

American Union

Newsletter

Volume 43, No. 4 – April 2026

MAY IS FAMILY MONTH

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7.

Dear brethren in the faith, Receive our warm greetings. We pray that the peace and

grace of our Lord Jesus will be with every church and every family.

We are pleased to inform you that the American Union has coordinated the printing and shipping of the *Readings for the Family Month*, created by the General Conference to strengthen the spiritual life in our homes.

In a spirit of unity and cooperation, we invite all who receive the *Readings* to give special offerings for this project and the AU Family Department. The cost is \$2 per book, and the offerings should be sent to the AU treasurer. The booklets will be sent on April 14 to the church-



es, groups, and families in the American Union.

We deeply value your continued support and your commitment to the Lord's work. May God abundantly bless each participant and prosper every effort made for His glory.

With Christian appreciation,

*Pastor Edison Henriquez
American Union Secretary*

Family Month
May 2026

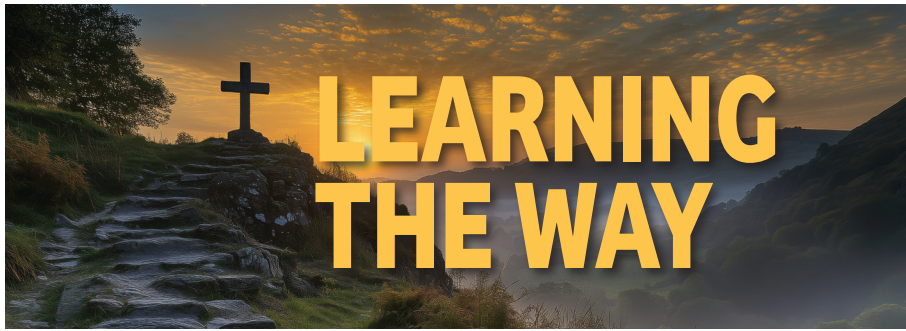
Man

After the Heart of Jesus



READING TITLES AND DATES

1. **The Image of God in Man's Identity** (Sabbath, May 2)
2. **The Hidden Enemies** (Thursday, May 7)
3. **Stealth Destroyers** (Friday, May 8)
4. **Challenges for Life** (Sabbath, May 9)
5. **The Identity of Man in Times of Crisis** (Sunday, May 10)
6. **Almost Forgotten Values** (Sabbath, May 16)
7. **Morally Upright** (Sabbath, May 23)
8. **A Heart after God's Own Heart** (Sabbath, May 30)



Pastor Larry Watts
Norman Park, Georgia

It was about 25 years before 1588 when the power of the universal church was broken by the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Mary I of England ("Bloody Mary") was in the middle of her five and one half years of reign which was marked by efforts to restore Roman Catholicism as the religion of the state with the burning of over 280 Protestants.

A boy was observed walking home after a martyr fire had brightly burned in Smithfield, England. Someone asked him: "My boy, why were you there?"

Like a true follower of the Lamb, he replied, "I want to learn the way."

Bloody Mary had forbidden the proclamation of the simple gospel. During this same time, Lawrence Sanders was constrained to obey God rather than man. When sentenced to death before the Lord Chancellor, Sanders said: "Welcome be it, whatever the will of God shall be, either life or death; I tell you truly I have learned to die." On February 8, 1555, he kissed the stake to which he was about to be chained and burned, saying, "Welcome the cross of Christ, welcome, everlasting life."

Do we think that such stories belong to another world? Shame on us if we think so. If, however, it is our eternal passion to press on to know Christ, we shall soon discover that the crucified Lord must have crucified followers. Do we glory in the cross, and do we know what that means? The apostle Paul declared, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14.

What way is that? It is the way of the cross. Jessie Brown Pounds (1861-1921) wrote "The Way of the Cross Leads Home" in 1906.

1 I must needs go home by the way of the cross;
There's no other way but this.
I shall ne'er get sight of the gates of light
If the way of the cross I miss.

Refrain:

The way of the cross leads home.
The way of the cross leads home.
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,
The way of the cross leads home.

2 I must needs go home in the blood-sprinkled way,
The path that the Saviour trod,
If I ever climb to the heights sublime,
Where the soul is at home with God.
[Refrain]

3 Then I bid farewell to the way of the world,
To walk in it nevermore;
For the Lord says, "Come," and I seek my home
Where He waits at the open door.
[Refrain]

To glory in the way of the cross is simply to put God before self. Psalm 25:12 puts it this way: "What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose." In other words, when I get my way, I can never be sure it is God's will. But when I yield my will to Him, God will lead me in the way that He shall choose.

When self is crucified, only then can you truly say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

Then we can sing with a heart full of thanks that "I love that old cross where the Dearest and Best for a world of lost sinners was slain." And that lost sinner means me.

What killed Jesus? Was it the cross? Did He die from loss of blood and the brutal beating? Many sermons are preached this time of year about the great pains of crucifixion. But it was not the cross and/or the beating that killed Jesus.

Horatio Bonner (1808-1889), "the prince of Scottish hymn writers" and author of the well-known hymn, "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," is said to have had a very impressive dream of the soldier who was hammering the nails into Christ's hand and, putting his hand on the soldier's shoulder, pleaded with him, "Don't do this wicked thing." And when the soldier turned to look at him, he saw his own face.

"But it was not the spear thrust, it was not the pain of the cross, that caused the death of Jesus. That cry, uttered 'with a loud voice' (Matthew 27:50; Luke 23:46), at the moment of death, the stream of blood and water that flowed from His side, declared that He died of a broken heart. His heart was broken by mental anguish. He was slain by the sin of the world." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 772.

"He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" John 7:38-39.

If we are ever to receive the latter rain and enter into the city of God, it must be by the way of the cross. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13-14.

It is in self-denial that self is crucified. "The hope of the church is the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord must breathe upon the dry bones, that they may live." —*Review and Herald*, January 17, 1893.





Elder Inayat Daniel Saleebi
Bronx, New York

[Bible verses are from the *New King James Version*.]

The Sabbath is not just a day of worship; it is also an eternal promise of financial prosperity. The blessings of the Sabbath are generally considered to be spiritual blessings in the heavenly kingdom, but the sacred Scriptures state that God has promised to bless those who keep the Sabbath holy with physical prosperity in this life.

The promise reads as follows: “If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.” Isaiah 58:13-14.

According to these verses, the first reward for keeping the Sabbath is that God “will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth.” This is a metaphor meaning to be honored. God will increase the honor of faithful people in the society where they live as they exercise the qualities of honesty, integrity, piety, godliness, charity, trustworthiness, sincerity and genuine leadership. “You shall increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.” Psalm 71:21. God knows that everyone desires to be respected.

The second reward is that God will “feed you with the heritage of Jacob

your father,” meaning to increase your prosperity. A wealthy father is able to leave his property or wealth to his children as an inheritance, and Jacob was a very wealthy man who could do this.

Miracles for the patriarchs

When Jacob had to leave his father’s house, he was not rich at all. He moved into his uncle’s house and managed his flocks. After completing his service to Laban for his two wives, Jacob agreed to continue working for his uncle, with an agreement that the spotted and speckled goats and cattle were to be his wages. What happened? Most of the animals began to be spotted and speckled. When Laban saw that Jacob’s herds and flocks were becoming very numerous, he changed the wages. Jacob told his wives, “And you know that with all my might I have served your father. Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me. If he said thus: ‘The speckled shall be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: ‘The streaked shall be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore streaked. So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.” Genesis 31:6-9.

As he remained faithful to God and worked hard for his uncle, Jacob was also blessed to use scientific breeding methods to manage the flocks and herds. Although Laban changed

the agreement ten times to increase his own animals, every change produced results in Jacob’s favor. Laban was upset about Jacob’s increasing prosperity, but God was the One controlling the business. “Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.” Genesis 30:43.

Jacob’s prosperity was a miracle of God. Still today, God performs miracles of financial prosperity in the lives of those who faithfully keep His Sabbath day holy, just as He performed miracles for Jacob. God gives His people divine wisdom and teaches them practical ways to manage their goods and property, for “Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all.” 1 Chronicles 29:12. That is why God said, If you honor My Sabbath, I will increase your honor and riches. “And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.” Isaiah 58:14.

God had made Jacob’s grandfather Abraham wealthy as well. “So he [Eliezer] said, I am Abraham’s servant. The Lord has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver



and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.” Genesis 24:34-35.

Furthermore, during the Israelites’ wilderness journey, God rained manna from the sky for their health and well-being every day for forty years, with the exception that this food did not fall on the Sabbath day. God rained down double the amount of manna on the sixth day, and it did not spoil when it was kept for the Sabbath. This was also a great miracle of prosperity!



The Sabbath of the land

"And the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food.'" "And if you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?" then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest.'" Leviticus 25:1-7, 20-22.

When God commanded that in the seventh year there should be no sowing or reaping, it would seem as though there would be great loss; but the people's obedience to this command was the basis for their prosperi-

ty and wealth—like the five loaves and two fish that miraculously multiplied as the food was handed out to five thousand people.

The sabbath of the land was a mosaic sabbath; and if the mosaic sabbath



was so bountiful, the blessings of the weekly Sabbath would be much more prosperous!

But, unfortunately, God's people did not obey this command. The results were that the government collapsed, the prosperity ended, and they were taken captive to Babylon!

Let us look at one more example. Jesus' disciples had been fishing all night, trying everything they knew, but without success. They were totally exhausted and discouraged. In the morning, Jesus came and told Simon

Peter, "'Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.' But Simon answered and said to Him, 'Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.' And when they had done this, they caught a large number of fish, and their net was breaking." Luke 5:4-6.

When Jesus came, it was the same sea, the same water, and the same net; but through their obedience, they obtained a huge measure of wealth, prosperity, and joy. All the fatigue of the previous night vanished.

"So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you." Exodus 23:25. In this verse, too, the blessing of bread and water means that our God is a God of prosperity. He never wants His people to be poor. Therefore, He has told them how to prosper: Honor My Sabbath, "And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed

you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken." Isaiah 58:14.

God bless you.

The *American Union Newsletter* is published monthly by the International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement, American Union. It is complimentary for members and friends and carries items of interest submitted by believers. We reserve the right to make changes as necessary and to refuse to print certain items. To submit news or articles, send your item in an email to info@sda1888.org.

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