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New Year's Message from the AU President

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with a heart overflowing with thanks and praise to God that I wish for each of you a joyful and blessed 2010. The joys and sorrows of 2009 are behind us; and, like the apostle Paul, we can say: *"Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."* Philippians 3:13. The New Year lies ahead, untried and unknown; but we serve a God who knows the end from the beginning, and we can safely and joyfully step into this New Year knowing that He goes before us and with us.

As you begin the New Year, no matter how busy you are, make time to thank God for His loving care, His power, and all the things He has done for you. May the words of Paul guide our hearts as we face 2010 with hope and confidence. *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."* Colossians 3:15. With the Psalmist, let us sing, *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."* Psalms 107:1. "God desired that the whole life of His people should be a life of praise." *—Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 299.

A well-known song says: "Count your blessings; name them one by one." If each one of us took time to reflect on the way God has led us since the beginning of this year, all of us would have a long list of things for which to be grateful.

But I would also like to urge everyone to consider the seriousness and preciousness of the time we have

left. From the pen of inspiration, we read the solemn counsel that was written to the church in 1882 as a New Year's greeting: "Another year of life is now in the past. A new year is opening before us. What will be its record? What will we each inscribe upon its spotless pages? The manner in which we spend each passing day will decide this question...."

"Let us enter upon the New Year with our hearts cleansed from the defilement of selfishness and pride. Let us put away every sinful indulgence, and seek to become faithful, diligent learners in the school of Christ. A new year opens its unsullied pages before us. What shall we write upon them?"

"Seek to begin this year with right purposes and pure motives, as beings who are accountable to God. Ever bear in mind that your acts are daily passing into history by the pen of the recording angel. You must meet them again when the Judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened.

"If we connect with God, the source of peace, and light, and truth, His Spirit will flow through us as a channel, to refresh and bless all around us. This may be the last year of life to us. Shall we not enter upon it with thoughtful consideration? Shall not sincerity, respect, benevolence, mark our deportment toward all?"

"Let us withhold nothing from Him who gave His precious life for us.... Let us all consecrate to God the property He has entrusted to us. Above all, let us give Him ourselves, a freewill offering." *—The Signs of the Times*, January 5, 1882.



Today, more than ever, people are asking the all-important question: How will the world end? There are myriad answers to this question. From every part of the globe there comes yet another speculation, another theory, and another prophecy. What will happen in the future?

Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe, is coming soon to this earth with the host of holy angels to banish evil and destroy this sinful world; but, most of all, He is coming to take His children home.

Promise of Christ's coming

"And if I [Jesus] go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

Jesus Himself promised to return at God's appointed time to deliver those who have been faithful to Him. There are some 2,500 references in the Bible to the second coming of Christ. In the Old Testament, for every prophecy of His first coming, there are eight prophecies telling of His second coming. Two thousand years ago, Jesus clearly made this promise: *"I will come again."* He has not forgotten us; and He wants to take away all pain, suffering, misery, and death. The blueprint of heaven calls for the restoration of the new earth, where man and God will dwell in peace and happiness forever.

How will He return?

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." 2 Peter 3:10. Christ will come back to this earth unexpectedly, "as a thief in the night." The wicked will be totally surprised and overwhelmed. They will not be ready for this grand event.

In A.D. 79, Mount Vesuvius erupted unexpectedly. The prosperous but sinful city of Pompeii was completely destroyed by this volcanic eruption. The inhabitants of that pleasure-loving city did not expect an explosion to end their lives. But the endless party that was their lives ended abruptly. The sudden and unexpected return of Christ will likewise find the wicked

totally unprepared. No one will escape the fiery and fearful day of judgment, except those who have made Christ their Saviour. *"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen."* Revelation 1:7.

How can you prepare for the second coming of Jesus?

John, the beloved disciple, wrote: *"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."* John 6:37.

I appeal to you, Go to Jesus today. He understands you; He is your Friend, your big Brother, and, most of all, your Saviour, who died for you and loves you immeasurably. He is calling you to make that first step. Go as you are—filthy, unrighteous, a sinner in need of grace. Ask Jesus to come into your heart today. It is a blessed experience to know that Jesus forgives and saves!

The time in which we are living is serious and solemn. The world cannot continue as it is much longer. It is on the verge of a stupendous crisis and the second coming of Christ.

I wish to conclude with this verse: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28.

Let us with hope, faith, and love in our hearts prepare for the greatest event in earth's history—Christ's return. "May the beginning of this year be a time that shall never be forgotten—a time when Christ shall come in among us, and say, 'Peace be unto you.'" John 20:19.

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial. We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best." —*The Review and Herald*, January 3, 1882. I wish you the Lord's richest blessings in the New Year.

Your brother in Christ,
Henry Dering

2010 CALENDAR

- **July 2010: Canadian Field Conference**
See www.imssdarm-bg.org for more information.
- **August 18-22, 2010: Western Field Conference at Leoni Meadows, Grizzly Flats, CA**

The *American Union Newsletter* is the official organ of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Reform Movement, American Union. It is published monthly, is complimentary for our members and friends, and carries items of interest submitted by church members. We reserve the right to make changes as necessary and to refuse to print certain items.

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