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SECRETS UNSEALED MINISTRY



First Quarter 2026 Newsletter

Reflections on Jewelry and Personal Adornment

What the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy Say?

Dear Friend of Secrets Unsealed

I greet you in the wonderful name that is above every name, the name of Jesus. As our ministry personnel read your prayer requests, we know that many are facing challenges in their lives. Be assured that our hearts are united with your hearts as we anxiously await the return of our beloved Savior, who will take us to a land where there is no sorrow, no pain, no suffering, and no death. How we long, along with you, for that day!

In this newsletter, I am sharing a study on what many in our church today consider to be a controversial topic—the issue of external adornment versus the adornment of the soul.

Times were when this issue was not controversial within our church or in other Christian churches. It is part of Fundamental Belief #22 of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which in the Church Manual is supported with the following Bible texts: Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Titus 2:11, 12; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 John 2:6. In part, it reads:

“While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit.”

Many consider personal adornment as a cultural issue. However, my article will show that it goes all the way back to antediluvian times, and was an issue in Old and New Testament times, and will be in the future.

The disciple closest to Jesus has admonished us:

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.” (1 John 2:15-17, NIV)

At Secrets Unsealed Ministry (SUMtv) we take seriously the need to uphold the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church, which are firmly rooted in Scripture. We believe that God has raised up this ministry for a time such as this. This is where our supporters come into the picture. We are ever thankful for your support; without which we could never carry forward this work that we love so much. We crave your prayers and financial support to fulfill the sacred and solemn commission that God has entrusted to us.

Once again, thank you for tuning in to our programs, for your words of encouragement, your personal testimonies, prayers, and financial support. We love you all!

Yours in the Master’s Service,

Pastor Stephen Bohr

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SUMtv Digital Reach & Impact 2025

In 2025, Secrets Unsealed/SUMtv continued to expand its international digital presence on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and SUMtv mobile app sharing biblical truth and messages of hope across multiple platforms and languages. Video views across all platforms, both English and Spanish, totaled 22.6 million (not counting our broadcast and smart tv services), including a 72,100 increase in YouTube subscribers during this period, bringing the total to over 262,000 subscribers. Our global reach comprised viewers and followers in North America, Latin America, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean. Facebook and Instagram interactions reached 379,800 and we are excited to continue broadening our media footprint as opportunities arise.

22.6M

Views

+72,100

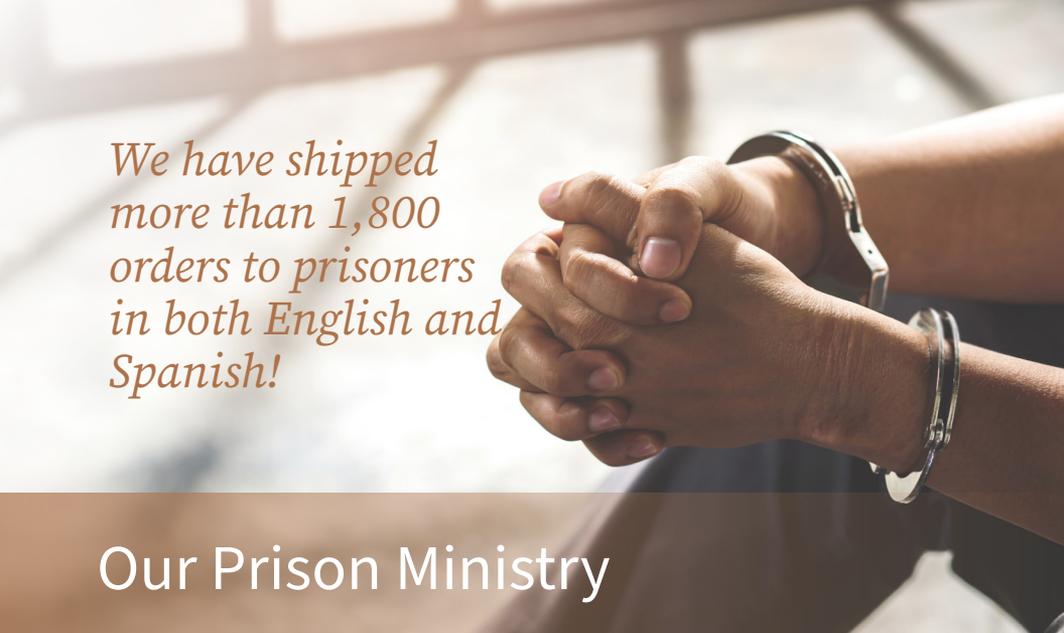
More Subscribers

262K+

Total Subscribers

379,800

Interactions



We have shipped more than 1,800 orders to prisoners in both English and Spanish!

Our Prison Ministry

Our prison ministry, funded by the Worthy Viewer Fund, continues to provide free books and Bibles to inmates nationwide. Over the past year, we have shipped more than 1,800 orders to prisoners in both English and Spanish. We also supply study materials and DVDs to several prison study groups and chaplain libraries, and we rejoice to see how God is working through inmates to spread His messages of love and hope to other inmates. As doors at many facilities are closing due to contra-band issues, we solicit your prayers and financial support to continue this Christ-appointed work.

Messages from our inmates

Please be advised, I have “wholeheartedly” accepted Christ and keep the Sabbath day holy as a result of reading the wonderful new truths from your reading materials mailed to me from Secrets Unsealed! May God richly bless you for helping prisoners like me.

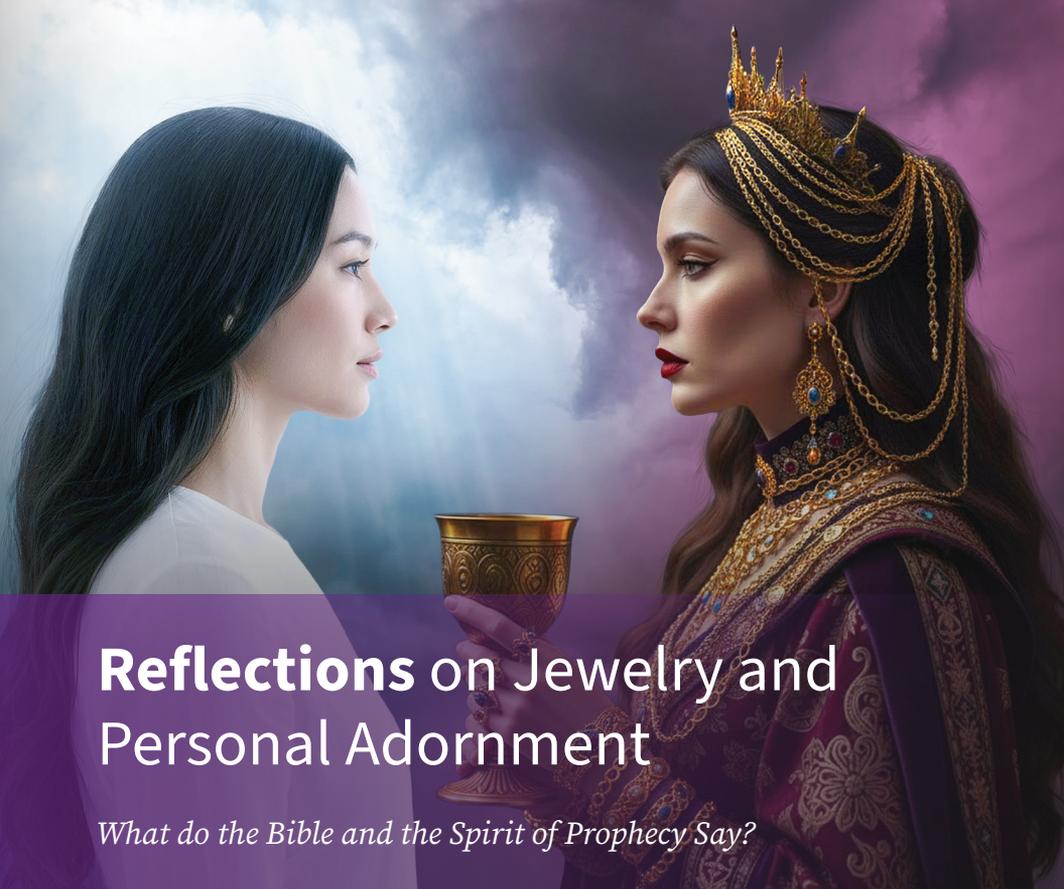
– Mildred in FL

Some of the ladies here had a catalog of y’all’s and we were told we could pick out one book and mail the form back to y’all for free. Well, to be honest, sounds too good to be true. But just in case it’s a real thing, I would love a Bible. Thank you, Blessed be.

– Dollie R. in AR

I am currently studying with an SDA group of inmates, and am very blessed by the truths I’m learning. I appreciate Secrets Unsealed.

– Kenneth from Atlanta, GA



Reflections on Jewelry and Personal Adornment

What do the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy Say?

By Pastor Stephen Bohr

The life of Jesus from eternity has had a single focus and purpose—to glorify His Father, (John 8:50), and He has admonished us to learn of Him who is ‘meek and lowly of heart’ (Matthew 11:29). In practical terms this means that what we say, what we do, where we go, what we watch and how we dress and adorn ourselves, should ever bring glory to God and draw people to Him, never to us. The apostle Paul expressed the principle:

*“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or **whatever you do**, do **all** to the*

glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

The Flood and the End of the Age

In His **Olivet Discourse**, Jesus drew a typological parallel between the world before the flood and its condition just before His **second coming** (Matthew 24:37-39). Genesis 6 describes the bold-faced and defiant **wickedness** that permeated the antediluvian world like a **deadly pandemic**:

*“Then the Lord saw that the **wickedness** of man was **great** in the earth, and that **every intent** of the*

*thoughts of his heart was **only** evil continually. . . And the Lord was **sorry** that He had made man on the earth, and He **was grieved** in His heart. The earth also **was corrupt** before God, and the earth was **filled with violence**.¹² So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it **was corrupt**; for **all flesh had corrupted their way [conduct]** on the earth.¹³ And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is **filled with violence** through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” (Genesis 6:5, 8, 11-13)*

Ellen White expanded upon these verses in Genesis 6:

*“The wickedness of men was **open and daring**, justice was trampled in the dust, and the cries of the oppressed reached unto heaven. Polygamy had been early introduced, contrary to the divine arrangement at the beginning. Neither the **marriage relation** nor the **rights of property** were respected. Whoever coveted the wives or the possessions of his neighbor, took them **by force**, and men exulted in their deeds of **violence**.”*
PP, p. 92

The moral condition of the world before the Second Coming will be no better. According to Ellen White, **Romans 1:18-32** is a true description of the condition of the world just before He returns:

*“I was referred to Romans 1:18-32, as a **true description** of the world previous to the second appearing of Christ.”* CG, p. 440

*“For although they **knew God**, they*

*neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but **their thinking** became futile and their **foolish hearts** were darkened. . . Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.”* (Romans 1:21, 28-31)

Thus, the wicked generation before the flood (as well as those who will live before the Second Coming) did not **glorify** God, their thinking was **futile**, and their foolish hearts were **dark**. They refused to retain the knowledge of God, and, as a result, **depraved thinking** led to every kind of **evil act**.

The Reason for this Condition

What caused this almost **universal wickedness** before the flood? Genesis 6:1-5 has the answer. The union of the ‘sons of God’ with the ‘daughters of men’ in verses 1-4 is **followed immediately** by a description of the wickedness of society in verse 5:

*“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men**, that they were*

beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. ³ *And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."* ⁴ *There were **giants [Nephilim]** on the earth in those days, and **also afterward**, when the **sons of God came in to the daughters of men** and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.* ⁵ *Then [as a result] the Lord saw that the **wickedness** of man was **great** in the earth, and that **every intent** of the thoughts of his heart was **only evil continually.**"* (Genesis 6:1-5)

The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men

Who were the 'sons of God' and the 'daughters of men'? The preponderance of **scholars** and **Bible versions** in the last several decades have suggested that the 'sons of God' were **fallen angels** who inseminated **human women** and brought into existence a race of mighty **giant hybrids**—the *Nephilim*, who were part demon and part human.

This bizarre point of view is founded on a **Jewish tradition** that we will refer to later in this article. Some modern **Bible versions transliterate** the Hebrew word *Nephilim* (NIV, ESV NASB, NRSV, NET), leaving it to the readers to determine what it means. The **NKJV** and **TEV** translate *Nephilim* as '**giants**' (probably echoing the **LXX** 'gigantes'), and yet other versions interpret the word as,

'children of the supernatural beings' (CEV), 'the fallen ones' (YLT), and the wildly speculative paraphrase in the Living Bible, 'evil beings from the spirit world'.

In contrast to these translations/paraphrases, Ellen White explained that the word 'giants' refers primarily to the immense physical stature of the pre-flood **men**:

*"Those who lived before the Flood, come forth with their **giant-like stature**, more than **twice as tall as men** now living upon the earth, and well proportioned."* ISDABC, p. 190.

Thus, Ellen White clarified that the giants were not hybrids but rather **wicked humans** who were tall in stature and also skillful in cunning and wonderful works. This brings to mind the wicked men in the **genealogy of Cain** who invented musical instruments, farming practices, and works of metallurgy:

*"There were **many giants, men of great stature and strength, renowned for wisdom, skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful works; but their guilt in giving loose rein to iniquity was in proportion to their skill and mental ability.**"* PP, p. 90.

The Angelic View of Genesis 6 is Untenable

The view of modern versions that the *Nephilim* were not merely human beings but rather '*supernatural beings from the spirit world*' is **untenable** for several reasons.

First, the text explicitly states

that there were already giants on the earth before (as indicated by the phrase ‘and also before’ in verse 4) the sons of God went into the daughters of men. This means that the giants were **not the fruit** of that union. The giants existed both **before** and **after** the ‘sons of God’ came into the ‘daughters of men’, and therefore they were not the result of that union.

Second, there were *Nephilim* (‘gigantes’ in the LXX) **in Canaan** long **after the flood** had destroyed **all wicked** human beings (Numbers 13:31-33). The ten spies who surveyed the land of Canaan complained that the cities were walled to the heavens and the inhabitants were physical giants compared to the Israelites, who were like grasshoppers. If the universal flood destroyed the pre-flood *Nephilim*, how could they still be alive in Canaan **eight hundred years** later? Clearly, the inhabitants of Canaan were not angelic or human hybrids, but rather tall in stature.

Third, Jesus **explicitly taught** that angels **do not marry** nor are they given in marriage. This should settle the question. There is no scriptural evidence that angels can procreate. Rather, Jesus explicitly stated that they do not! (Luke 20:34, 35) God established procreation solely for the human race with a specific objective—to **replace the vacancies** left in heaven by Satan and his angels.

Fourth, it has been said that *‘a text out of context is a pretext’*. The **immediately preceding**, the **broader** and **broadest contexts** of Genesis 6 clearly **identify** the

‘sons of God’ and the ‘daughters of men’. So, we ask, what are the immediate, broader, and broadest contexts of Genesis 6?

The Immediate Context:

Who were the ‘sons of God’, the ‘daughters of men’, and the ‘giants’? The immediate **context**, rather than the interpreters and Bible versions, must give us the answer. What is the immediately preceding context of Genesis 6?

- Genesis 4: Contains the genealogy of wicked Cain (it is highly unusual that three women are listed by name).
- Genesis 5: Contains the genealogy of righteous Seth (no women mentioned).
- Genesis 6: Describes the union of the sons of God (the righteous men in the line of Seth) with the daughters of men (the worldly women in the line of Cain).

Someone might object that **the angels** are referred to as ‘sons of God’ in the **book of Job** (Job 1:8; 2:1; 38:7). True enough, but we must keep in mind an important **hermeneutical principle**. A word or expression that appears in one context does not necessarily mean that it has the **identical meaning** in other **contexts**. For example, a **lion** can symbolize Christ, Satan, Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, and Judah. **Leaven** can represent sin, but it can also symbolize the power of the Holy Spirit to promote church growth. A **sword** can represent the Bible (Ephesians 6:17) and also the punitive power of the state to punish transgressions of civil law

(Romans 13:1-4).

Daughters of God and Sons of Men

It stands to reason that if there were 'sons of God' before the flood, then there must also have been **daughters of God**. The question that begs to be answered, then, is: **Why** were the sons of God physically **attracted** to the daughters of men rather than the daughters of God? We shall shortly suggest the answer to this question.

The Broader Context:

The book of Genesis is all about **twosomes**, and the twosomes **are all human**:

- The **woman's Seed** and the serpent's seed.
- **Cain** and Abel.
- The **sons of God** and the daughters of men.
- The **Babel builders** and **Abraham**.
- **Isaac** and Ishmael.
- **Jacob** and Esau.
- **Joseph** and his brothers.

Someone might object that if, according to Genesis 3:15, Satan has seed, then he (as well as his angels) must be able to procreate. This argument must be rejected. In Genesis 4, **Abel was God's seed, not physically but spiritually**, and likewise, Cain was the **devil's seed** ('was of the wicked one');

John 3:12), **not physically** but spiritually.

Contrary to what some have suggested, Cain was not the literal offspring of a sexual union between Eve and a fallen angel! The Bible explicitly states that **Adam** knew his wife and she conceived and bore Cain (Genesis 4:1). In similar fashion, **John 8** refers to a group of

unbelieving Jews as children of their **father the devil** (John 8:43). Clearly, they were not hybrids that resulted from a sexual union of the devil with human women. They had the

same spirit of Satan!

The Broadest Context:

In the broadest sense, Christ's faithful followers are called 'sons of God' in other places of Scripture, and they are certainly **not angelic beings**. Here are two of many examples:

- *"For you are all **sons of God** through **faith in Christ Jesus**. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ **have put on Christ**." (Galatians 3:26, 27)*
- *"For as many as are **led by the Spirit** of God, these are **sons of God**." (Romans 8:14)*

Fifth, there is a **verbal link** between the rebellious '**men of renown**' in Genesis 6 and the **apostate** post-flood builders of the **tower** of Babel in Genesis 11, who said, '*let us make a name for ourselves*'. The expression '*men of*

"Why were the sons of God physically attracted to the daughters of men rather than the daughters of God?"

renown' in both instances means that they were **famous** or aspired to be famous. There is no evidence that the builders of the tower were angelic/human hybrids. As stated before, if there were faithful sons of God, there must have been faithful daughters of God as well. Likewise, if there were unfaithful **daughters of men**, there must also have been unfaithful **sons of men**.

Therefore, it is no coincidence that the rebellious fame seekers who built the Tower of Babel are called 'the sons of men'—the unfaithful male counterparts of the unfaithful 'daughters of men':

*"And they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves. . . But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the **sons of men** had built.'" (Genesis 11:4-5)*

Solomon's 'Humanist Manifesto' contrasts the sons of men who **do not fear** God and are fully set to evil, with the righteous **who fear** before Him:

*"Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the **sons of men** is fully set in them **to do evil**.¹² Though **a sinner** does **evil** a hundred times, and **his** days are prolonged, yet I surely know that it will be well with **those who fear God**, who **fear before Him**.¹³ But it will not be well with **the wicked**; nor will he prolong his days, which are as a shadow, because **he does not fear** before God." (Ecclesiastes 8:11-13)*

Sixth, not all commentators or

translators agree that the expression 'sons of God' refers to angels. The Protestant Reformers, along with older scholars, believed that the 'sons of God' were members of the righteous line of Seth and the 'daughters of men' of the impious line of Cain:

Martin Luther:

*"The true meaning of the passage [Genesis 6:1-4] is that Moses designates as **sons of God** those people who **had the promise** of the blessed Seed."*

John Calvin:

*"That ancient figment, concerning the intercourse of angels with women, is abundantly **refuted** by its **own absurdity**; and it is surprising that **learned men** should formerly have been **fascinated** by ravings so gross and prodigious."*

John Wesley:

*"The **sons of God** — Those who were called by **the name of the Lord**, and called upon that name, married the daughters of men - Those that were profane, and strangers to God. The **posterity of Seth** did not keep to themselves as they ought, but intermingled with the **race of Cain**: they took them wives of all that they chose — They chose only **by the eye**: They saw that they were fair—which—was all they **looked at**."*

Keil and Delitzsch:

*"Now if, according to the simple meaning of the passage, the Nephilim **were in existence** at the very time when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, the appearance*

of the **Nephilim cannot afford the slightest evidence** that the “sons of God” were angels, by whom a family of monsters were begotten, whether demigods, daemons, or angel-men.” Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament. Comments on Genesis 6:4.

Albert Barnes Notes:

“The sons of God, therefore, are those who are on the **Lord’s side**, who approach him with duly significant offerings, who call upon him by his **proper name**, and who **walk with God** in their daily conversation.”

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown:

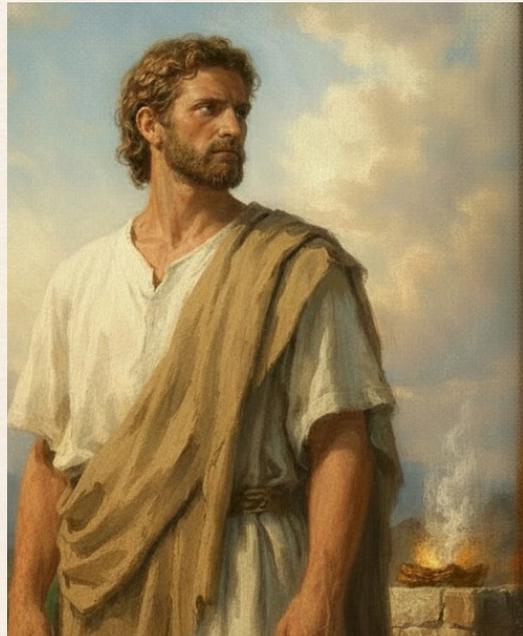
“The most correct, and now the most prevalent, view of this passage . . . is that by ‘the sons of God,’ are meant **the Sethites**. . . And by ‘the daughters of men, women of **Cainite descent**, including such as might have joined their degenerate society from other branches of the Adamic family. . . **Mixed marriages** between parties of opposite principles and practice must necessarily be sources of extensive corruption. The women, irreligious themselves, would, as wives and mothers, exert an influence fatal to the existence of religion in their household, and consequently the later antediluvians sank to the **lowest depravity**.”

Ellen White Identified the Sons of God and Daughters of Men

Ellen White agreed with the Reformers and the older commentators. In harmony with Scripture, the Lord’s servant explained that the apostasy of the line of Seth did

not happen overnight; it transpired over the course of **centuries**:

“**Seth** was one of more noble stature than Cain or Abel, and resembled Adam more than did any of his other sons. The **descendants of Seth** separated themselves from the wicked **descendants of Cain**. They cherished the knowledge of God’s will, while the ungodly race of Cain had no respect for God and his sacred commandments. But when **men multiplied** upon the earth [**not initially**], the **children of Seth [the ‘sons of God’]** saw that the **daughters** of the **descendants** of Cain [**the ‘daughters of men’ were the children of Adah, Zillah and Naamah; they were six generations in the line of Cain; in other words, they were, great, great, great, great, grandchildren of Cain]** were **very beautiful**, and they departed from God and displeased him by taking wives as they chose of the **idolatrous race of Cain**.” ST, February 20, 1879.



In *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Ellen White later **expanded** on how the slow and relentless slippery slope of apostasy developed:

“For **some time** the **two classes [the female descendants of Cain and the male descendants of Seth]** remained **separate**. The race of Cain, **spreading** from the place of their first settlement, **dispersed** over the plains and valleys where the children of Seth had dwelt; and the latter, in order to **escape** from their contaminating influence, **withdrew to the mountains**, and there made their home. So long as this **separation** continued, they maintained the worship of God in its purity. But in the **lapse of time** they ventured, **little by little**, to **mingle** with the inhabitants of the valleys. This **association** was productive of the **worst results**. “The **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men** that they were fair.” **[quoting Genesis 6:4]** The **children of Seth**, attracted by the **beauty of the daughters of Cain’s**

descendants, displeased the Lord by **intermarrying** with them. Many of the worshipers of God were **beguiled** into sin by the **allurements** that were now constantly before them, and they lost their **peculiar**, holy character. **Mingling** with the **depraved**, they became like them in spirit and in deeds; the restrictions of the **seventh commandment** were disregarded, “and they took them **wives [polygamy]** of all which they chose.” The **children of Seth** went “**in the way of Cain**” (Jude 11); they fixed their minds upon **worldly prosperity** and **enjoyment** and neglected the commandments of the Lord. Men “did not like to retain God in their knowledge;” they “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” **Romans 1:21** Therefore “God gave them over to a mind void of judgment.” **Verse 28**, margin. **Sin spread** abroad in the earth like a **deadly leprosy**. PP, pp. 81, 82

It was the godly, not the depraved, who took the initiative to mingle with the depraved women in the line of Cain:

“The **godly** mingled with the **depraved**, and became **like them** in spirit and in deeds.” Bible Echo, July 1, 1887.

What did the Sons of God See?

Now, to another most important question. What did the ‘sons of God’ **see** in the ‘daughters of men’ that they **did not see** in the ‘daughters of God’? Genesis 6:2 tells us that the sons of God **saw** that the ‘daughters of men’ were **beautiful!**



Something in these women **captivated their eyes** and appealed to their **senses** and their **passions** (cf. Judges 15:1-3 1Samuel 16:12; 2 Samuel 11:2; Esther 1:11; Daniel 1:15; Nahum 3:4). The ‘sons of God’ **saw, chose, and went in** to the ‘daughters of men’.

Without a doubt, they saw something in the ‘daughters of men’ that they did **not see** in the ‘daughters of God’. Did the ‘sons of God’ shun the ‘daughters of God’ because they were all ugly? Of course not! What, then, was the distinction?

Over **75 times**, the book of Genesis highlights the importance of the meaning of **names**. Just a few examples are, ‘**woman**’ (‘taken from man’), ‘**Eve**’ (‘mother of the living’), ‘**Seth**’ (‘appointed in place of’), ‘**Babel**’ (‘confusion’), ‘**Peniel**’ (‘face of God’), ‘**Yahweh Jireh**’ (‘the LORD will provide’), ‘**Bethel**’ (‘house of God’) ‘**Jacob** (supplanter)’ and ‘**Israel**’ (‘prince of God’).

The names of three women are listed in the **line of Cain** and their meaning will help us understand the ‘magnetism’ of the ‘daughters of men’. As previously indicated, the expression ‘daughters of men’ in Genesis 6:4 refers us back to the women in the **genealogy of wicked Cain** in Genesis 4. Notably, the genealogy of Seth in Genesis 5, the genealogies of Shem, Ham and Japheth in Genesis 10 and that of Shem in Genesis 11:10-31 mention no women. In contrast, the family line of Cain contains the names of **three**. The inclusion of the names of these women in Cain’s lineage is clearly **intentional** because it links the female descendants of wicked

Cain in Genesis 4 with the ‘daughters of men’ in Genesis 6:1-4.

The Name Adah

Name of the first woman is Adah, (Genesis 4:19) which means ‘to deck with jewels, ornaments’. A closely related word appears three times in **Exodus 33:4-6**, and is translated “**ornaments**” (KJV) or ‘jewelry’ (NCV, NLT, TEV). In these verses, Israel was commanded by God to **remove their jewelry** after they worshiped the golden calf at Mount Sinai. Notably, these artificial enhancements remained off their bodies from **Sinai all the way** to Canaan:

*“So after they left Mount Sinai, the people of Israel **no longer wore jewelry**” (verse 6, TEV).*

This detail is important because, when the people later brought their jewelry for the building of the sanctuary, the women did not take the trimmings off their bodies but rather brought them from storage. Clearly, when the Israelites pillaged the Egyptians upon their departure from Egypt, the gold, silver and precious stones were

"Israel was commanded by God to remove their jewelry after they worshiped the golden calf at Mount Sinai."

not **intended to be worn** on their bodies but rather invested in the building of the sanctuary (Exodus 25:8; 35:1-35; 11:2; 12:35).

One wonders if this does not teach us some **profound lessons** today. Instead of spending money on unnecessary bodily adornment and costly apparel, why not rather invest it for the salvation of **souls** and selfless service to **the poor**? Ellen White recommended this very investment:

*“There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the **wants of their fellow man**. Professed Christians adorn **themselves** with jewelry, laces, costly apparel, while the **Lord’s poor suffer** for the necessities of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Savior’s blood will squander the means entrusted to them for the **saving of other souls**, and then grudgingly dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor **to themselves**. **These are idolaters.**”* (2BC, p. 1012; ST, January 26, 1882)

The Spirit of Prophecy tells us the story of Elder Simpson, an evangelist who preached present truth without any mention of jewelry:

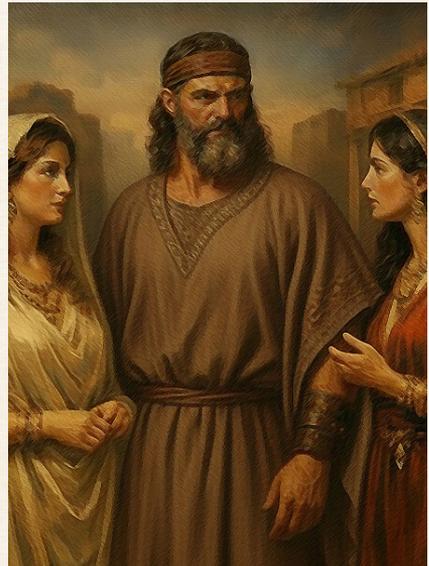
*“Elder Simpson explains the prophecies by the means of charts, and makes it very plain that the end of all things is at hand. In some cases, entire families have taken their stand to obey God, as in 1844. All are brought over the ground from the beginning, and many believe as **the prophecies** relating to the past, present, and future are explained. **Jewelry**, which*

*cost **many hundreds of dollars**, has been given to Elder Simpson to be **sold for the cause**. There is **no spirit of excitement** in this movement. **No fanaticism** attends it. The **truth takes hold** of hearts; and men and women give their rings and bracelets although **no call** has been made for them to strip themselves of **these idols**. The work is **earnest and quiet**. The people take off their jewelry of **their own freewill**, and bring it to Elder Simpson as an **offering up of their idols.**”* 14MR, pp. 250, 251.

The Name Zillah

Now that we have explained the meaning of ‘Adah’, let’s turn to Zillah.

*“Then **Lamech [the first polygamist mentioned in the Bible and a murderer]** took for himself **two wives**: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was **Zillah.**”* (Genesis 4:19, 23)



The preponderance of commentators believes that the name ‘Zillah’ means **‘shadow’**. However, others have suggested that the name comes from the Hebrew *tsalal*, which means **‘to tingle or quiver’** as do stringed musical instruments, bells, and cymbals.

Dancing to music appears frequently in the Bible in the context of apostasy. Thus, dancing to music chimed at Herod’s birthday party (Mark 6:14-28), at the apostate worship service at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 32:19) and by the daughters of Zion who were decked to the hilt (Isaiah 3:16). This translation of the name ‘Zillah’ would certainly jive with Ellen White’s statement that the sons of God *‘fixed their minds upon worldly prosperity and enjoyment.’*

The Name Naamah

Now let’s consider the meaning of the name ‘Naamah’, the third in the line of Cain:

*“And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every **craftsman in bronze and iron**. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.”* (Genesis 24:22)

Naamah means *“pleasant, sweet, lovely, delightful, charming, **beautiful**”*. Once again, the name is linked with **external beauty**. It can hardly escape our notice that Genesis 6:2 describes the ‘daughters of men’ as **‘beautiful’**. Clearly, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with beauty as such, except when it is **self-centered**, prideful, and artificial.

The Testimony of Jewish Tradition

Ancient **Jewish tradition** helps us understand in what sense the beauty of the ‘daughters of men’ **was different** than that of the ‘daughters of God’. Earlier, we provided multiple reasons why the Jewish rabbis **were wrong** when they identified the sons of God as fallen angels. However, I believe that they were correct when they described what made the ‘daughters of men’ look beautiful and charming to the ‘sons of God’:

*“And Asael [**Azazel**] taught men to make swords, and daggers, and shields and breastplates **interesting in the light of Genesis 4 where Tubal-Cain forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron**]. And he showed them the things after these, and the art of making them: **bracelets, and ornaments, and the art of making up the eyes** and of beautifying the **eyelids**, and the most precious and **choice stones**, and all [kinds of] **colored dyes**. And the **world was changed**. And there was great **impiety** and much **fornication**, and they went **astray**, and all their ways became **corrupt**.”* (Enoch 8:1, 2)

The Jewish Targum of Reuben paints a similar portrait:

*“Flee therefore, fornication, my children, and command your wives and your daughters, that they **adorn not their heads and faces** to deceive the mind, because every woman who uses **these wiles** hath been reserved for eternal punishment. For thus they **allured the Watchers** who were before the flood...”* (Targum Reuben 5:5-7)

The Jewish *Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan* presents a similar scenario:

*“And it came to pass when the **sons of men** began to multiply on the face of the ground, and beautiful daughters were born to them, that the sons of the great ones saw that the **daughters of men were beautiful, with eyes painted and hair curled, walking in nakedness of flesh, and they conceived lustful thoughts; and they took them wives of all they chose.**” (Targum of Pseudo Jonathan 6:1, 2)*

Most likely, as the ‘sons of God’ were attracted to the **artificial, external, self-exalting, and enticing** beauty of the ‘daughters of men’, the ‘daughters of God’ began to **adorn themselves** likewise in order to retain the interest of the ‘sons of God’.

Several years ago, I was studying the Bible with a lovely couple who were preparing for baptism, and when we reviewed the lesson on the use of makeup and jewelry, the **wife objected**:

“If I take off my jewelry, I fear that my husband will be attracted to the beauty of other women who use them.”

I assured her that the sweetness of her character should be her attractive feature. She obeyed the Lord’s counsel, disposed of her jewelry, and she is still happily married to her husband! The lesson is clear, physical appearance is transitory but the sweetness of character endures!

The sobering fact is that in a world that undoubtedly numbered

millions, the union of the faithful with the worldly **diminished** the number of the faithful to **only Noah** and his family—eight persons! It took the better part of sixteen centuries, but that was the striking result! Embracing the world and its culture does not convert the unfaithful to the faithful but rather corrupts the faithful!

The Same Danger Today

Ellen White described how Israel lost her peculiar identity:

*“It came to be a common practice to **intermarry** with the heathen. The Israelites rapidly lost their abhorrence of idolatry. Heathen customs were introduced. Idolatrous mothers brought their children up to observe heathen rites. The Hebrew faith was fast becoming a **mixture of confused ideas.**” FE, p. 499*

The Lord’s servant warned that Christians must beware of the same danger today:

*“There is constant danger that the **obedient and the disobedient** in the world and in the **nominal churches** will become so **amalgamated** that the **line of demarcation** between those that serve God and those that serve Him not will become **confused and indistinct.**” 18MR, p. 26*

And again:

*“Those who profess to be followers of Christ, should be living agencies, co-operating with heavenly intelligences; but by **union with the world**, the character of God’s people becomes **tarnished**, and through **amalgamation with the corrupt**, the fine gold*

becomes dim.” RH, August 23, 1892

A Slow, Relentless Process

The slide down the slippery slope to apostasy does not happen overnight. The **marriages** of Solomon with women of pagan nations (2 Kings 11) teach us that apostasy is a slow, inadvertent, gradual, and virtually imperceptible process:

“So **gradual** was Solomon’s apostasy that **before he was aware of it**; he had wandered far from God. Almost **imperceptibly** he began to trust **less and less** in divine guidance and blessing, and to put confidence in his own strength. **Little by little** he withheld from God that **unswerving obedience** which was to make Israel a peculiar people, and he conformed **more and more** closely to the customs of the surrounding nations.” PP, p. 55

Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel

Solomon’s missteps eventually led Israel into a full-blown apostasy. Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel described how Israel decked **herself** with ornaments in order to entice the pagan nations to fornicate with her, which led her into **apostasy**:

“She decked **herself** with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers; but Me she forgot,” says the Lord.” (Hosea 2:13)

“Though you clothe **yourself** with crimson, though you adorn **yourself** with ornaments of gold, though you **enlarge** your eyes with **paint**, in vain you will **make yourself** fair; your lovers will despise you; they will

“There is constant danger that the disobedient in the world’s churches will become so averse to the line of demarcation between those that serve Him not and those that serve Him indistinctly.”

seek your life.” (Jeremiah 4:30)

“Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed **yourself** for them, [you] painted **your eyes**, and adorned **yourself** with ornaments.” (Ezekiel 23:40)

Although these verses refer symbolically to corporate Israel, they apply with equal force to literal unions between believers and unbelievers. Why would God say that it was wrong for Israel to do it and not for individuals? Clearly, what happened to Israel corporately applies equally to the union of individual believers with unbelievers, be it through marriage or the adoption of worldly cultural customs.

Lucifer’s Pride

Some church members support the use of jewelry, citing the example of Lucifer, who was beautiful and whose garment was adorned **by God** with precious jewels. As the argument goes, if God covered Lucifer with jewels, then we can put them on **ourselves** as well. It is true that **God created** Lucifer

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18MR, p. 26

beautiful and adorned his garment with precious jewels. However, it is important to underline that Lucifer did **not deck himself**; God did:

“You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and **perfect in beauty**.

¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; **every precious stone** was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your **timbrels and pipes** was prepared for you on the day **you were created.**”
(Ezekiel 28:12-13)

On a side note, God not only endowed Lucifer with beauty and precious stones. He also gave him the **gift of music**. As the leader of the heavenly choir, he must have been a master musician! Ellen White wrote:

“Satan had **led the heavenly choir**. He had raised the first note; then all the angelic host had united with him, and glorious strains of music had resounded through heaven in honor of God and His Dear Son.” SR, p. 25

Satan, so to speak, Lucifer was given a PhD in music, and for this reason, he knows how to pervert it to destroy spirituality among the

youth:

“I feel alarmed as I witness everywhere the frivolity of young men and young women who profess to believe the truth. God does not seem to be in their thoughts. Their minds are filled with nonsense. Their conversation is only empty, vain talk. They have a keen **ear for music**, and Satan knows what **organs to excite** to animate, engross, and **charm the mind** so that **Christ is not desired.**” AH, p. 407.

Sadly, Lucifer could not handle the beauty and adornment that **God had bestowed** on him. He ‘looked in the mirror’ and was filled with pride at his ‘looks’. He forgot that all his endowments were a gift from God:

“Your heart was lifted up **because of your beauty**; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of **your splendor**; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings that they might gaze at you.” Ezekiel 28:12, 17

We have all heard the refrain, “If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it’s a duck!” Likewise, if Christians eat like the world, drink like the world, speak like the world, watch what the world watches, love the music that the world enjoys, dance like the world, dress like the world, and adorn themselves like the world, what are they? **WORLDLY!**

God Adorned Israel

It is true that there are passages in the Bible where **God** symbolically endowed Israel with beauty and adorned her with precious jewels.

However, the key point here, that is often missed and ignored, is that Israel did not adorn **herself**, **GOD DID!** There was no room for pride—the honor and glory belonged to God. It was **God's splendor** that He bestowed upon her. **She did not** put on the jewels herself. **God** put them on her! Notice the number of times that the pronoun 'I' refers to God in the following passage:

*“Then **I** washed you in water; yes, **I** thoroughly washed off your blood, and **I** anointed you with oil. ¹⁰ **I** clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; **I** clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹ **I** adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your wrists, and a chain on your neck. ¹² And **I** put a jewel in your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³ Thus you **were adorned** with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. You ate pastry of fine flour, honey, and oil. You were **exceedingly beautiful**, and succeeded to royalty. ¹⁴ Your fame went out among the nations **because of your beauty**, for it was perfect through **My splendor** which **I** had bestowed on you,” says the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 16:9-14)*

Tragically, like Lucifer, Israel became proud of her beauty and adornment as if it were her own and as a result, fell into apostasy! In a sinful world, self-adornment is a dangerous thing as we can see by the word 'but' in the very next verse:

*“**But you trusted in your own beauty**, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it. ¹⁶ You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored high places for **yourself**, and played the harlot on them. Such things should not happen, nor be. ¹⁷ You have also taken your beautiful jewelry from **My gold and My silver**, which **I** had given you, and made **for yourself** male images and played the harlot with them. ¹⁸ You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set **My oil and My incense** before them. ¹⁹ Also **My food** which **I** gave you — the pastry of fine flour, oil, and honey which **I** fed you — you set it before them as sweet incense; and so it was,” says the Lord God.” (Ezekiel 16:15-19)*

The New Testament Testimony

Now let's turn to **apostolic times**. Some have suggested that the matter of personal adornment was a cultural issue in Old Testament times, which is irrelevant in the New Testament. Peter and Paul begged to differ. They **frowned** on external personal adornment and discouraged Christian women from using it. Peter wrote to Christian wives:

*“Wives, likewise be **submissive** to your own husbands, that even if **some** do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the **conduct** of their wives, ² when they observe your **chaste conduct** accompanied by fear. ³ **Do not** let your **adornment** be **merely** [**a word not in the original**]*

outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—⁴ rather let it be the **hidden person** of the heart, with the incorruptible **beauty** of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is **very precious in the sight of God**. (1 Peter 3:1-4)

Notably, in verses 5 and 6, Peter wrote that faithful women in Old Testament times adorned their inside rather than their outside and provided **Sarah** as an example:

*“For in this manner, in **former times**, the holy women who trusted in God also **adorned themselves**, being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶ as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.”* (1 Peter 3:5-6)

Peter’s counsel regarding external adornment is clear. The word ‘adornment’ in verse 3 is **kósmos** (‘world’). In the LXX version of Jeremiah 4:30, the expression “*though you **adorn** yourself with **ornaments of gold***” the verb ‘adorn’ is *kosmése* (where the word ‘cosmetics’ comes from) and the noun ‘ornaments’ is *kósmos*. Furthermore, in the LXX version of Exodus 33:5, 6 the word ‘ornaments’ is likewise *kósmos*. Perhaps this is the reason why the use of jewelry and cosmetics is frequently referred to as being ‘worldly’.

The apostle Paul was likewise clear that internal adornment should characterize the Christian woman (and these days, men as well!):

“I desire therefore that the men pray

*everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; ⁹ in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in **modest apparel**, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with **good works**.”* (1 Timothy 2:8-10)

In the secular world today, all is about show and ostentation. The ‘Red Carpet’ at the **Oscars** is all about the latest fashion and jewelry that glorifies the stars. Yes, God loves beauty that brings honor and glory to Him. Yes, God did adorn Lucifer and Israel with beautiful jewels, but they were puffed up and appropriated glory to themselves instead of God.

The Typology of the Flood Story

As we have seen, Jesus drew a typological relationship between those who lived at the time of the flood and the final generation. (Matthew 24:37-39) What was, will be once more. God commissioned Noah to invite the wicked world to repent and change their ways. His message was politically incorrect and fell on deaf ears (Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5). It is inconceivable that Noah failed to rebuke the intermingling of the sons of God with the daughters of men, that is, of the godly with the world, especially in light of the fact that this was the ‘*one sin above another*’ that ‘*defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere which called for the destruction of the race by the flood*’ (1SP, p. 69).

Like Noah, God will have a

faithful remnant at the end who will call the world to repentance, especially denouncing the union of the faithful with the world, both individually and as a church. In Revelation 12:1, this faithful group who will deliver the final Loud Cry (Revelation 18:1-6) is portrayed as a pure woman who is clothed with the **natural** beauty of the sun and moon. Revelation 14:1-5 describes the characters of those who will belong to this group, and there is no mention of external adornment. It is the inside that is beautiful, not the outside.

In contrast to the faithful remnant will be the harlot and her daughters. Their apostasy is portrayed as being decked with gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls, all with the intention of attracting attention to self and enticing the faithful to jump on board (Revelation 17:4, 5; 18:6). ‘Beauty’ on the outside but corruption on the inside!

Jesus, the Sanctuary and True Beauty

We can also approach the matter of personal adornment from the perspective of the Hebrew sanctuary, which is a type of Christ and His church. Exodus 26:14 explains that the **outside** appearance of the sanctuary had no particular attractiveness—it was covered with **dull grayish** badger skins:

*“You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a covering of **badger skins** above that.”* (Exodus 26:14)

However, the external simplicity of the sanctuary belied its **beauty inside**. The gold, silver, precious stones, and priceless fabric, and golden thread were inside. The sanctuary was a type of Christ who once said:

*“Destroy **this temple**, and in three days I will raise it up.”*²⁰ *Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?”*²¹ *But He was speaking of the **temple of His body**.”* (John 2:19, 21)

What did the body of Jesus look like while He was on earth? Was it full of tattoos, earrings, nose rings, ankle rings, and bracelets? The prophet Isaiah answered:

*“For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of **dry ground**. He has **no form or comeliness**; and when we see Him, there is **no beauty** that we should desire Him.”* (Isaiah 53:2)

The life of Jesus was characterized by the natural and the **simple**. He never did or said anything to attract attention to himself. He lived to glorify His Father alone. The four Gospels contain no **physical portrait** of Jesus. There is no description of the color of His hair, his eyes, his height, or any other physical characteristic. And his garment was a simple seamless robe (John 19:23). However, the Gospels do contain, in all its glory, a description of His beautiful character of love, sympathy, mercy, truth, justice, and generosity! Ellen White wrote that the external appearance is an index of what is



in the heart.

*“I saw that the **outside appearance** is an **index** to the heart. When the **exterior** is hung with ribbons, collars, and needless things, it plainly shows that the love for all this is **in the heart**; unless such persons are cleansed from their corruption, they can **never see God**, for only the pure in heart will see Him.”* 1T, p. 136

According to the apostle Paul, **the temple** was not only a symbol of Himself but also of each individual church member:

*“Or do you not know that **your body** is **the temple** of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore, **glorify God** in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

If our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, should our beauty not be internal rather than external?

Recent Developments in our Own Church

In recent years, many Adventists, especially in so-called developed countries, have embraced all sorts of practices that are at odds with the principles of the Word of God and the explicit counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy, all in the name of culture. Contemporary **musical genres** have been made a matter of culture, the use of **jewelry** and **immodest dress** have been sanctified by an appeal to culture, **worship styles** are embraced in the name of culture, **entertainment choices** are justified on the basis of culture, **drinking wine** with meals and **coffee after meals** are condoned because of culture, **competitive sports** in our schools are attributed to the practice of culture, and **lax Sabbath observance** can be traced to the encroachments of culture.

In order to appeal to culture to justify these practices, the

testimony of the Spirit of Prophecy must be neutralized or explained away, because Ellen White was unambiguous in condemning them. So, without **openly** denying the Spirit of Prophecy (although some do), those who appeal to culture to justify a lowering of the standards declare that the Bible does not explicitly forbid any of these things and that Ellen White's counsels are remnants of an outdated Victorian age and therefore are no longer relevant or applicable to a refined culture that has come of age. Thus, the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy in these matters has **not been openly denied** but has been made of **none effect** or neutralized by an appeal to culture. Ellen White well predicted:

*“The **very last** deception of Satan will be to make of **none effect** the testimony of the Spirit of God. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to **unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people** in the true testimony.”* 10MR, p. 310

Be not Unevenly Yoked

The **individual members** of the church, as well as the **church corporately**, must be careful not to entangle **with the world**, its culture, and its practices lest they lose their unique identity. We must not embrace the darkness of the world lest our light be extinguished. We must not lose our ‘saltiness’ lest we follow in the steps of Lot’s wife.

Regarding the result of

marriages of believers with unbelievers, Ellen White wrote:

*“The plea is sometimes made that the unbeliever is favorable to religion and is all that could be desired in a companion except in one thing—he is not a Christian. Although the better judgment of the believer may suggest the impropriety of a union for life with an unbeliever, yet, in **nine cases out of ten**, inclination triumphs. **Spiritual declension commences** the moment the vow is made at the altar; **religious fervor is dampened**, and one stronghold after another is broken down, until both stand side by side under the **black banner of Satan**. Even in the festivities of the wedding the spirit of the world triumphs against conscience, faith, and truth. In the new home the hour of prayer is not respected. The bride and bridegroom have chosen each other and **dismissed Jesus**.”* AH, p. 65

And the Spirit of Prophecy explains that one who has not accepted **the truth for this time** is an unbeliever:

*“Though the companion of your choice were in all other respects worthy (which he is not), yet he has **not accepted the truth** for this time; **he is an unbeliever**, and you are*

“We must remain distinct in our health and educational habits, our worship style, our everyday lifestyle, and our theological views, lest we fall into the temptation of yielding to the world’s influence.”

WOR

forbidden of heaven to unite yourself with him. You cannot, without peril to your soul, disregard this divine injunction.” Letters to Young Lovers, p. 87

And regarding God’s corporate people, God counseled:

“Those who profess to be followers of Christ, should be living agencies, co-operating with heavenly intelligences; but by **union with the world**, the character of God’s **people** becomes tarnished, and through **amalgamation** with the **corrupt**, the fine gold becomes dim.” RH, August 23, 1892

The apostle Paul wisely warned the Corinthians:

“Do not be **unequally yoked** together with **unbelievers**. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **you are the temple** of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Therefore “**Come out** from among them and **be separate**, says the Lord.

Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 2:14-18)

The Danger of Compromise

The Seventh-day Adventist Church must shun the temptation of embracing **worldly beliefs and practices**, incorporating them into our church. We must **remain distinct from the world**. Our health and educational institutions, our **music**, our **worship style**, our **evangelistic methods**, our **lifestyle**, and our **theology** must not yield to the temptation of yielding to the standards of the world. We must not get entangled with aid from the government, with various commissions of the United Nations, or with the ecumenical movement. We are to dissipate the darkness by filling the world with light and to give saltiness to a world that is flavorless. The Bible itself warns:

“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that **friendship with the world** is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

ct from the world. Our institutions, our music, evangelistic methods, our gy must not yield to the to the standards of the ld.”

“**Do not love** the world or the **things in the world**. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)

The secular worldview centers on money, power, material possessions, glitz, glamour, show, and selfishness. Have we individually and corporately been tainted with this way of thinking? How much have we thought about the second coming and our future life compared to our present life?

The Unconverted Heart: A Wicked Rationalizer

The unconverted heart is **deceitful** above all things and **desperately wicked**. It is a **rationalizer** that offers excuses to **justify** sinful practices. One church member once told me that she adorned herself because she wanted to look pretty for the Lord! As if God is more impressed with the outside than the inside! The prophet Jeremiah warned:

*“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; **who can know it?**” (Jeremiah 17:9)*

The sinful human heart rationalizes the use of jewelry by arguing that God decked Lucifer and Israel with jewels, the Father gave the prodigal son his ring, Queen Esther wore jewelry, and therefore, we are justified in doing the same.

When we employ arguments such as these, are we not using the same type of rationale as Protestants who ‘use’ the Bible to justify Sunday observance? Protestants (mis)use Scripture to discard the Sabbath by formulating arguments such as, we are not under law but under grace (Romans 6:14), the law was nailed to the cross

(Colossians 2:13-17), the Sabbath is Jewish (Exodus 31:17), Sunday observance honors the resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:1,2), Paul told us not to judge those who do not keep the Sabbath (Colossians 2:16) Sabbath observance is legalism (Galatians 5:4), John was in the spirit on the Lord’s Day (Revelation 1:10) and Christians should be persuaded in their own minds regarding which day to keep (Romans 14:5, 6). It is common to hear Seventh-day Adventist youth say, ‘*I don’t see anything wrong with it*’. Perhaps a visit to the heavenly optometrist would help them see things as God does.

The question is, how can a deceitful, rationalizing, self-justifying, sinful heart be kept under control? The answer is in the very next verse:

*“**I, the Lord**, search the heart I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.” (Jeremiah 17:10)*

The Psalmist expressed the same thought in different words:

*“**Search me**, Oh God, and **know my heart**; **try me**, and **know my anxieties**; ²⁴ And **see** if there is any wicked way in me, and **lead me** in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23, 24)*

So, let’s ask God to help us be **brutally honest** with ourselves concerning the use of personal adornment. Let’s ask ourselves: What is my motive for using it? Does it attract people to Jesus or to myself? Is it a good exercise of stewardship? Does it bring honor and glory to God? Does it prepare

me for heaven? Without intending to be irreverent, when was the last time you heard a man say: “Wow! Look how well the Lord has endowed that woman, praise be the Lord!”

We must remember that God will evaluate our actions by our motives:

*“Every course of action has a twofold character and importance. It is virtuous or vicious, right or wrong, according to **the motive** which prompts it.” CG, p. 201.*

Not a Matter of Culture

So, is the issue of personal adornment simply a matter of culture? The answer is no! The evidence indicates that it transcends culture and has been a problem from the beginning and will continue to the end.

- It became a problem with **Lucifer** in heaven.
- It led to the corruption of the faithful **before the flood**.
- It was an issue when Israel apostatized at **Mt. Sinai**.
- It led Israel **constantly** into apostasy.
- It was a potential problem in **apostolic times**.
- It is an issue with the apostate Christian church in **Revelation 17**.

Clearly, the matter of personal adornment is an issue that **transcends** one specific time or culture!

Principles to Remember

In closing, here are some

principles that will help us to dress in a manner that brings honor and glory to the Lord rather than to ourselves:

- It should be **clean**.
- It should be **orderly and neat**.
- It should be **simple**, not extravagant and showy.
- It should be **modest** (not revealing that which tempts the eye).
- It should be **economical** but not cheap.
- It should be of **good quality** and durable.
- It should promote **health** (Not too tight and protect from cold and the sun).
- It should be **tasteful** (make sure color combinations match).
- It should be appropriate **for the occasion** (wear a sweat suit to church?).
- Above all, it should draw attention to God and honor and **glorify Him**.



Pastor Stephen Bohr
President/Speaker SUMtv



Little Man | Sad Heart to Happy Heart

By John Bridges

One of the most exciting names in the Bible is Jericho, where two marvelous stories take place. 1) The Battle of Jericho 2) The story of a little man who climbed a tree, a tax collector named Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10. He was hated by his own people because he, an Israelite, misused his position to cheat his own people and enrich himself with the Roman government as a tax collector. He was trapped in practicing dishonesty by unfairly charging people absorbent Roman taxes. He had no friends, although he had a lot of stolen money. He knew he was guilty of dishonesty and stealing in his work. He knew why people

avoided and shunned him, and why they showed him disrespect. He was sure he could never change or live differently, but he heard wonderful stories of God's compassion and help to sinners of every sort in Jesus' ministry.

He asked himself... could (Jesus), would He... forgive me.... help me. You know the story.... being a very short man, he climbs a sycamore tree to get a good look at Jesus. As Jesus passes under him, He looks up at him and says, Zacchaeus, come down, I'm going to your house today. Jesus read his heart and knew he wanted to make a change, and He was there to help him. Jesus is always there to help

those who cry out for help.

Some of you have been faithful and can testify strongly of God's goodness, blessings, and love. Some of you have been negligent and less than honest in dealing with God and man. Jesus stands before you today with open arms ready to forgive and heal, bless you and make you strong in faith, and give you the experience and courage you need to be faithful with your tithes and offerings and dealing with fellow man.

With a grateful heart as you respond to Jesus, will you consider remembering God's work through this ministry through an estate plan, a Will, or a Trust, by naming Secrets Unsealed as a beneficiary on a bank account, retirement plan, or insurance policy? This is a powerful testimony of your heart's response to God.

It is that time of year when many of you are making IRA distributions. If those withdrawals are not required for your basic needs... you are allowed to do a direct roll-over to Secrets Unsealed Ministry and it meets government requirements for distribution while avoiding all taxes. This is a powerful cash gift to this soul-saving ministry. Have you remembered this ministry in your estate planning? Please give us a call, and we will assist you with any of these steps.

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Pastor John Bridges

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Wine or Wine Not

By Jeanne Wheaton

The Eighteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States was ratified in 1919 by three-quarters of the nation's states, making it constitutional. Organized efforts supporting this amendment's nationwide prohibition to manufacture, sell, or transport alcoholic beverages across the country involved temperance groups concerned about the detrimental effects of alcoholic beverages on society.

Proving itself difficult to enforce, the Amendment was repealed in 1933 and subsequently overridden by the Twenty-first Amendment, which handed over its regulation to the states.

Seventh-day Adventists have long supported the temperance

movement, promoting total abstinence and legal prohibition from the earliest years. In the late nineteenth century, they formed their own organization, the American Health and Temperance Association, which lost its significance once the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified.

Nothing New Under the Sun

In recent decades, some observational studies have suggested that moderate drinking might actually be good for you. Regular use of wine, with its high resveratrol content, has been touted by many as a healthy practice, useful for the prevention of heart and other chronic diseases. However, these

types of studies make it difficult to determine cause and effect, and recent scrutiny has led many to question and even reject their conclusions. It has been suggested by some that the positive association between alcohol and health may be due to lifestyle factors other than the alcohol itself. For instance, moderate wine drinkers may have healthier habits, higher socioeconomic status, or other heart-protective factors than abstainers, accounting for better heart health. One recent systematic review of over a hundred studies involving almost five million participants did not find a significantly reduced risk of all-cause mortality with daily low or moderate alcohol intake after adjusting for possible variables.¹

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, excessive alcohol use is a leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., responsible for about 178,000 deaths each year. The American Heart Association recommends moderation in alcohol consumption; however, they suggest, “If you don’t drink already, don’t start... The Association does not recommend drinking wine or any other form of alcohol to gain potential health benefits.”² Given the well-known, potentially devastating effects of chronic alcohol use, opting for other natural sources of resveratrol, such as red grapes, blueberries, pistachios, peanuts,

“Moderate drinking is the school in which men are educated for the drunkard’s career.”

or soy, which also provide other key nutrients for a healthy diet, seems prudent.

Victor Hugo, a well-known French author

from the nineteenth century, was quoted as saying, “God made only water, but man made wine.” A truth indeed and good cause for concern. A co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist church and staunch supporter of the temperance movement summed it up this way, “Moderate drinking is the school in which men are receiving an education for the drunkard’s career.”³ Likewise, one of the wisest men that ever lived cautioned, “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.”⁴

1. Zhao J, Stockwell T, Naimi T, Churchill S, Clay J, Sherk A. Association Between Daily Alcohol Intake and Risk of All-Cause Mortality: A Systematic Review and Meta-analyses. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2023;6(3):e236185. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.6185
2. New research explores alcohol’s impact on the heart. 22 July 2024. <https://shorturl.at/ZALLZ>. Accessed 27 Nov. 2024.
3. White, E.G. *The Review and Herald*. March 25, 1884, Art. A, par.5
4. Proverbs 20:1 (New King James Version)



Jeanne Wheaton
M.S., J.R.D.N.



San Miguel: Young People Find Hope in the Faith of Jesus

By Pastor David Salazar

A Prophetic Message Inviting Us to Live with Hope in the End-time

Recently, the *Adventist Christian Academy* in San Miguel, El Salvador, hosted a week of prayer and evangelism that left a lasting impact on children, teenagers, families, and church members. With a focus on God's Word and the call to live the faith of Jesus in these last days, the program proved to be a deeply spiritual experience that touched hearts.

Messages that Reached Students' Hearts

Each morning featured two spiritual presentations: the first at 8:30 a.m. for the children, and

the second at 9:30 a.m. for the teenagers. These moments were not merely teaching sessions but meaningful encounters with God.

After the presentations, a special time was set aside for personal counseling with students who sought spiritual guidance and encouragement. It was during these moments that heartfelt stories surfaced—stories that revealed the silent struggles many young people face. One student shared tearfully that he felt rejected by his own friends; a young girl confessed that she was battling dark thoughts of self-harm; another boy, with a trembling voice, asked how he could help his parents learn to love each other and stop hurting one another. Each conversation

showed a deep need for comfort, direction, and hope. Through prayer and the Word of God, these young hearts were reminded that they are loved, valued, and precious in the eyes of Jesus.

A Call for These Times

Each evening at 6:00 p.m., the *El Calvario Adventist Church* opened its doors for the evangelistic series entitled: **“The End-Time: Living the Faith of Jesus”**. Night after night, students, parents, church members, and visitors gathered eagerly to listen to Bible-centered messages about the times in which we live.



Each topic emphasized that we are living in the closing days of earth’s history and that the distinguishing mark of God’s end-time people is to keep His commandments and to live the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12). This faith, as was stressed throughout the series, is not merely a theological concept but a living, transformative experience: trusting the Father as Christ trusted, obeying as He obeyed, and

reflecting a character renewed by divine grace.

The program concluded on Sabbath in an atmosphere of joy and gratitude. Throughout the week, heartfelt appeals were made, and many responded with a sincere desire to walk closer with the Lord and to allow the Holy Spirit to transform their lives. This week of prayer was more than a Bible series—it became a genuine encounter with God that renewed faith and sparked hope in the entire congregation. The tears shared, the prayers with the students at school, and the commitments made at the altar testified that the Holy Spirit was at work in every heart. Though the full harvest of these efforts will be seen in time, the seeds planted during these days will surely grow and yield fruit for eternity.



Pastor David Salazar

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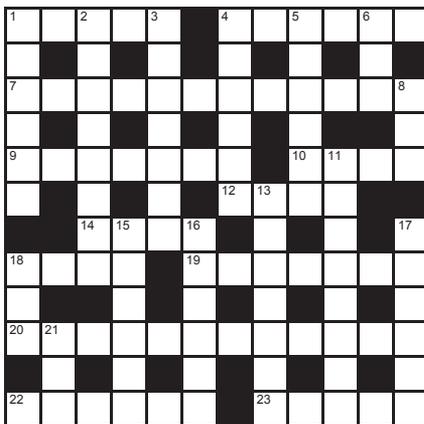
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Across

- 1 Like a sword (5)
- 4 First camp after Israel crossed the Jordan (6)
- 7 Miracle (12)
- 9 Just (7)
- 10 At the very end (4)
- 12 Watches (4)
- 14 Middle easterner (4)
- 18 Scene of Jesus' first miracle (4)
- 19 Prophet (7)
- 20 Brought back by the spies (12)
- 22 Shuts (6)
- 23 Purple seller (5)

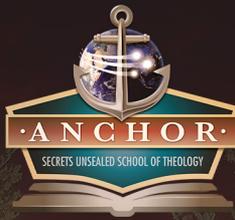
Down

- 1 Veil (6)
- 2 Army killed by an angel (8)
- 3 Region visited by Paul (7)
- 4 Visitors (6)
- 5 Zacchaeus, for example (6)
- 6 In the past (3)
- 8 Fisherman's tool (3)
- 11 Helped (8)
- 13 Like God (7)
- 15 Elijah's providers (6)
- 16 Worn by Jewish men (6)
- 17 Elijah's successor (6)
- 18 Last supper artefact (3)
- 21 Lamp fuel (3)



by Philologus

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The Great Prophecies
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