shop when He speaks to us, and if this be the case we can let a silent prayer ascend to God for forgiveness. Then as soon as we can, we should kneel down in a quiet place where we can talk confidentially with our heavenly Father. As we pray let us claim the promises of forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord. We should mention specifically the faults of which we are repenting. Too many Christians are satisfied to pray in a general way, especially about their own faults.

Let us talk to God as we would to a loving father, asking Him not only to forgive but to help us show the fruits of repentance. Let us not be hurried in these devotions, but allow time for God to speak to our soul. We should follow the directions of the Lord: "Shut the door" on things worldly as we pray in preparation for this Week of Prayer. Let us pray for courage and strength to make things right and set our spiritual house in order. An abundant blessing will come to us in our devotions if we can have the assurance that we have made everything right with our God.

We can be assured, as we ask God for forgiveness and repent of our failings, that there is joy in heaven, and that all the power we need, and more, is put at our service to help us anew in the struggle. Let us claim the promises of 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

To make our peace with God is a grand victory, but there will be another aspect of our experience to which we should give attention — to make right the wrongs we have done our fellow men. Reconciliation with someone we have wronged is very important in Christian ethics. The Lord taught that if a man was making an offering and had reached the very side of the altar, and at that almost final point remembered something that had not been made right with "his brother" he was to leave his gift and go away to seek reconciliation.

From this we can see that it is important to our worship and devotion that all wrongs be righted with our brethren. Sometimes we do not have anything against our brother, but he has something against us. With equal force comes the command that we should initiate the reconciliation. In the Christian life there is no substitute for making things right; absolutely none.

Many situations between men in this dark old world can never be unravelled and disentangled by human arguments and reasonings. The only way under God to seek release from these experiences is for us to forgive and forget, bury the issues, live together as sons and daughters of God, leaving the whole matter with our merciful and understanding heavenly Father.

Let me quote a statement on this subject from the pen of Ellen G. White: "Many are zealous in religious services, while between them and their brethren are unhappy differences which they might reconcile. God requires them to do all in their power to restore harmony. Until they do this, He cannot accept their services. The Christian's duty in this matter is clearly pointed out."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 311.

As we go to our brethren or other persons to make things right, we should go in a humble spirit. Let us not argue and try to define the responsibility of each by splitting hairs, as it were. Instead, we should allow for some possible misunderstanding and innocent good intentions on the part of the other person. Let us not try to be judges of our fellow men. God is judge of all. As we talk with the one who has been wronged,

or with the one who we think has wronged us, let us remember that "a soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. 15:1).

A good plan is to try to have our reconciliation in some place where it will be possible to have prayer together before we part. Hardly anything cements hearts together in Christian love like praying together. It will be outside the spirit of the Master if we go to one whom we have wronged, or who has wronged us, with the intention of "showing him up" in the light that human passion and anger might carelessly dictate. This is the wrong way to make things right. To speak disparagingly to an offender or to use despicable epithets will close the door to reconciliation faster than almost anything else. The greater care in this respect is none too much.

We shall have to be very careful in all cases where old offences have been left to fester for a long time. We never know just how much a person may be depressed. How sad it would be if one who has wronged us were to be treated that way, and then we would discover later that such a one was under special temptation and trial. We would undoubtedly feel that we should have tried to "bear" the man's burden instead of piling more burden on his crushed soul. To make things right with those we have wronged is one of the hardest things we have to do, but it is the only way to prepare for spiritual blessings and for great enjoyment of and acceptance by God in our devotions.

As we seek reconciliation with another let us keep in mind these words written by Mrs. White: "Do not put him to shame by exposing his fault to others, nor bring dishonour upon Christ by making public the sin or error of one who bears His name. Often the truth must be plainly spoken to the erring; he must be led to see his error, that he may reform. But you are not to judge or to condemn. Make no attempt at self-justification. Let all your effort be for his recovery. In treating the wounds of the soul, there is need of the most delicate touch, the finest sensibility. Only the love that flows from the suffering One of Calvary can avail here. With pitying tenderness, let brother deal with brother, knowing that if you succeed, you will 'save a soul from death', and 'hide a multitude of sins.' James 5:20."—*Ibid.*, page 440.

The only way to prepare for the Week of Prayer is to face up to the reality of our experience. We may feel that we have a large number of things to make right with

God and our fellow men. Some may feel that there is just no use to try again. Oh, I plead with such to lift up your eyes and look upon Jesus, who is so willing to help you!

There may be some who feel they should be better Christians, but who are indifferent or listless about reaching out and taking hold of the promises of God. To these let me say that one way to gain strength is to earnestly pray to God for help. As people pray in faith, help comes.

Peter's Experience

The experience of the apostle Peter can be of encouragement to us. He had fallen asleep when Jesus wanted him to pray in the Garden. Jesus had to correct him when he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Then it is written: "Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace." As he worked to the climax of failure as a disciple, he denied his Lord three times. Who could have a more discouraging outlook?

But Peter faced up to the reality of his experience. At this moment the record tells us that "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." Peter's next few hours are described in these words: "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Out there in the Garden, prostrated on the ground where the tears of the Master had fallen, Peter saw things in their true perspective.

The reality of his experience was hard to face. I am inclined to think that Peter was naturally a very sensitive man. People who are outspoken and frank as he was are many times very sensitive to the outspokenness and frankness of others. Quite likely he thought of the shame he would have to endure to go back to the circle of the disciples. He probably felt like hiding his face from all the world; but on the resurrection morning Jesus conveyed a special invitation to Peter to go to Galilee, where He would meet the disciples.

How tenderly the Lord looks upon those who are crushed with guilt! He seems to show a special care for those who are faced with taking the hard steps back to full reconciliation and acceptance.

David, in the fifty-first psalm, gives evidence that he had come to grips with the reality of a terrible experience in his life. He came to the place where he did not hide behind excuses and alibis, but acknowledged his sin. "My sin is ever before me," he writes, thus recognizing the seriousness of his guilt. Thank God, he did not turn away in discouragement and gloom, but he recognized the mercy of God to forgive, and the power

of God to create in him "a clean heart" and "a right spirit." David expected to receive the joy of salvation.

This is one of the most significant personal victories over sin recorded in Holy Writ. This is a pattern for restoration to all who have fallen into the ways of carelessness in the Christian life. Whether our offence be small or great, there is salvation for us if we turn to God. As we meet these experiences let us remember that wonderful declaration by the apostle Paul in Romans 5: 20: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." If as you prepare for the Week of Prayer you feel specially discouraged, I commend to you the fruitful lessons of the two examples mentioned above.

Plans should be made now for attending the Week of Prayer meetings. Great spiritual benefit comes from meeting in church fellowship. The daily work of many of our church members will be such that special arrangements will have to be made, and these plans should all be worked out early. As you go to the first Week of Prayer meeting, plan to enjoy the coming together with your brethren. Pray that your mind and soul will be prepared to receive the message of the reading.

At each meeting try to capture one or two special thoughts that will be helpful in your experience. Copy these thoughts in a notebook, if need be, to be reviewed the next day. Writing things down impresses them on the mind. Then square your life with these great truths you glean from meeting to meeting. If it is not possible for you to attend all the meetings, make a special effort to read privately at home the reading you have missed.

As you prepare for these Week of Prayer meetings in 1959, make out a list of ways in which, by the grace of God, you hope to be a better Christian. Begin to pray about these plans. Give all diligence to building your life in a new way. Launch out into new fields of activity for the Lord Jesus and for your fellow men. Resolve to maintain your thinking on a high level. Be a more earnest student of the Scriptures than ever before. Determine to seek opportunities to do good. Be prepared to suffer for righteousness' sake.

As we enter this time of great spiritual revival in our church around the world, it is my earnest hope and prayer to God that victory, in generous measure, over past failings will come to all of us. May God grant us all a considerable increase in the stature of our experience with God and with our fellow men.

— *Review and Herald*



News Notes

✕ Mr. and Mrs. John Muderspach have just arrived in Ghana. He is taking the place of Secretary-Treasurer left vacant by the transfer of Brother John Rigby to the Union staff. Brother Muderspach was formerly the Secretary-Treasurer of the Sierra Leone Mission. He will be greatly missed there but we are sure our Ghana Brethren are pleased to have him in their midst.

✕ Brother and Sister A. Leigh are now settled at Bo in Sierra Leone. He is the Secretary-Treasurer of that Mission. He was formerly connected with the business department of the Stanborough-Hydro in Watford, England. He is a brother to Miss Barbara Leigh who spent one term of service as Secretary-Accountant in the West African Union Office. Welcome, Brother and Sister Leigh.

✕ We welcome into our West African Union family Brother and Sister Paul Heise who are taking up duties in Bouaki in the Ivory Coast. Brother and Sister Heise are both experienced missionaries having spent many years in service in East Africa. Brother Heise, who holds Doctor of Theology and Bachelor in Philosophy degrees is a convert from the Roman Catholic church. He has taught in our college in Collognes, France, carried on Pastoral work in Strassburg France, and more recently was connected with the mission at Dakar, Senegal. The brethren in the Ivory Coast are fortunate in having his services.

✕ Pastor M. T. Battle and his family have recently arrived in Accra where he will take up his duties as Home Missionary, Temperance and Public Relations Secretary of the Union. Pastor Battle was President of the Liberian Mission throughout his last term of service. We are sure his contagious enthusiasm will bring great advance throughout West Africa to the work of his department.

✕ Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Christoph and children have now arrived back from furlough in the United States. Brother Christoph will be teaching in the Science department at the Bekwai Secondary School.

FOR SALE

A portable, folding-box-type Organ, with travelling container. Purchased 1957. Three stops — three octaves. Prepared to sell at £40. Cost considerably more. Enquiries to:

Miss A. Horder, Kwahu Hospital
Box 27, Mpraeso

Notes from Travels in Nigeria (from page 3)

Considerable time was spent with Brethren Winslow and Coon, who are responsible for getting the New Adventist College of West Africa under way. In spite of almost insurmountable difficulties they definitely plan to open in October as announced. They have rented quarters to use while our own buildings are under construction.

For the Sabbath we went up to Ife Hospital. Brother and Sister Harju welcomed us into their home. We were happy to meet two new families who had just arrived to help carry the heavy hospital load. They are Dr. and Mrs. Gard and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Courser and family. Brother Courser is a X-ray and Laboratory technician, but when we arrived we found him out at the well working with his own hands to improve the water supply of the hospital. We were pleased to see a very happy spirit among the workers there. Dr. Gentsler is in charge since Dr. Nagel has gone on leave. Within the next few days they were expecting two more doctors to arrive, namely: Dr. Longo and Dr. Owens. Dr. Owens will later go to Jengre Hospital to succeed Dr. Peterson when he leaves early next year. At the meeting of the Hospital Board we were gratified to see that the reports showed unprecedented advances in finances and in services rendered. On Sabbath the lovely hospital church was nearly full of worshippers, although I was told that all the children were having their services in another building.

In writing of our trip to West Nigeria, we should not fail to mention the work of the Voice of Prophecy. Pastor J. M. A. Adeoye is ably carrying the work of Principal during Pastor Hughes' furlough. He has planned a series of rallies in the large cities of the Western Region. It was our privilege to attend the one held in Ibadan's largest hall.

Now we are back in the office facing a mountain of letters that need answering. We have come back with new courage having met our brethren throughout Nigeria, and witnessed their faith, loyalty and devotion. God is going to work with His people in Nigeria.

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