

20-Oct-2012

I Did it My Way, Part II

“...Immanuel, as defined in Isa seven, in the person of the normally shy and self-effacious man named Derek West, this very author, frees himself from all timid modesty and identifies himself as the one given this assignment; he is the son of man of whom Christ promised to emerge in John 8: 34, 35, John 6: 27, Isa 7: 15, 2Sam 7: 10-14, etc. As a result, he proves from the Testimony of Jesus the sinfulness of smoking cigarettes. He proves that it is not good; it has no virtue as a tool in this work; and he compels the disciples indeed to heed the Davidic commission and ‘do good’ so that they may win their Christ-relayed reward to dwell in the land...”

Clemency for Good Behavior

Emilio,

You wrote of your struggles to overcome your smoking habit, and now, based upon the recent MSC letter, *I Did It My Way*, you desire a counseling revisitiation of the ethics pertaining to that struggle. In your mind, the letter may have exposed the possibility that smoking is not now condemned, and this presumption has kindled within your soul the daunting temptation of your own self-justification in that habit. I thank you for the opportunity for me to sharpen the message of that former letter.

Cigarette and cigar smoking has always been outlawed, theologically, by the Seventh-day Adventist church. This has been enforced scripturally by Paul’s counsel, whereby he expresses the need to guard our bodies as the temple of God—not to mention the denunciations delivered by the *Spirit of Prophecy* (SOP). As this habit has resurfaced in your life, you do well to expose it as you now participate in the ritual that the MSA has defined as the *Ordinance of Humility*. Your intense study into this, the MSA’s light has, by the Lord’s Spirit, caused you to wash your feet proverbially, and this has correctly and correspondingly driven you to uncover the dark stain of smoking that has tarnished your trodden-life’s path. Should you cast it over into the precipice, or can you hold onto the “cords” while you continue to practice that vice? —is the issue at hand. Now, to heed the Savior’s commission to become clean in every whit, you seek to receive a *Testimony-of-Jesus*, legal ruling to guide your feet to the Kingdom. Does the man who bears the pitcher of water to facilitate the *Ordinance of Humility* have, within his fountain, the mission and ability to scrub away your nicotine stains? —you wonder. To thwart this temptation, the MSA must successfully argue to convince you of Father’s judgment and do so without any ambiguity for to overcome, you must first know that He disapproves. Otherwise, it will be nearly impossible for you to engender the internal fortitude to prevail in this wrestling match. Any hint that He may be casually approving of your habit will erode and zap your spiritual power to resist. Remember, Jacob’s grace was attained only after he struggled, with the full intensity that he could endogenously muster, until he received the blessing—he did not get power from Christ, His wrongly-perceived adversary. This theme matures the saints beyond another Pauline, doctrinal misconception, the one that discredits work, a man’s

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need to deploy his own strength, to win salvation. Thus, my burden is to intensify my lawyering duties so as to aid you in this, your own energetic fight for your seat in the Kingdom. You have courageously begun this struggle with the flesh by boldly revealing this, your secret reproach, to the brethren of like faith. I do applaud you for delivering that powerful wrestling maneuver and assure you that it will win for you success. It is a strong and important step in your path to righteousness because, now, you can be aided by the knowledge of our love for you. Therefore, as I unfold to you the *Testimony-of-Jesus* standard that has been heretofore hidden from the eyes of the church, I must first define for you the mission of

Christ's Appointed Lawyer

All need to witness the Lord's work in your life as you step forward and introduce yourself to the disciples and claim the love promised to you. You wrote the following:

"I have been enjoying your recent emails and listening to audio studies. I have to say that the 'I did it My Way' was one I had a challenge integrating and differentiating. . ."

"When I first started investigating the MSA, I can recall reading your literature and smoking cigarettes at the same time. Once I committed to following the Lord's voice, I was able to stop smoking cold turkey with success and praise to Father for the strength to do so. That was almost four years ago. Then for some mystery, I began smoking again a few months ago. I tried to quit a number of times but to no avail. When you came to Edmonton, I stopped a few days prior just like when the announcement of the prophet Samuel arriving to Jesse's town...the people cleaned themselves up. And that's what I endeavored to do."

"But once the seminar ended I again took up the habit and didn't know where to get the motivation to quit... Then I read your email, and I must say it was tempting to make a case for smoking...and call it my way. I searched for any Biblical standards/laws that prohibit smoking..." —E-mail, Emilio C___, 10-22-2012, 1:21 PM, Ellipsis belong to quote

There is at least one other person amongst us who struggles with the tyranny of the cigarette habit and his/her affliction had been called to my attention shortly before your E-mail. I know that others have confessed that this habit has likewise at least seduced, if not plagued, them in the past. Now I can better understand why, in my dreams, I have, on occasion also found myself smoking and doing so with ambiguous justification. I do not smoke and haven't done so since the days of my adventurous youth. Such a dream is a revelation that we are one, and as we advance, we, as a community, must break that habit. But let it be known, dreams are not the basis for my legal findings. Instead, we, the disciples indeed, have real and challenging problems which require, as indicated by our most recent refrain from *Ps 37*, our trust in the Lord. In fact, in that Text we are encouraged to **"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace"** —*Ps 37: 37*. This, the path to peace, is the underpinning of my findings. By bringing your burden to me, you have heeded that counsel and can resultantly anticipate your peace. It was not the purpose of the E-mail to which you referenced to give cover and legitimacy to any who have self-destructive habits which tether them to the earth; hence, you should rejoice that the fountain water contained in the proverbial pitcher has been, upon my shoulders, hoisted above the earth, on the cloud, within the upper room.

True, to the common student, the *Testimony of Jesus* does not appear to directly forbid cigarette smoking; it is only by integrating into our lives the principles of its teachings that we can discern Its forbidding stance on that issue. This, again is the reason why we must do as you have done and publically, to the brethren, acknowledge all of our reproaches and sins —do not seek grace in hiding them,— embracing the service afforded to the disciples who have 'found' the perfect and upright man, the man of peace, heaven's lawyer. Such is the only way to have our feet washed: We must remove our shoes and socks in his, the lawyer's, presence. With regard to this lesson, you may have missed the following applicable statement recorded in the E-mail that you referenced for your question: **"...When this trust is achieved, then we will rest assured that we are judged by the Law, and any suggestion that a scientist can give us a warning that Christ did not cover in His law**

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and/or with His lawyer is to suggest that He could not Himself communicate to this generation from His divine, Sinai-ic perch of the past” —the MSC, E-mail/letter, 16-Oct-2012, *I did it My Way*.

To gauge the full span of this issue, consider the following argument only now to be presented before the Divine, Judicial Bench. It expresses Freedom from

The Enshackling Traps

You mentioned that you have great difficulty in breaking that smoking habit; in fact, after four years of freedom, you have again succumbed. This means that you are a servant, indeed a slave to it. And, this very testimony from you gives to me my answer. Being a self-appointed slave gives to you solid, irrefutable evidence —not just scientifically-predicated findings— to convict you that smoking is an evil and demonic entanglement. At least the MSC can deploy its “trump card” and say, “smoking is proven to be, not good.” Subsequently, your freedom requires another draft of the fountain, one that was not available to you four years ago. Christ came to free slaves and not to eternally shackle them. In fact, this is the overwhelming theme of the Passover, the reason for the Lord’s call of ascension, for the disciples, to the upper room. The Lord spoke disparagingly about such servitude from a familiar Text which now takes a new, differential meaning. He said, **“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”** —John 8: 31, 32. Notice and settle upon the thrust of this God-the-Father relayed counsel; do not now glibly or nonchalantly appraise the power of its punch. Freedom comes only by continuing —not in EGW’s word, nor in scientific findings but— in the *Testimony of Jesus*. There is no other formula in the universe for our freedom. More Testimony is available to you today than ever before; thus, it is up to you to be a disciple and receive it. Some may immediately retort the following: The MSC’s claim is that the sin is in the servitude; is not such a claim, at best, an inferential argument, one that is subject to being overruled by the Bench, for the Lord’s subject in this Text is freedom —not its antonym, slavery? As such, how can the MSC, by use of antonymic analysis, make its case with a claim of *Testimony-of-Jesus* validation? To answer this objection, the Lord’s detractors serve the MSC in the advance of this argument: They expand, with Christ’s confirming acknowledgement, the meaning of His use of the term, “freedom”. In their zeal to discredit Christ, the Pharisees opened the door and gave license to the MSC’s expanded argument against the slavery of bad habits. They carefully weighed and considered the Lord’s statement pertaining to “freedom”, and then they sought to discredit His words by use of its antonym, bondage, to launch their counter attack. But what is remarkable is that the Lord advanced His teaching on the sophistry of their own arguments. In other words, He, Himself parlayed into His sermon lessons of bondage which they, the Jews, raised. Otherwise, one could challenge this lesson claiming it to be out of context for our salvation comes by virtue of our compliance to His testimony. The Lord’s enemies, seeking to pervert the Lord’s promise of freedom, juxtapositioned it to bondage when they said, **“...We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free”** —John 8: 33. In the Lord’s reply we see the association between bondage and sin. He explains that sin creates servitude or bondage; thus, anything that defeats our will and our yearning for a free choice is the thing from which the Lord came to rescue us; it is now defined as sin. If the Lord came to free us from bondage, and sin makes us its servant, then any bondage is sin. Cigarettes yield a very strong tether of bondage; therefore a cigarette habit is a sin. He said,

“³¹If ye continue in MY word, then are ye MY disciples indeed; ³²And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ³³They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? ³⁴Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ³⁵And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ³⁶If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. ³⁷I know that ye are Abraham’s seed...” —John 8: 31-37

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Before any further comment on these Texts, I find it amazing indeed that the Lord, in these short Texts, makes inconsistent use of His pronoun voice; this He does for a deeper purpose, and this phenomenon deserves my comment now. This finding could only serve as proof that when He refers to the “son”, He is not making reference to Himself for here, to convey His message, when speaking of Himself, He deploys the first-person voice using the pronouns “my” and “I”. If this were not the case, the Lord would have spoken differently and said, ‘**I abideth in the house for ever and I shall make you free**’; He does not speak that way; instead, He says, “**the son abideth in the house for ever,**” and “**the son...shall make you free.**” After all, He surrounds that phrase using the first-person voice by saying before the phrase, “**Verily, Verily, I say unto you...**” Then immediately after it, He says, “**I know that ye are Abraham’s seed...**” Evidently, the son, the light of Israel, the son of David promised to sit on the earth’s throne forever (see *Ps 89, 2Sam seven*, etc) is the son to whom Christ refers, and he, by expanding and clarifying the Lord’s testimony is the one who makes the slavery-overcoming, *disciples indeed* free. He, by the impress of the Comforter and by authority of being heaven’s appointed lawyer, is to begin to recycle the *Testimony of Jesus* making it plain today so as to afford for the true disciples the chance to continue in Christ’s word and to win their freedom. Thus was David, pertaining to the house of which his son was to eventually become the master, promised the following:

*“¹⁰Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before time...¹¹Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. ¹²And when thy day be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his Kingdom. ¹³He shall build an house for my name and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. ¹⁴**I WILL BE HIS FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE MY SON...**” —2Sam7: 10-14.*

Consequently, when we marry *John eight* with *2Sam seven*, we see the prophetic promise of the house and of the son. Christ is to build David’s son a house, one that will endure forever —just as promised in our key, anti-bondage Text above. Christ is also to adopt David’s son as His own; thus, when He says, “**the son abideth ever...the son therefore shall make you free**”, He, Christ, is referring to the promised son of David. He, the same man who is to bring our oneness, is not to be a servant but a son, a man free of all bondage. Consequently, the Lord was not conveying to us that He Himself was the object of His own promise; He, Christ, was neither the servant or the son to whom He made reference in *John 8: 35, 36*. Without a doubt then, to be made free from the be-shackling habit of cigarette smoking requires that one become —not a servant, nor a disciple, but—a *disciple indeed*. Such a saint must determine to not become a servant, a temporary, nominal, SDA occupant in the house, but a son, one who shall forever have full rights and privileges. But be it not mistaken, *disciples indeed* will, in verity, have their own servants for the Lord promises, “**...I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there**” —*Isa 65: 9*. Evidently, the *disciples indeed*, having achieved oneness in community with the son of David, fall into the first category that is referred to as “my elect”. David, as shown below from *Ps 37*, makes this same point. But before thereto proceeding, let us fully drink down the meaning now conveyed to us from our keystone, anti-bondage Text, *John 8: 35, 36*.

A transition is to occur for the disciples in the day of the son of man’s emergence. This is the day when we are to heed carefully to his wisdom; indeed, we are to labor for it —even if such labor is so arduous that we must break the shackles of all “bad” habits. We are to, “**Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed**” —*John 6: 27*. This labor is now to define our “work”, our way. Consequently, having combined the *John-six* commission with the *John-eight* commission, the portion of the *Testimony of Jesus* which forbids cigarette smoking and gives to you your hope, we can be assured of the promise of freedom given to us by Christ. We can know that once the *disciples indeed* are freed, they will never again be servants; they will loose all shackles of bondage; instead they will become sons and daughters of God, saints who receive the very glory which the Father gave to Christ. E.G. White called them “**joint heirs with Christ**”. She

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said, “**Many of you are seeking honor of one another. But what is the honor or the approval of man to one who regards himself as a son of God, a joint heir with Christ? ...**” —see E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 5, 48:2. Did not Christ pray, “**That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US: that the world may believe...And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one**” —John 17: 21, 22? Knowing and fully integrating this Text into our understanding of discipleship, we can be certain of the impossibility for a disciple to be one with Father and Christ and yet be a servant to any force in the universe for such would make the Father and the Son, Beings united with us by Christ’s prayer, to be shackled and trapped in the same bondage.

Contrary to this, we must now know that freedom from such sin is made manifest in

The Reward for “Good” Behavior

By now, all disciples have been made aware that the Lord included the Psalms as being integral to His testimony. He left on record that He, Christ, would fulfill all that was written of Him in the Psalms (See Luke 24: 44). He also noted, that when David made reference to the Lord, He was speaking of Christ (See Mark 12: 35-37). This neatly integrates into our studies, central in emphasis for this hour, the appeal of *Psalms 37*, the Psalm that mandates our trust in the Lord and promises to us a reward for our obedience, a reward which Christ, in His testimony, promises to fulfill. Therein does David promise that our dwelling in the land —not just the inheritance of it by first-tier disciples— hinges upon our commission of two Davidic mandates: that of trusting in the Lord and that of doing good. In other words, of the two groups, the elect and the servants, both must comply with this Davidic duty. Speaking of Christ, the One who promised “...*that all things must be fulfilled, which were written...in the psalms, concerning me*” —Luke 24: 44— David said the following: “**Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed**” —Ps 37: 3. This commission could only apply to this generation in this very hour for never before have any been able to discern the Lord’s identity so as to trust in Him. For this reason, they have not until now been fed. Additionally, never before has the church arrived at an hour in time which allows her to choose the good and refuse the evil. Such is to be Immanuel’s commission, the man of whom it was prophesied, “**Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good...for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.**” —Isa 7: 15, 22. In fact, we can, according to Paul, in *Heb five & six*, only learn to discern between good and evil after having left the principle doctrines of Christ. Having so done — even now evidenced by our novel understanding of “freedom”— we are promised to become of full age, to have our senses exercised, and by that process, we can discern both good and evil. These are the procedures which Paul defines. This being said, let it be known that none else in the history of the universe, hardly none but Father and Christ and perhaps the Comforter —we do not know for He does not speak of Himself (John 16: 13)— has achieved this level of maturation and wisdom. This conclusion of universal confusion over righteousness can be confirmed merely by examining Lucifer’s folly. Such an endowment of wisdom in the universe, for us, was promised immediately after the fall of man, for while pointing to the *disciples indeed*, the ones who are to dwell in the house forever, Father said, “**Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil**” — Gen 3: 22. Immanuel as defined in *Isa seven*, in the person of the normally shy and self-effacious man named Derek West, this very author, frees himself of all timid modesty and dutifully identifies himself as the one given this assignment; he is the son of man of whom Christ promised to emerge in John 8: 34, 35, John 6: 27, Isa 7: 15, 2Sam 7: 10-14, etc. As a result, he proves from the *Testimony of Jesus* the sinfulness of smoking cigarettes. He proves that it is not good; it has no virtue as a tool in this work; and he compels the *disciples indeed* to heed the Davidic commission and “do good” so that they may win their Christ-relayed reward to dwell in the land. Beyond that he makes a key differentiation: He upholds the liberated policy cited by you in the last letter—that of taking over-the-counter stimulants as an aid to advance the Kingdom so as to allow long, late-hour

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driving even if the drink contains high doses of vitamins and caffeine. This differentiation is justified because it meets the commission to do good and advancing the Kingdom falls squarely into that category, and it fulfills the other leg of the Davidic commission, that which requires that we trust in the Lord. I understand that this paragraph may have some overlapping expressions. Such is done to seal within all the Father's orientation in this matter: He is not calling to Himself an eternal family of slaves.

Today, we must trust in the Lord and do good, and we must know that the two requirements, though they may have some overlap, are not one and the same mandate. The discernment of this requires a mastery of the present-truth skill of differentiation. Differentiation is exactly that to which Paul referred when he promised to us the day of discernment pertaining to the "oracles of God" when he said, *"...For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection..."* —Heb 5: 13, 14, 6: 1. It is not "good" to bring hazard upon oneself unless such a hazard advances the Gospel and the Kingdom. This is, after all, the only reason why Christ led Jesus to Calvary. If He could have merely smoked a cigarette to achieve the same goal, then He would have done that instead of the other. Going to Calvary by Jesus; casting Himself from the pinnacle of the temple; going to the gentiles by the disciples; or driving under the influence of a stimulant, in the dead of the night, for five hours by the *mustard seed*, can all become examples of bad or good behavior. Only one who has consumed strong meat so as to differentiate or choose the good and refuse the evil is capable of making a judgment on these issues. The distinction is that, by careful judgment, the good can be deemed to reverse the harm or overwhelm the evil. When such a bold move is done—like the three Hebrew boys and the fiery furnace—then Father, an expert in choosing between the two, can give His angels charge over us to protect us from the hazard of our risk. Jesus, had He yielded to the temptation and cast Himself from the Temple Pinnacle, would have committed a sin against His own good—the very reason why Christ gave to us the Law—and would not have yielded for Himself the Father's approval; therefore, He did not do it. Why, because, unlike being led to Calvary, it could not have honored the Father by advancing the cause of salvation. Your temptation pertaining to cigarettes is a sin of the same nature, of casting oneself from the temple pinnacle. You must now differentiate between the good and the evil and win—first on a doctrinal level, then on a practical level—your victory. The doctrine, the light, will guide your steps for the desire of Father's approval always gives to us the maximum power to resist evil. We merely need to become convinced of His opinion pertaining to our walk. This principle of careful distinction was expressed by me in the letter to which you referred:

"If the risk is not certain and clear and corroborated by objectively-cited peril, and if the Bible cannot confirm the hazard to our health, then each individual who is on an active assignment for the Lord should measure for himself the warning hazards against the urgency-of-the benefit and then rest their trust in the Lord's hands. This is applicable with regard to most, if not all, medicines, whether natural or chemically engineered. Some would mistakenly assert that this is presumptuous, but such a sin is only chargeable to those who directly refuse righteousness, and parsing the difference (differentiation) is a matter of biblical jurisprudence...What answer is provided for all who trust in the Lord? —"commit thy way unto the Lord...and he shall bring it to pass" Here we see that our way, once committed to Christ, is promised success."
—Derek West, the MSC, 16-Oct-2012, *I Did it My Way*.

If you can show to me that smoking can advance the gospel like a late-night-driving stimulant then I will re-assess the prohibition of that habit. This I will do only for those who do not have a history of addiction for the addict can more readily fall back under the yoke of its enslaving power. What will empower you to victory has already occurred: You have revealed yourself to your brethren. When you meet with them, give to them a report of your success and your falterings; consider this part of the *Ordinance of Humility* for you. This you should do as you remember, cheerleaders can motivate behavior. But as you do this, also avoid yesterday's old clichés; that gig is up. Work, faith, and grace all lead to salvation for the end-time disciples. Do not, by compelling all to pray for

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you, make it a matter of group prayer either. When Jacob wrestled with Christ, it was a personal interaction between the two of them. Furthermore, you have gained victory before without any group prayer. Instead, allow your love for the brethren and their love for you be your driving inspiration. If prayer was the answer, then David would have committed Christ to a different mission in our lives, one of praying for victory. The entire book of Psalm is full of David's prayers to Christ for our success. It is his overwhelming theme. To boot, Christ prayed to Father for your success before you were born. Instead of that being your remedy, try compliance. David made our success a matter of our efforts: He told us, not to pray to keep the Lord's way but to, **"Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land"** —Ps 37: 34. Do not become bogged down on fanciful arguments of yesterday's childish remedies, the Lord requires our effort—even if milk doctrinaires call such a thing *Righteousness by Works*. Our exaltation will come, just as promised, by our keeping the commandments of God and the *Testimony of Jesus* and not by our merely praying for it. The distinction between works and faith are entanglements of those who have failed to heed Paul's counsel, who have failed to grow up, yesterday. Then, we could not work nor could we exhibit faith because we could not define good and evil. The commission to stop smoking requires the same discipline as that of the law which prohibits one from bathing with an electrical toaster. Both require work; however, the latter, and to some degree, the former, represents a harm that the unsuspecting and uneducated ignore. But once a man knows that a connected toaster in the bath tub with him is injurious to his health, then he has more power to resist its allure, and then he can exhibit *Righteousness by Works*. Knowing for a certainty of the Father's disapproval, "Faith," once you know of Him, is even a more powerful incentive to work righteousness in your life.

We must all become "do-gooders". This is our formula to dwell in the land. A man cannot do good, as commanded, if he self-indulgently injures himself. Remember, the church's departure from Egypt? It illustrates this point and allows us to peer more deeply into this litigation so as to see it as a statute. Liberation and the lessons thereto pertaining show the "way", an approved path, encouraged by heaven. Pharaoh tried to destroy the Hebrews, but the Lord intervened; He approved of their risk-of-hazard by leaving Egypt to advance the Kingdom. He did so because it was a move to freedom and away from bondage. Since He did that for their/our good, since He broke their shackles, then He obviously defined for us the law that restrictive shackles are evil.

"And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand...And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us" —Deut 6: 20, 21, 24, 25.

Here we see the reason to be recited to our children for the law was the freedom from bondage. What was their righteousness? First, it was liberation, then obedience; both were for their good. Obedience to the Law can only come when a man is fully free. So you see, freedom from bondage is the law; it is for our own good. Our problem, these past 6000 years, is that we needed to grow up to appreciate freedom. Accordingly, to walk headlong back into bondage is to greatly offend the Lord and to resist His leading us into the Kingdom. Such is exactly what Israel deemed to do that won the Lord's desire to curse His own people. While yet in transition, while traveling to the Kingdom, they said, **"...Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt"** —Num 14: 4. When the saints finally understand that hazard of our well-being greatly offends God, that His goal, since creation, was to make us happy, then all will use their energy, their work, to comply and their prayers will be dominated—not by petitions for victory, but— with petitions of praise and thanksgiving for those successes. Then we will be "sons who abide forever".

Finally, the requirement to trust in the Lord takes another application that will help you here. I last visited Edmonton nearly three weeks ago. Before that, for some time, perhaps as much as three

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months, the message had been honed and fine-tuned under the theme of the *Ordinance of Humiliation*, the removal of our socks and shoes so as to expose our feet. This has placed much stress on the brethren; I know from the reaction in my very own home. In the time of such stress, rather than reverting to old forms of stress releases, in your case, cigarettes, learn to trust in Christ. You must know that he feels your burden, and He and Father have plotted this path from the beginning, and They have not ignored our psychological trauma. It is always easier holding on to His word than it is seeking to find our own tension relief. Such is exemplified by the example of your own choosing: the visit of Samuel to Bethlehem. Can't you just imagine those elders giving a great sigh of relief when they uncovered Samuel's true purpose? The same will occur with all of the faithful: This mission is not as hard as our carnal perceptions lead us to assume. This, I feel the Edmonton brethren realized from my last visit; it went very well contrary to the expectations of some.

May God, with this counsel to you, re-energize you to fully commit to His way. And as you do so, may you take courage that He is leading you home with the rest of His children who likewise have taken to His son, in this hour to free them on their pathway home.

Sincerely,

Derek