

PREPARING TO STAND

Number 10 — August 2008

“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-05

Some Thoughts on Stockpiling Supplies

by Jim Buller

On page 56 of *Early Writings of Ellen G. White*, are the following interesting statements. (Note the word “provision” or “provisions” in the following two quotations.)

“The Lord has shown me repeatedly that it is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us. I saw that our bread and water will be sure at that time, and that we shall not lack or suffer hunger; for God is able to spread a table for us in the wilderness. If necessary He would send ravens to feed us, as He did to feed Elijah, or rain manna from heaven, as He did for the Israelites.”

This must be talking about the second part of the Time of Trouble, (see the end-time time-line study in “Preparing to Stand” Extra #5 regarding the two parts of the time of trouble,) because on pages 9 and 10 of *Country Living* we are also told:

“Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one.”

We are told to have country homes where we are able to raise our own provisions in preparation for not being able to buy or sell, which happens during the first part of the Time of Trouble. But, from the *Early Writings* quotation, it appears that about the beginning of the second part of the Time of Trouble, close to the same time when we flee to the “most desolate and solitary places,” (*Great Controversy* page 626), our country homes will be raided and strangers will reap the fields where we have been raising our provisions. We should expect this to happen and not be discouraged by it, for God has promised to sustain us. He “is able to spread a table for us in the

wilderness,” which is where we flee as a result of these raids and persecution. Personally, I’m looking forward to being able to eat some manna!

The main focus of this study therefore will be on the two sentences of the *Early Writings* quotation which says, “I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us.” Any food that we may have “laid up” or stockpiled, “by” us, that is in our homes will be taken from us. In the same way, we will lose things we may have “in the field” —this could be either crops in our fields and gardens that are yet to be harvested, or supplies hidden somewhere out in the countryside. Several years ago, I heard of some people that were hiding food and supplies out in the mountains for the Time of Trouble. It seems clear that we should not be doing that.

Before we go on, let’s talk a bit about things that are *not* “stockpiling.” During the first part of the Time of Trouble, when we are raising our own provisions, in many instances we will be storing up a year or more’s worth of what we have raised. Take potatoes for instance. After this year’s potato crop comes off, we won’t have any more potatoes from our gardens until next year’s crop is ready. Therefore we will need to make a root cellar, or have some other way to store up enough potatoes to last us until next year’s potatoes come out of the garden. In fact, if we are wise, we may even store up more than a year’s worth, just in case next year’s crop isn’t that plentiful for some reason. (Remember, from the study in “Preparing to Stand” Extra #5 this first part of the Time of Trouble may last for a couple years or so; and disasters, both “natural” and man-caused, will be more and more frequent.) Though we may not be used to storing up that many potatoes, this is not “laying up” or stockpiling. It is simply common practice in an agriculturally based life-style.

There are also many “supplies” that a household living this type of life-style will need to be able to function without running down to the store for every little thing —remember, we won’t be able to buy or sell during this time. Purchasing these items, and gathering them together now, even though God may not have opened the way for us to get out in the country just yet, is not stockpiling either —any more than, say, a person planning to go to work as a mechanic collecting the tools he will need to carry on his trade would be.

The real issue behind this subject is “trusting wholly in God.” Is our “trust” in our stockpile of supplies, or is our “trust” in God? This same question could be asked about learning “skills.” Let me illustrate with a couple of stories.

Once I heard about a missionary family who was stationed a way back in the bush. The husband had to be away for a few days, leaving his wife and children at the mission station. During the time he was away, a deadly snake came in their house. The wife, who was not familiar with firearms, gets the gun her husband left behind, and somehow manages to load it. She points the gun at the snake and prays, “Lord you aim, I’ll pull the trigger” —and shoots the snake right in the head! Was she “trusting wholly in God” —obviously! But, is it necessary to have empty pockets, bare shelves, and to lack skills in order to be trusting *wholly* in God? Somehow many of us have the idea that to truly be trusting *wholly* in God we must be in a position where we have literally nothing. But, let’s look at another story, this one from the Bible.

In 1 Samuel 17 is the familiar story of David and Goliath. But read the story again and look at the details we usually skip over. Was David skilled with the sling —Yes! In fact the Israelites about that time were known for their skill with a sling. (See Judges 20:16 for an example!) Notice also what David tells King Saul about experiences he has already had going up against enemies that were both larger and stronger than he was. “Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them.” (1 Samuel 17:36.)

Notice also that when David went out to fight Goliath, he took not only his sling, but also his staff, —a long-range weapon *and* a short-range weapon. He also picked up five smooth stones. (See 1 Samuel 17:40.) David had skills, experience, confidence, and the tools to do the job! Does this mean that he went in his own strength, and that he wasn’t “trusting *wholly* in God?” —No!

Notice what David told Goliath as he came on the field of battle. “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin.” *Goliath* was the one coming in his own strength. “But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts ...” David was essentially saying, whatever happens here is not up to either of our skills and abilities, but up to *God*. It *is not* necessary to have empty pockets, bare shelves, and inadequate skills to be “trusting *wholly* in God.”

There are many other Bible stories that illustrate this same point. As mentioned in “Preparing to Stand” #2, Noah building the ark is an excellent example. God told Noah to build the ark. Does this mean that Noah was going to have to depend on his own skills and abilities? —No. Faith and works go together. God and Noah were working on the project *together*. *Patriarchs and Prophets* page 95 says, “All that man could do was done to render the work perfect” —*perfect* skills and abilities on Noah’s part! “Yet the ark could not of itself have withstood the storm which was to come upon the earth. *God alone* could preserve His servants upon the tempestuous waters.” (Emphasis supplied.) Even though Noah had *perfect* skills, he was still relying on GOD ALONE!!! In spite of all he did he was still “trusting *wholly* in God!”

Somehow we have picked up the idea that if God is going to do something it leaves us out of the picture; and if we do something, it leaves God out. But this idea is not scriptural. The Bible says, “we are labourers *together with* God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9 (emphasis supplied.) And read James chapter 2, faith and works *go together!*

Like Noah, *we have been told* to get out in the country where we can be set up to “raise our own provisions.” Most of us will have to learn a few things, and get geared up to be able to do this; and we also may have to do some re-locating. We have also been told that we will be fleeing to the “most desolate and solitary places,” and we will also have to learn a few things and get geared up for that too. Brothers and Sisters, we have our part to do; and by doing our part we are *not* necessarily leaving God out. Sure, there are those who will leave God behind, and run off in their own wisdom and strength —but this is not the way it *should* be, or the way God wants it to be. He wants us to work *together* with Him.

So what exactly is our part? Notice what these three stories have in common. The missionary wife, David and Noah each did *all* they could, and then trusted that God would do the rest. We, therefore, need to do all we can, and trust that God will do what we can not do.

Notice also that during the first part of the time of trouble we *are* told to raise our own provisions, and not just to eat from what we have previously stockpiled. In fact, the process of raising our food will be a lesson for us in how to trust wholly in God. As we do what we can —preparing the soil, planting, watering, weeding— we still have to depend on God to make the plants grow and produce the food we need. But if we don't do our part ... ? Notice the following Ellen White quotation from the July 17, 1888 issue of the Review and Herald:

“God does not work miracles where he has provided *means* by which the work may be accomplished. Use your time and talents in his service, and he will not fail to work with your efforts. If the farmer fails to plow and sow, God does not work a miracle to undo the results of his neglect. Harvest-time finds his fields barren —there are no sheaves to be reaped, no grain to be garnered. God provided the seed and the soil, the sun and the rain; and if the agriculturist had employed the means that were at his hand, he would have received according to his sowing and his labor.”

In closing I think the old memory verse from Proverbs 3:5-6 says it very well. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.” We need to develop the habit of acknowledging God “in *all* our ways” because when we don't acknowledge Him, we probably are running off in our own strength and wisdom. But, if we “acknowledge Him in *all* our ways” because we “*don't* lean on our own understanding,” and let *Him* “direct our paths,” *He* will have us do the right thing. This is “trusting wholly in God.”

The Desire of Ages pages 121-122

“In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Rev. 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, “He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” Isa. 33:16. By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed. “They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.” Ps. 37:19. To that time of distress the prophet Habakkuk looked forward, and his words express the faith of the church: “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” Hab. 3:17,18.”

Contact Information:

Email seems to be the most efficient way to communicate, but here is my address for the time being.

“Preparing to Stand”

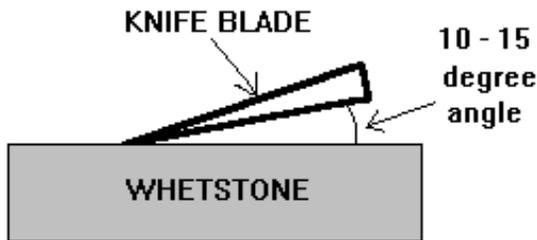
Jim Buller
3520 Harmon Rd
Bakersfield, CA 93307

jabuller@juno.com

Knife Sharpening

When sharpening a knife, what you are actually doing is grinding off metal to make a new sharp edge on the blade. The diagram at the right shows a microscopic cross-section view of the edge of a dull knife. Notice how the edge is rounded. In order to sharpen it, the shaded metal must be ground off with the sharpening stone.

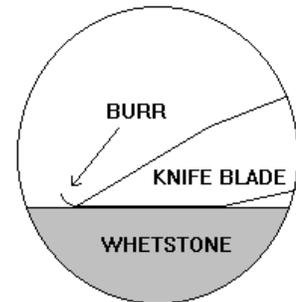
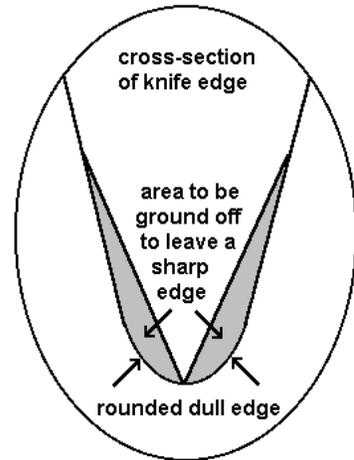
Therefore, while sharpening, the most important thing is to keep the angle of the blade to the whetstone the same while you are sharpening it. This must be done in order to grind a keen edge. If the angle is not kept the same, it will be ground rounded again and the knife will not end up being sharp.



At first press fairly hard, using a circular or figure-eight motion, (or whatever suits you). Work all along the knife edge from the point to the base, changing sides every so often. Rinse or wipe off the knife and the face of the whetstone frequently to remove the small pieces of metal and stone that are ground off. Rinsing in water works well.

When the roundness of the dull edge has been ground off, the metal at the very edge will have a tendency to turn upward rather than being ground off. This is called "burr" or "wire edge." This is useful because it lets you know when the roundness has been ground out, but the burr should be removed before you're finished. You can feel the burr by lightly rubbing your thumb or finger across the blade from the back of the knife toward the edge. The burr will catch slightly in the grooves of your fingertip. Note that it will be only on the side opposite of where the whetstone was used last. Check for this burr frequently during the sharpening process. Continue grinding both sides of the knife with the whetstone until you have this burr all along the edge. When this happens, all the roundness has been ground off, and there is a good edge all along the knife.

The last thing to do is to grind off the burr. To do this, Continue grinding as before, but press *very lightly*. Change sides and rinse both blade and stone after every couple strokes. Check for burr each time you change sides. When the burr has been ground off, the knife should be sharp. This whole sharpening process may take some time at first, but as your skill improves it will take less time to make a sharp edge. This same procedure can be used for sharpening other tools such as hatchets and axes.



"If the ax is dull, and one does not sharpen the edge, then he must use more strength; but wisdom brings success."

Ecclesiastes 10:10