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It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies (Job 28:15–18, emphasis supplied).

“There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel” (Proverbs 20:15, emphasis supplied).

Wisdom and knowledge are of tremendous value. Whenever a person can genuinely be considered an expert in any area of life, he or she has power to gain wealth—to enjoy perhaps a higher quality of life. This basic principle, of course, applies to life in general. . . . Yet how much more true is it when eternity is involved?

We cannot earn eternal life; it is a gift God offers to us. The jewels involved in eternal matters do not consist of mere earthly treasures—they are priceless gems of truth that have been entrusted to a few qualified people throughout the history of the world.

What are these jewels? Can you be trusted with keeping them safe? Can I? Are we qualified for the job? What are the prerequisites for it?

There are so many churches today, all claiming to be the chosen people of God, handling the sacred truths from Heaven. . . . Are all faiths claiming to be the church of God really His church? Is the Creator of the universe actually trusting them with His precious gems of truth?

Does He have one church or many churches? How do we know?

We find the answer in the Scriptures: “There is one body, and one Spirit. . . . One Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:4, 5).

One body

Inspiration tells us that there is ONE BODY and ONE FAITH. Yet this may mean something different than most people think.

We see through Scripture that God has always had a chosen people. God is very selective; not all who call upon Him are His. Christ says that many are called but few are chosen (Matthew 20:16).

Christ will soon say to many, “Come unto me” (Matthew 11:28; 16:24; Mark 1:17; John 7:37, and so forth) yet He will say to others, “Depart from me” (Matthew 7:23; 25:41).

The “coming” and “departing” indicate a separation.

Separation

There have been many separations throughout history. Those who follow God are always in the minority, and when there is a separation, the minority always leaves.

Examples: Noah and his family had to be separated from iniquity and from those who were practicing iniquity. “God looked upon the earth, and . . . it was corrupt. . . . All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth” (Genesis 6:12).

Was there anyone faithful to God? Anyone left?

Yes, “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Verse 9).

“And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come. . . . I will destroy them” (Verse 13).

God separated Noah and his family from the rest of the antediluvians, so that Noah and his family might be saved.

“And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation” (Genesis 7:1).

“And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him” (Verse 5).

If you were living in the days of Noah, what would you do? Would you join the crowd? Would you be embarrassed to go into the ark with Noah when everybody was ridiculing him?

Abraham

Several hundred years had passed since the Flood, and the
children of Noah multiplied. And again, the earth and its inhabitants became corrupt.

The Lord chose Abraham. He said: “Get thee out, . . . and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee” (Genesis 12:1, 2).

What did Abraham do? He “departed, as he Lord had spoken unto him” (Verse 4).

Abraham had to depart from his father’s house (from friends and family) in order for God to bless him. He separated himself. He withdrew.

Why did he separate from them? Because God said to do so. Isn’t that good enough?

Moreover, he separated from wickedness in order to render obedience to God and to worship Him properly.

Let’s get out the “magnifying glass” (the Spirit of Prophecy) on this point:

The Lord “chose Abraham, of the line of Shem, and made him the keeper of His law for future generations. . . . Even his father’s household, by whom the knowledge of God had been preserved, were yielding to the seductive influences surrounding them, and they ‘served other gods’ than Jehovah.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 125. [Emphasis supplied.]

“[God] communicated His will to Abraham and gave him a distinct knowledge of the requirements of His law and of the salvation that would be accomplished through Christ.”—Ibid.

Notice, God’s will was communicated to Abraham and not to everybody. He communicates His will through His chosen ones.

“In order that God might qualify him for his great work as the keeper of the sacred oracles, Abraham must be separated from the associations of his early life. The influence of kindred and friends would interfere with the training which the Lord purposed to give His servant. Now that Abraham was, in a special sense, connected with heaven, he must dwell among strangers. His character must be peculiar, differing from all the world.”—Ibid., p. 126. [Emphasis supplied.]

Why do we have to be different? Why can’t we be like everybody else? If we are not peculiar, different, and separate, we do not qualify to be the keepers of the sacred oracles, the protectors of the jewels.

Are you willing to be a keeper of the faith today?

We need to find out who are the keepers of the faith today and join them. The keepers of the faith are those who are standing for the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (the testimony of Jesus and the Spirit of Prophecy). Revelation 14:12; 12:17; 19:10.

There are good people in all churches, but that is no reason for me to be satisfied going simply where it is convenient. I need to be where the truth is kept and honored.

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve. . . . As for me and
my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish” (James 3:13–15).

The world is full of false wisdom which is earthly, sensual, and devilish. Those who yearn to separate from that polluting atmosphere need to begin training their thoughts to run in a different channel—to develop a higher, heavenly way of thinking.

“What have you been reading? How have you been employing your time? Have you been seeking to study the sacred oracles in order that you may hear the voice of God speaking to you out of His word? The world is deluged with books which sow the seeds of skepticism, infidelity, and atheism, and to a larger or less degree you have been learning your lessons from these books, and they are magical books. They put God out of the mind, and separate the soul from the true Shepherd. . . .

“What a mass of fictitious reading is there in the world, to fill the mind with fancies and follies, thus creating a disrelish for the words of truth and righteousness! The mind is thus unfitted for solemn thought, for patient, persevering investigation of the Scriptures, which is the guide book by which you are to be directed to the paradise of God.

“Much is written in regard to gaining earthly treasure, as though the wealth of this world would buy us a passport into heaven. What volumes of history have been written, filled with the daring, presumptuous achievements of men whose lives do not throw one glimmer of light upon the pathway that leads to the better country!”—Messages to Young People, pp. 276, 277.

Although the above statement refers to books, obviously today the warning would apply even more pointedly to much of what we find in most videos, DVD’s, and on many websites.

God’s chosen people

History has been repeating itself. Martin Luther withdrew himself from the large, established church, and so did all the great reformers. Actually, many were killed and others were cast out. Separation from the apostate church was necessary in order for God’s people to render obedience to Him.

“Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14).

Who are the chosen of God? Those who obey His voice. You cannot obey until you listen and hear what He is trying to tell you.

In order to follow any instructions, you need to be able to hear what they are. But you can’t even hear the instructions until you step away from all the excess “noise” that is found everywhere. Once you separate yourself from it, you can finally hear God’s voice. His assurance is: “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:5, 6).

The Scriptures call the church a people, a kingdom, a nation. In other texts they are called a “congregation,” as in the “congregation of Israel” (Exodus 12:3, 6, 19, 47). The word “church” was only introduced in the New Testament.

The church is organized

Some believe that God is not leading a specific organization but, rather, just individual Christians. Is this true? God is a God of order, not of disorder. Christ, during His ministry on earth, did not scatter disciples—He gathered them.

We see clearly in the Scriptures how particular God is about His church. For example, Christ has specific instructions to the church on dealing with sin (Matthew 18:17).

We are to take certain matters to the church. How can this be done if the church is composed of scattered believers?

Based on this text, we know that Christ has His own church.
The church must be organized and must assemble together. The church has obligations, such as to keep itself pure.

The church must reprove sin and sinners.

The disciples, in following Christ’s instructions when giving the Gospel message (Matthew 28:19, 20) brought believers into the church (Acts 2:47). It was not enough to preach and baptize; they had to confirm the believers in the faith and establish them in the church. Please read Acts 2:37–47. This text shows a clear order of actions taken by the apostles in confirming a believer, as follows:

Conviction, repentance — The believers were “pricked in their heart,” and they showed repentance for their past life of sin.

Teach, Learn—Teaching of the Word comes before baptism (according to Matthew 28:19).

Believe—Accept, practice, live the Faith. He that believes is baptized. “They that gladly received his word were baptized” (Acts 2:41).

Baptism—The disciples were instructed by Christ to teach and baptize new believers. Only after they were taught and demonstrated that they believed, accepted, and lived the faith, then they were baptized.

Gifts of the Spirit—God gives to believers the gifts of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:5–8)—after baptism.

Being added to the church—The new converts were fellowshipped (were admitted) to the church. They did not become independent Christians. They belonged to the church.

Continue in the apostles’ doctrine—This means: do not give up the faith; and continue growing in the knowledge of the truth. This also includes sharing the faith.

Fellowship—Continue having fellowship with the apostles and other believers of Christ’s body. This means that the new Christian attends church services and participates in the church activities, programs. Church hopping does not fulfill this command.

Breaking of bread—This means that the church members who are in regular standing in the church partake of the Lord’s Supper. Here we see clearly that those who have not been baptized, who have not been added to the church, and who do not fellowship together, are not to participate in the breaking of bread. Taking part of the Lord’s Supper without going through the steps above is out of gospel order.

Praising God—The believers continued to have a personal devotional life by prayer and study of the Word. They were not shy about their faith. They praised God continually. When you praise God, you share your faith.

The believers were first called Christians in Antioch. “And it came to pass, that a whole year [Barnabas and Paul] assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26, emphasis supplied).

Thus the believers assembled with the church of God, not just with any church.

The church of God is a distinct body of believers (1 Corinthians 10:32). The apostle Paul makes a clear distinction between Jew, Gentile, and the Christian church. The church is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18).

The church is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). This text says that the church of God is the foundation and the pillar of the truth. A building cannot stand without a solid foundation and without the pillar or pillars. Here is a simple equation: True Church of God = Ground and Pillar of Truth. If we modify one side of the equation, the other side is no longer valid. If a church tampers with (modifies, ignores, eliminates, attempts to replace) the “ground” or the “pillar” of the truth, that church cannot be the true church. At the same time, this Scripture is telling us that if we want to know the truth, we will find it in the true church.

What distinguishes the true followers of Christ? They render explicit obedience to the Lord, “that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).

Why not then declare in your heart: “I choose today to be a keeper of the faith. I choose to be with other keepers of the faith. I choose to be with God’s chosen. I am going to allow God to make me trustworthy to care for His gems of truth and develop a character that rightly represents the eternal jewels that need to be sacredly protected in a corrupt world.”
I recently read a story of a little boy named Johnny. “He and his sister were visiting their grandparents at their farm one day. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods; but he could never hit the target. Disappointed, he headed back for dinner.

“As he was walking back, he saw Grandma’s pet duck. Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. Johnny was stunned, shocked, and grieved! In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile; only to see his sister watching! Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing.

“After lunch the next day Grandma said, ‘Sally, let’s wash the dishes.’ But Sally said, ‘Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen.’ Then she whispered to Johnny, ‘Remember the duck?’ So Johnny did the dishes. Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go and play in the park, but Grandma said, ‘I’m sorry but I need them to help make supper.’ Sally just smiled and said, ‘Well it’s okay because Johnny told me he wanted to do it with you by himself.’ Then, she whispered again, ‘Remember the duck?’ So Sally went to the park and Johnny stayed to help. After several days of Johnny doing both of their chores, he finally couldn’t stand it any longer. He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck. Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug, and said, ‘Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let guilt make a slave of you’” (Author unknown).

Guilt or remorse can make us do strange things. However, before we go any further on this subject, we need to know what guilt actually is.

**What is Guilt?**

The sense of guilt is an emotional warning signal. Its purpose is to warn us that we’ve done something wrong or neglected to do something we should have done. Our concept of right and wrong is predominantly acquired during our childhood years and develops over our lifetime. These moral convictions make up our conscience. The feeling of guilt results from going against the grain of our convictions.

The word guilt is derived from the Old English noun “gylt,” which means “crime.” It is true that not all those who are guilty in the legal sense feel remorse for their crime. But in any earthly government, guilt is not determined by feelings but by the violation of enacted law. This same principle is seen in God’s govern-

**God’s Remedy for Guilt**

**BY GERSON ROBLES**
ment. Paul wrote, “I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘you shall not covet’” (Romans 7:7, NKJV). And he also wrote, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Romans 3:19, NKJV).

So one thing is for sure—we all suffer from guilt, and we can all tell how displeasing it feels. But how do you get rid of it? The Bible tells us of two ways to deal with guilt and their ultimate results. God’s remedy for guilt is called “godly sorrow,” and the other is called “sorrow of the world.”

“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Corinthians 7:10, NKJV).

The sorrow of the world

Guilt or its associated feelings of grief is here called the “sorrow of the world.” This, the Bible says, leads to death. Over 100 years ago, Ellen White wrote, “Many of the diseases from which men suffer are the result of mental depression. Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life forces and to invite decay and death” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 241).

Today science is catching up with this amazing insight into how the mind affects the body. Numerous studies are now being published in medical journals showing the way that diseases are related to mental depression. But how do human beings deal with emotions of guilt?

Because feelings of guilt are unpleasant, many try to ignore their “conscience prickings” by attempting to silence guilt in various ways. The first three of these are found in the book of Genesis and show what Adam and Eve did once they sinned.

Self-correction

“And...[the woman] took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Genesis 3:6, 7).

Whenever we sin, we lose something. Here, Adam and Eve lost their innocence. Their shining robes of pure white light—which symbolized their innocence—also disappeared. There they stood, ashamed in each other's naked presence; ashamed and naked before God! In the Bible, nakedness is associated with shame (see Revelation 3:18). With a guilty conscience, they tried to make up for their loss by practicing self-correction. In desperation, they sewed for themselves fig-leaf garments, but nothing they did could take away the sting of a violated conscience.

Many today are attempting to make up for their nakedness of soul in the same way Adam and Eve did. A sense of shame moves them to do some “guilty-church-going” or perhaps some “guilty-missionary-work.” Others will attempt to counterbalance their sin by some “guilty-Bible-study” or even some “guilty-praying.” Yet all our greatest endeavors will never make up for the loss sustained.

Hiding from Reality

Adam and Eve soon found out that their fig-leaf garments were inadequate. “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden” (Genesis 3:8).

Hiding from reality will afford a temporary release, but reality never goes away. When Adam and Eve hid themselves from God, they did so because of shame and fear, “And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself” (Verses 9, 10).

Today, young and old will try to hide from the reality of their guilt or shame by secluding themselves from others. Fear of rebuke or exposure can move a person to become a hermit, even in his or her own home.

Another way we attempt to escape reality is by numbing the mind. Since a pricking conscience is felt in the mind, many of us will try to silence the resounding voice of guilt. In the world, some turn to drugs or alcohol for release. Others turn to sex and immorality. It is easy to see that these things worsen the problem, but how are Christians in danger of hiding from reality?

In Christian circles, we use milder measures to achieve similar results. Movies will bring some release, yet the release only lasts as long as the movie plays. Other things we may do in excess are eating, sleeping or listening to music.

I once knew a lady where I used to work who listened to music all day—literally. In the morning, she woke up to her radio alarm clock. Once up, she switched her stereo on and got ready for work. She then hopped in the car and headed for work listening to her favorite radio station. While at work, she plugged her ears with headphones and listened to her favorite music. The cycle was the same on her way...
responsibility for all decisions he made in behalf of the country. Likewise, God holds us accountable for the choices we make based on our moral convictions.

Sanctifying sin

Have you ever heard anyone say, “I did it, but God understands”? or “I’m a Christian, and the motive I have is holy.” Or maybe you’ve heard the expression, “God knows my heart.” All these come in an effort to sanctify sin, or to make sin appear holy by bringing God into the picture. These are all forms of self-deception and although they may appear to lessen guilt, they actually add deceit to our list of sins.

Comparison

Comparing ourselves with others is a fanciful way of making us look better. The thought will cross your mind, “I did it, but look at everyone else that’s doing it” or, “I’m not as bad as some others.” Jesus spoke of a Pharisee who compared himself with a person whom he thought was guiltier than he. In his own estimation, he appeared quite a good sort, “God, I thank You that I am not like other men” (Luke 18:11, NKJV), he said. Here was his problem; his opinion of himself was formed from looking at others, rather than from comparing himself to Christ.

Minimizing sin

All of the above-mentioned points are attempts to lessen our guilt. It is easy to think of our sin as small by looking at how others view what we’ve done on a scale of 1 to 10. But we have to realize that there is no small sin in God’s eyes, only varying degrees of guilt. The more light and understanding we possess—the guiltier we become when we transgress that light.

The sorrow of the world can only lead to one place. Ultimately, all guilty sinners will suffer eternal death. Is there a way of escape? What is God’s remedy for guilt?

Godly sorrow

The Bible tells us that “godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation.” We will now take a brief look at the way God would have us deal with guilt.

Identify and acknowledge your guilt

Why do you feel guilty? Is it something you’ve done or didn’t do? Is it something you’ve said? Or maybe, is it something you’ve assumed is wrong or someone else has said is wrong? Whatever the reason, you must be honest with yourself. Identify the cause of your guilt. In the little book Steps to Christ is written this clear-cut statement, “Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance” (Steps to Christ, pp. 37, 38).

Accept the consequences

Once you’ve searched your heart and understand the cause of your guilt, you need to recognize the consequences and accept them. What harm have you done to yourself and others? To every action there are consequences—this is natural law. When we don’t accept the consequences of our actions, we are not dealing truly with our own soul.

Realize the enormity of sin

The Bible describes sin as a mystery (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Ellen White wrote regarding sin, “Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin” (The Great Controversy, p. 493). But while sin is a mystery in the sense that no cause can be shown for its existence, yet we are still counseled to understand

home and was only broken when she fell asleep to the radio playing. Every day was the same—she was living in her own unreal music-world.

Passing the buck

The third thing Adam and Eve did to escape guilt was to shift the blame on each other and God. “The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat’ ” (Verse 12, NKJV).

Because influence is the strongest between those who are the most intimate in their association, all it takes is a moment of weakness to give in to the promptings of the other. It is true that the strong influence of others may have had a bearing on our guilt. We can clearly see, however, that God does not excuse sin on account of how strong the temptation was. Sin is inexcusable.

The expression “passing the buck” refers to the action of transferring blame to another person. U.S. president Harry S. Truman kept a sign on his desk with the words, “The buck stops here.” This sign indicated that he accepted
its abhorrent nature. Consider this statement, “We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life” (Steps to Christ, p. 23).

So how are we to know the real nature of our sins? Ellen White continued writing, “The exceeding sinfulness of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross” (Ibid., p. 31). What is it about the cross that reveals the dreadful nature of sin?

At the cross we see God’s hatred for sin, in that He did not spare His only begotten Son from suffering its dreadful curse, and we see the remedy so graciously provided for our guilt.

The Man of Sorrows

God’s remedy for guilt is Jesus. By transferring our guilt on Himself and suffering the punishment due to us, Christ has made us free. This act of Jesus in taking our guilt is worthy of our most solemn consideration.

As Christ was walking towards the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples, He was fulfilling the prophecies of Isaiah 53. Notice carefully the following texts:

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”

“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

“He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.”

“He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.”

“He hath poured out his soul unto death.”

“He was numbered with the transgressors.”

Jesus was called, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). But, “The holy Son of God had no sins or griefs of His own to bear. He was bearing the griefs of others; for on Him was laid the iniquities of us all” (The Signs of the Times, August 14, 1879).

“[Jesus] took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me’ (Matthew 26:37). Christ was suffering as a result of our sins, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:17).

While at the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus “prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44).

Sweating blood is a rare medical condition known as “hematidrosis.” It is caused by intense mental contemplation or agony. What was it that grieved Jesus so much? “Christ was the prince of sufferers; but His suffering was from a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that through familiarity with evil, man had become blinded to its enormity” (The Desire of Ages, pp. 752, 753).

This mental suffering was intensified by the separation our sins caused between Him and His Father. “It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s wrath upon Him as man’s substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God” (Ibid., p. 753).

Recently, the story of Jesus, physical pain was made popular by a Hollywood movie. But when you start to look into the cause of Christ’s death, a different picture begins to emerge. “The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt” (Ibid). “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” (Ibid., p. 772).

Here is our remedy. God has given us His Son to take away our guilt. When, in view of the cross, we acknowledge our guilt, deep sorrow for sin will flood our soul, and God will cause us to turn away from it in disgust. Then, our confessions will be specific and to the point, and we will acknowledge the very things of which we are guilty.

To all who truly repent and confess. Christ has promised forgiveness. In the story at the beginning of this article, Johnny let guilt make a slave of him. How are you going to deal with your guilt, dear reader?
In this third and final part in our series on Adoniram and Ann Judson, we will focus especially on Ann.

Believe it or not: This was “a party girl” at heart

Nancy (Ann) Hasseltine was a year and half younger than Adoniram. A charming favorite of her father, Ann was cheerful, buoyant, and clever at getting her own way. Although the family consisted of churchgoers, while in her teens this energetic young lady developed a taste for social activities and dancing. Lively and vivacious, she could not seem to resist the enchantment of worldly fun and frolicking. The perils involved in such a lifestyle were evidently not perceived by Ann’s parents at the time, and they did not forbid their daughter from pursuing such activities.

When Ann was 15—five years before Adoniram would eventually meet her—a new preceptor, Mr. Abraham Burnham, came to take charge of the academy she was attending. He was an excellent teacher who made a deep impression on the students.

Ann did not realize it, but under Mr. Burnham’s instruction something inside of her subtly began to change. One morning as she was dressing for church, she noticed a particular sentence in a book entitled *Strictures on Female Education*. The statement seemed to jump out at her: “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” The teenage girl began to reflect on her partying life of mirth and began to pray that the Lord would help her to become more reverent and serious. She read Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* and was stirred by the victory of Christian who adhered to the narrow path and was carried through his trials and finally admitted to heaven.

Yet, try as she might, however, Ann seemed powerless to resist the alluring invitations of friends to continue attending lighthearted social events. Her troubled conscience would disturb her afterwards to consider the wasteful vanity of these outings.

Struggle and striving

Around this time, under Mr. Burnham’s stimulus, a religious revival began to occur in town and Ann attended the meetings. Her feelings were stirred as her heart agonized through the Christian dilemma depicted in Romans 7:18, 19, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” She used to attend the meetings seated alone in the farthest corner of the room, ashamedly concealing her flowing tears.

The Holy Spirit was doing His work—and before long, Ann lost all taste for the shallow amusements that had once been her weakness. She knew that she absolutely must have a new heart and a new spirit or perish forever.

Finally, when Mr. Burnham visited the Hasseltine home to share with the whole family the principles of how the Holy Spirit convicts the heart and why it is so important to accept the wooing of Christ, Ann quietly left the room. She went out
to the garden to weep uncontrollably. She knew she was a captive of Satan, in bondage to the fanciful whims of her pleasure-loving friends. She also realized that if she did not respond wholeheartedly to the call of Christ now, her soul was at risk. Her whole experience could be shipwrecked and her conscience become hardened and her discernment blinded.

**Seclusion**

Over the next two or three weeks, Ann secluded herself in her room to read and cry for the mercy of God. At first she began to feel hostile against God for being so holy. Then she paused to consider more deeply the character of Jesus, coming to realize that our compassionate Redeemer does hate sin, but thankfully He does not hate sinners. He loves them!

Suddenly, new motives came to Ann's heart. She began to want to avoid sinning, not out of fear of hell, but because she feared to displease a loving, merciful God and to grieve His Holy Spirit. A new urge came upon her to appreciate the advantages He was willing to bestow upon her if she would make the pursuit of useful knowledge and spiritual refreshment her life's aim.

How often is the case that when a person comes to the Lord, he or she needs to spend some period of time alone for a while. . . . We hear of the experience of the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, but many are not aware that shortly after his conversion and baptism, Paul departed to the wilderness for a while to “digest” and assimilate the truth that had now begun to affect his life so deeply. The apostle testifies: “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them
which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem” (Galatians 1:15–18).

This period of solitude may require an investment of hours, days, weeks, or even years, but whatever the length, how important it is that the soul invest precious time of undivided attention to commune with the One who has implanted the powerful seed of eternal life in the heart.

**Baptism and commitment**

The conversion of Ann made a powerful impression on the rest of the Hasseltine family. Her brother John was baptized on the same day and soon afterwards her three sisters were baptized as well.

From that time on, the life of Ann became more fruitful, mature, and productive. She opened a school to educate others. Then at the age of 21 she was eventually swept up by what was viewed as a wild, romantic undertaking: To become the missionary wife of brave, dedicated Adoniram Judson.

**Ann’s character**

What was it like in the mission field? The vibrant energies of this young bride so deeply consecrated to God were challenged to flow in a rushing stream of self-sacrifice and never-ending patience. Years were to pass before the couple was ever to see even a trickle of interest in spiritual matters from the faces of the heathen among whom they had pledged themselves to dwell and serve.

Did Ann murmur at God’s often difficult providence? No! Even in disease, she persevered gracefully. When she fell seriously ill and there were no doctors in Rangoon [the former capital of Burma], Ann sailed alone all the way to Madras, India, rather than have her husband leave his sacred post of duty in order to accompany her. Upon her return, it is evident that even then she was not thinking of herself. She brought back a seven-year-old orphan girl to join the family.

How did Ann respond to bitter trials? With patience, fortitude, and continued trust in God.

Because of the life of toil and hardship, the Judsons’ sweet-natured, beautiful firstborn son was to die at the tender age of less than 8 months. Later, Ann did not even live to see her lovely little daughter die as a toddler—she was to precede that second child of her womb in death herself.

The Judsons had surely been helped by British pioneers such as Felix Carey who had paved the way for the entrance of the gospel into Burma. Yet those missionaries had already left the area or entered into government service. Adoniram and Ann were to see the first converts and establish the first church.

If it had not been for Ann’s tireless efforts during the war that plagued Burmua, undoubtedly her husband’s life would have been lost. The courage and determination of this faithful wife kept the mission going and her husband’s ministry was to endure for decades more. Thousands of Burmese were to be converted to Christ, and Ann’s selfless contribution was to serve as a source of inspiration to countless future missionaries.

In Asian society, there would have been no way that the ministry of Adoniram alone could have been effective among the women of Burma. Ann was ever at her husband’s right hand to be an active partner in laboring for other women. She had felt the same “call” from God as Adoniram had. She was as fully engaged in teaching and personal work as he was, being viewed by many of the Burmese converts as their spiritual mother.

The life of Ann was a great example of strong womanhood. She did not challenge her husband’s authority, yet neither was she content to be the passively delicate, pampered stereotype of females in her generation. Her zeal and active spirit for Christ are evident in every aspect of her life. Ann Judson’s writings reflect a tremendous awareness of the majesty of God and her own unworthiness.

The Judsons did not have the slightest presumption that God “needed” them in Burma. They simply felt privileged to be used in His service for as long as He would see fit, before others would be raised up in their place. The couple loved one another and they loved their biological and spiritual children. Above all, they loved their Lord and Master Jesus Christ who had suffered so much for them—and for us today as well. May all who have been touched by the wonder of that wondrous, forgiving love be inspired to take action as did the Judsons. . . .

Dear youth, whether it be in your own home town or someday in the remotest mountain village abroad, why not choose to allow God’s light and love to shine through you? Why not seek to enlist His powerful help to brighten the corner where you are!
So you think you’re modest? Believe it or not, but the Bible actually defines modesty. In biblical times the dress of God’s people changed very little. The common people wore an inner garment usually made of soft linen and an outer garment made of sturdy material. The inner garment was more or less like a poncho, that is, a single piece of cloth folded over with a hole cut out for the head. This garment was then wrapped close about the body and then tied at the waist with a belt. It was sleeveless and reached down only to about the knees. Over this was worn an outer garment or robe either one piece or sewn together. This garment reached down to just above the ankle and loosely hung from the shoulders about the body.

A very interesting verse in the book of John mentions the outer garment. “Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea (John 21:7). The literal translation is that he did gird on the outer coat. Now, before you jump to conclusions, let me explain something. Peter wasn’t sunbathing there. While working in the house or way out on the lake among close friends, it was common for men to remove the outer garment. We have this example of Peter, and also the example of Christ at the last supper. However, to be seen this way out in public was a great shame, because you would have been considered naked.

Biblical modesty and nakedness again seem foreign to our own concepts. It was also a sign of extreme poverty to be without a coat or outer robe. Remember all those admonitions in scripture to feed the hungry and clothe the naked? Well, those people had inner garments on, but they just would have been too embarrassed to even go out of the house and ask for help. These people probably had put their only garment up as surety and then through some misfortune had been unable to pay. So, literally they lost the clothes off their back.

Manufacturing garments was a lengthy and tedious process. Just to spin enough thread to make a garment would have taken a considerable amount of time, and then it still had to be woven together. It took weeks to months to make a garment, and people took very good care of the ones they had, even passing them down to the next generation.

Persons of rank or financial status could be readily discerned by what they were wearing. The Pharisees made use of their status as priests to greatly enrich their garments. So beautiful and luxurious were these garments that they alone would have commanded great respect and admiration from the common people.

So, what did the clothes of God’s people look like exactly? Well, that is the problem—we don’t know exactly, but we can get a good idea from the paintings of the Dura-Europos synagogue. These paintings, made within an hundred years or so of the completion of the New Testament, give us some idea of the style of dress worn in biblical times.

Basically the outer garment hung from the shoulders and then was wrapped loosely around the waist. Honestly, it seems like they were wrapped up in a big sheet, but there is a definite style and consistency to it. The figures of both men and
length is lost under the head cloth. This is consistent with the modern description of Jesus by one author that His “hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders” (Testimonies, vol. 1 p. 60).

Now we can better understand the writings of Paul in first Corinthians. “If a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering” (1 Corinthians 11:14, 15). Based on what we have discovered so far, long hair would be well below the shoulders, and short or cut hair would be from the shoulders up. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (1 Timothy 2:9). Here, in the New Testament, Paul stresses the need for women to be modest and avoid outward adornment. Apparently some of the new Gentile converts were having a little trouble adjusting on this particular point.

Let us summarize the biblical perspectives of modesty. First of all, we have found main points of public nakedness: Sleeveless, knee length or shorter, and tight fitting clothes. All these are in the category of nakedness. However, they may be appropriate to wear in the house. Next we found that modest public appearance would consist of loose-fitting clothing coming no higher than mid-calf, with at least sleeves to the elbows. Lastly, we found that hair length is defined by the shoulders, men being above and women below.

As far as can be discerned, these basic principles have been followed by God’s people since Jehovah made the first full-length robes for Adam and Eve. Only in our day have the vast majority of God’s professed people strayed from these basic guidelines.

Is it coincidence that God mentions the Laodiceans as being naked? “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17). Is it possible to be naked in God’s eyes and think that you are clothed and have need of nothing? It is true that the main application of this is spiritual, but I do find it more than interesting that it is the only church that thought they were clothed and God still pronounced them naked. Could it be that we have become so blinded by sin and exposure to the world’s nakedness that we cannot see clearly? To answer honestly and accurately we need spiritual eyesalve to truly discern how God views this issue.

We were warned by Christ that in the age of Laodicea there would be many who would be content with making their own standard of religion, that is, not to God’s standard but down to that of the world. We are now living in that time and professed followers of Christ abound, but there are few spiritually alive and willing to follow Him all the way. He says, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Verse 6). Could we, as God’s professed people, get spewed out thinking all the while that we are righteous before the world?
Today, everyone is looking for security. We like to know that someone, somewhere will be there for us in life’s disappointments. We crave the emotional security that comes from having someone on whom we can depend. The Bible says this will be harder to find in the last days since “the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12).

Monetary security is also becoming unstable in today’s society as markets crumble. Many loans and licenses require insurance, which provides a certain security—the insurer will cover loss or damages in case of accidents, theft, or natural disasters. The more you pay, the greater the coverage they will provide in the event of tragedy.

“Coverage.” It is an interesting word. After Adam and Eve fell into sin, they felt exposed and naked—totally embarrassed. In His mercy, their loving Creator immediately covered them so they wouldn’t have to feel ashamed. He never makes us feel ashamed; He always reassures and comforts His children. He doesn’t hide the truth—He is open and honest with us. Yet even in our worst mistakes and wrongs, He does not humiliate or downgrade us; He lifts us up and covers us.

Awesome coverage. After committing a great sin, the psalmist rejoiced in this coverage: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (Psalm 32:1).

As sin increases, people care less about having adequate coverage—spiritual or even physical. It used to be that arms and legs were clothed to foster good health and a respectful attitude in public. Now, society has sunk so low that people no longer care about such things. So they’ve moved on to exposing the chest area. The necklines of clothing are plunging lower and lower with no regard to modesty. Garments are designed with very little coverage, symbolic of the age.

For the Christian to imitate the world is risky business; it’s not a smart investment. Instead, we should seek real, lasting security from the only One who can truly provide it—the enduring Friend “that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).

The servant of the Lord wrote: “I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty” (Early Writings, p. 43).

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By trusting in God’s promises, we can enjoy greater security than ever dreamed possible—it’s like opening an eternal life insurance policy. Let’s invest in that awesome coverage!  

WM
The Sinner’s Plea

Before the throne of God above,
    I have a strong, a perfect plea;
A great High Priest, whose name is Love,
    Who ever lives and pleads for me.

My name is graven on His hands,
    My name is written on His heart;
I know that while in Heaven He stands,
    No power can bid me hence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair,
    And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look, and see Him there
    Who made an end of all my sin.

Because the sinless Saviour died,
    My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
    To look on Him, and pardon me.

Behold Him there, the bleeding Lamb!
    My perfect, spotless righteousness—
The great, unchangeable I AM—
    The King of glory and of grace.

One with Himself, I cannot die;
    My soul is purchased by His blood;
My life is hid with Christ on high—
    With Christ, my Saviour and my God.

—Author Unknown