


HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM



**When you have a holiday, make it
a pleasant and happy day for your
children, and make it also a pleasant
day for the poor and the afflicted.**

Ellen G. White



Editor's Letter

John J. Grosboll

The Crisis Issue at the End of the World

When Jesus came to our world to become our Savior and Redeemer, the second table of the law of God—the last six commandments—were often ignored, while God's professed people exalted in their keeping of the first four commandments and avoiding idolatry, which had been the plague of God's professed people up until the time of the Babylonian captivity. This can be seen over and over in the gospels (see for example Mark 3:1–6).

But in the last days, the situation is reversed. We know this from studying Revelation 13. There will be great emphasis on loving your fellow man but there will be a rebellion against the first table of the law, which commands us to love God with all our heart and mind. If I do love God with all my heart, I will never commit idolatry. However, according to Revelation 13

we will be commanded to worship an image.

Does the Bible emphasize the fact that law-keeping versus law-breaking will be the issue in the last days and that the special issue will involve the first four commandments? It does.

Here is a little of the evidence:

1. The difference which distinguishes God's children from the rest of the world in the last days is that God's children in the last days will be commandment keepers in contrast with those who worship the beast and the image to the beast and who receive the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9–12; 13:14–17). Worshiping any image is a violation of the second commandment.
2. The saved from the last generation will be those who do not worship the beast, the image, and receive the mark of the beast (Revelation 15:2; 20:4).
3. Nobody can be saved who is a violator of the second commandment unless he repents and is converted and forsakes that sin. Notice the warnings about this in 1 Corinthians 6:9; Revelation 21:8; 22:15.
4. A deliberate attempt to change God's times and His law is a special identifying mark of the apostasy of the latter days according to Daniel 7:25. The only times in God's law are the times mentioned in the fourth commandment, the longest commandment of the ten and the one that has been almost universally broken since ancient times. And yet this commandment for thousands of years has been the sign that distinguishes God's true people from all others. (See Exodus 31:12–17. Compare Ezekiel 20.)

LANDMARKS

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LandMarks is a magazine of Steps to Life, a ministry established in 1988 by Seventh-day Adventists. It is dedicated to the publication of the historic doctrines held by God's true people in all ages. Its special emphasis is to present truth (II Peter 1:12)—those historic doctrines espoused by Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in the nineteenth century. Its purpose is to help all of God's remnant people to press together in unity, holding high the banner on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Because the powers of darkness have attempted to take control of God's last-day people through infiltration and false signs and teaching which if possible would deceive the very elect, this magazine is intended to help those believers who are contending with professed brethren over the faith once delivered to the saints. Many historic believers have established home churches where they can bring new interests and converts to hear the Three Angels' Messages instead of the New Theology. This magazine is designed to help them to defend the faith and to expose the flood of false doctrine by which the truth is being assailed in these last days.

It is the goal of *LandMarks'* editors to present articles based on truth from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Viewpoints of writers and/or contributors expressed outside of articles printed in this publication are not necessarily the views of this magazine's editors and are not endorsed by Steps to Life Ministries.

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The Rule of the Judgment

By John J. Grosboll

When I was a boy, there was a very popular magazine that I used to read just about every month called *The Reader's Digest*. This magazine consisted of summarized articles from many other magazines and newspapers. At the back of the magazine there was always a condensed book for quick reading. However, when summarizing, a lot of details were left out that may have been important to the story.

The Bible has many summary statements in which huge amounts of information are summarized in just a few sentences. For example, Matthew 22:37–40 contains in two or three sentences a summary statement by Jesus Christ. Jesus said that on these two things, the whole law and the prophets – everything – hangs.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave an even shorter summary that is often referred to as *the golden rule*. He said, “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

I have tried for many years to understand that sentence. There is an interesting paragraph from the book, *The Desire of Ages*, 640, that states, “Millions upon millions of human souls ready to perish, bound in chains of ignorance and sin, have never so much as heard of Christ’s love for them. Were our condition and theirs to be reversed, what would we desire for them to do for us? All this, so far as lies in our power, we are under the most solemn obligation to do for them. Christ’s rule of life, by which every one of us must stand or fall in the judgment, is, ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them’ (Matthew 7:12).”

This is the golden rule that will determine each person’s eternal destiny in the judgment. It is unfortunate that Christians spend so much time fighting with each other over differences of understanding about theology. However, that is reality. Some years ago, back in the 1990s, a huge controversy arose about whether Jesus died the first death or the second death on the cross of Calvary. The prophecy concerning what the Messiah would suffer for the human family is recorded in Psalm 18:4, 5. It says, “The pangs

of death encompassed Me, the floods of ungodliness made Me afraid. The sorrows of Sheol surrounded Me; the snares of death confronted Me” (literal translation).

Some people have a rather shallow view of the cross of Christ, seeing Christ as only somebody who died as a martyr. But Jesus did not die on the cross of Calvary the death of the martyr. When the martyrs died, they died having a great hope. They knew that although other men put them to death, they would be raised again to eternal life. It is recorded as one man was being led to his martyrdom, a clergyman said to him, “We are going to cut you off from the church

hope. They knew it was temporary. By contrast, in recent years there have been a number of people who have lit themselves on fire and burned to death in terrible screaming agony.

Life in this world, whether you are killed or martyred or not, is very temporary. One time there was a family that was brought before the judges for their faith. One of the youngest boys said, When we have family worship, we always pray for the government and the leaders for the government. The judges were deeply moved by this testimony, that this was a family that not only prayed, but they prayed for their enemies and the government, the people who were leading

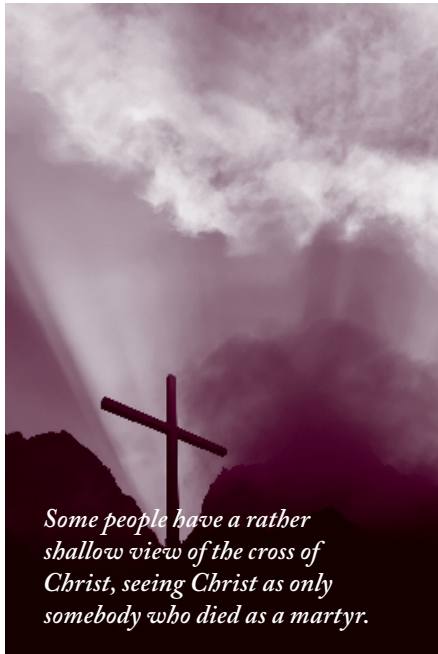
“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Matthew 7:12

militant.” The martyr replied, “But not from the church triumphant. You might cut me off now, but you can’t cut me off forever because I’m going to be in the resurrection.”

Martyrs died with that hope. In fact, if you have ever studied a book such as *Martyr’s Mirror* or *Foxes Book of Martyrs*, you will know that there were many martyrs. Two examples were John Huss and Jerome. Both were burned at the stake. When the fire was lit and their bodies burned there was no screaming. Witnesses reported that as the flames arose around them they sang and the vehemence of the fire could scarcely stop their voices, and they died singing. Just before they died their lips were seen moving in prayer. They died singing and praying, because in their death they had

the government. However, because of their prejudice, they said that the father and the oldest son had to be burned at the stake anyway. As they were tied to the stake and the fire was lit, the son said to the father, Look up! I see the heavens opened and I see an innumerable company watching us. Angels were always present on those occasions. If you are one of God’s children, the Bible says angels accompany you everywhere you are, whatever you are doing, and they protect and guard God’s children from the innumerable dangers of which we are unaware.

A clergyman that was present said, Oh no. You’re not seeing angels from heaven, you are seeing the devil’s angels. The boy replied, No. I’m not seeing the devil’s angels. I’m seeing

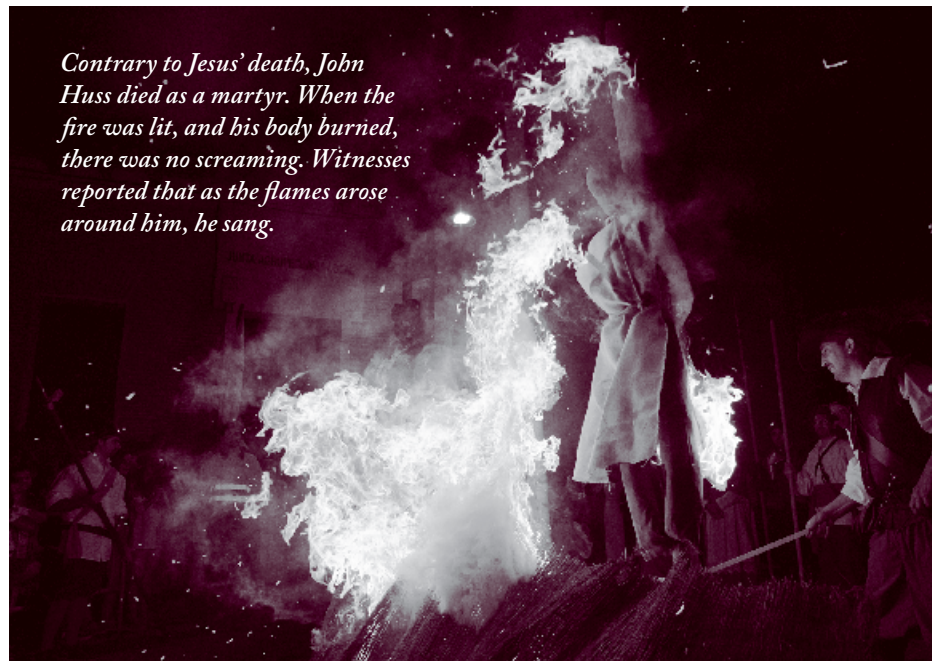


angels from God. They are watching us. It was by divine power those people died praying and singing with great joy, knowing that very soon, it would be to them, almost instantaneous, they would meet the Lord again when He returns in the clouds.

Jesus Christ did not die the death of a martyr. In Matthew 27:46 it tells us the kind of death that Jesus died on the cross. "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" Jesus died the death that a fallen sinful man will die if he does not accept the gospel – the plan of salvation.

Jesus endured the pains of the second death – a death with no hope of a future. It is a death forsaken by God where the penalty of sin is paid by the sinner. Jesus endured that death so that you could be set free.

"The great sin of God's people at the present time is, we do not appreciate the value of the blessings God has bestowed upon us. We serve God with a divided heart. We cherish some idol



and worship at its shrine." *This Day With God*, 50.

What does this divided heart mean? Suppose a suitor came to a young woman and told her, "I love you with half of my heart." Would she respond, "That is wonderful, that is what I always wanted"? If he got it up to three quarters would she be completely satisfied? Never.

Dear friend, do you realize that we have a habit of doing this to the Lord all the time? We say we love Him and choose to follow Him, but our heart is divided. The book of James explains why there are so many people claiming their prayers are not answered. James 1:8 says, "... he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." Verse 7 says that person is not going to receive anything in answer to his prayers and becomes discouraged with the Christian religion, believing he has tried it and found it doesn't work. His prayer was unanswered because of his divided heart.

The very first commandment and basic principle of the Christian religion is to love God with all your

heart, soul, and mind. "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. 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. 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 devil is expert in luring people by the love of those three things.

Modern advertising has captured the minds of people with lewd suggestive displays in store front windows, magazine ads, internet pop-ups, and on billboards. Everywhere the eye turns are pictures designed to appeal to the lust of the flesh. One must be diligent to make a covenant with their eyes to keep their minds pure.

If the devil cannot trap you that way then he tries the lust of the eyes, your possessions. With some people, it is clothes and with others it is houses. With a lot of young men, in my generation, it was cars. I remember when I was in high school one young man's father decided to buy his son a new

car. This man came over with this new car to show it to all of us. It was a new type of Ford, a two-door hardtop convertible that the roof came down, one of the first ones made. It made a huge impression on the young men of my generation. I do not know whether the young men were impressed with girls more or cars, but they were impressed with the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes.

If the devil cannot get you with either the lust of the flesh or the lust of the eyes he will try to get you with pride, which is one of the most fundamental problems with humanity. The apostle warned not to love those things that the rest of the world loves because they are all temporary.

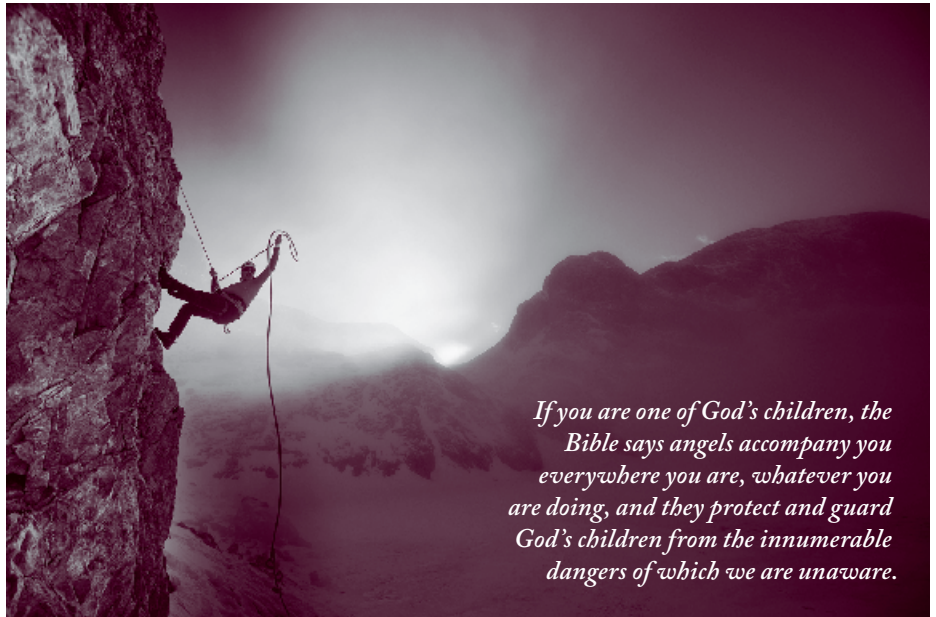
Do you appreciate what God has done for you, and do you tell Him so? Do you live like you appreciate it or is your heart divided? James 1:17 says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

Every good gift, whether it comes through father or husband or daughter or anyone, comes from God, the ultimate Source of every good gift. For that reason, He deserves appreciation.

“As the Giver of every blessing, God claims a certain portion of all we possess. This is His provision to sustain the preaching of the gospel. And by making this return to God, we are to show our appreciation of His gifts. But if we withhold from Him that which is His own, how can we claim His blessing? If we are unfaithful stewards of earthly things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with the things of heaven? It may be that here is the secret of unanswered prayer.”

Prayer, 309.

A problem for God’s professed people for thousands of years is that many do not appreciate Him. In the



book of Malachi, it says, “‘For I am the LORD, I do not change ... from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘But you said, “In what way shall we turn?” ‘Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, “In what way have we robbed You?” In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try [prove] Me now in this,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it’ ” (Malachi 3:6–10).

I have met many people during my ministry who have told me that they cannot afford to pay tithe. But in reality, are you sure that you can afford not to pay tithe?

The Lord promises those who honor Him that He will pour out a blessing on them so abundant that they will not even be able to receive it.

Those who know and refuse are under a curse. A tithe is a tenth. Many can testify that 90% of your increase with God’s blessing stretches much further than 100% with God’s curse.

Those in greatest need of God’s blessing on their finances are often those who say they can’t afford to do it. Accept that as a perfect opportunity to put the God of heaven to the test. In fact, He says, “Try Me now in this” (Malachi 3:10).

When my wife and I took a leave of absence and went to Southern California to graduate school we got into a situation where our expenses were more than our income for several months, so I know what it’s like to be financially tried. However, we did not stop paying tithe. In giving back a part of what God has given to us we are not enriching God, but we simply showed that we appreciated what the Lord Jesus has done for us.

Another way to show appreciation for what God has done for you is to consider others in their need. Remember Jesus said to do for others what you would want men to do for you, for this is the law and the prophets. He

points us to people around us, to the poor, the suffering and the oppressed.

In Matthew 25:31–33 it says, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”

Verses 34–36: “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave me food;

Paul wrote, “But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated (became Christians) you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven” (Hebrews 10:32–34).

Too often it is considered that people in trouble have caused it themselves and they should be left to suffer the consequences. Adam and

city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, ‘This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.’” (Luke 7:36–39).

She was looked down on by everybody in that society because of the terrible sins that she had committed. It was common knowledge throughout that region who this woman was and what she had done. And how arrogant of Simon, who had been cured by the Lord Jesus of leprosy and saved from a living death himself, to criticize this woman who he, himself would not touch.

“And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ So he said, ‘Teacher, say it.’ ‘There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?’

“Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom He forgave more.’ And He said to him, ‘You have rightly judged.’ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this

Jesus endured the pains of the second death – a death with no hope of a future. It is a death forsaken by God where the penalty of sin is paid by the sinner.

I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’”

They say, Lord, when did this ever happen? We don’t know when that ever happened. We don’t remember doing any of those things.

Look at verse 40: “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”

Notice, Jesus identifies Himself with those who are in trouble – the people who need food, the people who need clothing, the people who are sick, the people who are in prison, as will those who identify with Him.

Eve made a conscious choice to do the wrong thing, but they were given help to recover from the consequences.

Remember Jesus’ rule, Whatever you want men to do to you, you do to them. Ask yourself, what would I want if I were in the hospital, or in jail? What if I didn’t have enough food or money to buy the clothes that I needed? Would I want somebody to say, Well, it’s your own fault because you made these mistakes back there. After all, don’t we all make some bad decisions at times?

The best illustration of appreciation is recorded in all four of the gospels. “Then one of the Pharisees asked Him (Jesus) to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the



We serve God with a divided heart. Suppose a suitor came to a young woman and told her, “I love you with half of my heart.” Would she respond, “That is wonderful, that is what I always wanted”? If he got it up to three quarters would she be completely satisfied? Never.

woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.’ Then He said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ‘Who is this who even forgives sins?’ Then He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.’ ” (verses 40–50).

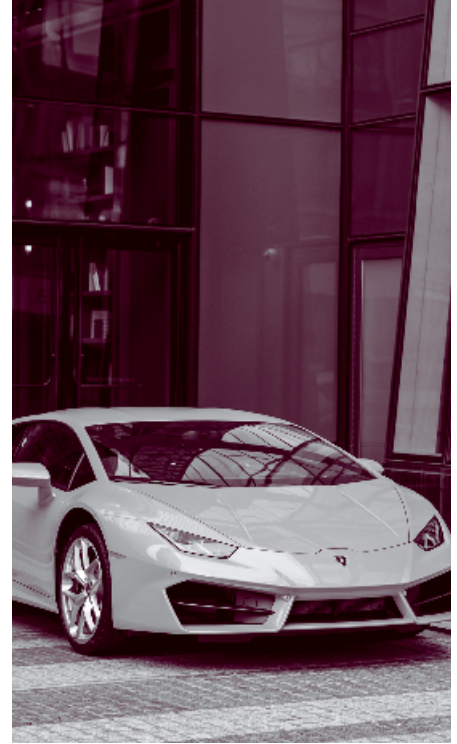
Notice. There are still both types in the world today, those who, like the Pharisee, look down on “big sinners,” considering them unworthy, and the truly repentant ones who know they are sinners and accept the forgiveness of Jesus.

This woman, considered one of the worst sinners in town, accepted the grace offered her by her Saviour.

To show her appreciation she bought an alabaster box containing oil of spikenard, one of the most expensive perfumes that has ever been developed or made. The oil she used in anointing Jesus does not wash off and the fragrance remains for approximately 30 days.

As horrible as it was when Jesus went to the cross, He knew from the fragrance poured on His body six days earlier that there was at least one person in the world who appreciated what He was doing, making it possible for her sins to be forgiven. Jesus told His disciples that anywhere in the whole world that they would preach the gospel, they were to tell this story.

Everyone wants a response from those they love. Jesus’ love for you is greater than any human love and He also would appreciate a response. The



If the devil cannot trap you with modern advertising then he tries the lust of the eyes, your possessions. It can be clothes, cars, houses.

way you live, the way you treat your fellow men, how you support His work is evidence of how much you appreciate what He has done for you.

Thank Jesus Christ for what He has done for you. In the way that you support His work, in the way that you treat and relate to your fellow men, you will show to the whole universe your appreciation for the gift of salvation.

(Unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, Bible texts are from the New King James Version.) **LM**

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THE REASON WHY WE SIN

BY MARLOWE PARKS

When I was in the world, it was very easy for me to sin while still believing that I was a good person. It was only when I came to Jesus and looked at the cross that I began to see who I really was. After I was baptized and gave my heart fully to Jesus, I realized something even more strange: I realized that I was more wicked than I ever realized before. The closer I came to Jesus, the worse my condition became.

Suddenly I was struggling with evil thoughts. I could not understand why, because I had just given my heart to the Lord. As Jesus went into the wilderness of temptation after His baptism, so I went into my own wilderness of temptation. I began to see that, depending on myself, I was uncontrollable and in continuous sin. The difference was that as a Christian I could now see my condition. So I prayed to God to tell me the reasons why it is so easy to sin.

To fully appreciate what Jesus has done in making salvation possible, we must first understand and accept our true condition. First, let's define what sin is. John wrote, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

In James 2:9–11, James explains which law is being referred to: "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."

This law is the ten commandments and Scripture tells the consequences of breaking that law. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The Bible says, "... when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

The result of sin is death. Sin is not merely a concept. It is an action and power. Sin is contrary to the law. The question must be asked, Can sin be present in a person without the person actually committing sin?

Psalms 51:5 says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." From the womb, this is our true condition. A

baby has not committed sin, but can a baby die? Death only occurs because of the presence of sin. Though a baby has not committed any sin and can die means there is sin present, even in the nature of the child. This is the condition in which all human beings were born, hence the struggle and battle with sin. Because we were shaped and conceived in sin, it is impossible to overcome by ourselves. We need help from above.

To discover the way out, we first must come face to face with who we really are.

Isaiah 48:1–8 says, "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the

image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

"Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

"Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb."

After I was baptized and gave my heart fully to Jesus, I realized that I was more wicked than I ever realized before. The closer I came to Jesus, the worse my condition became.

name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness. For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is His name. I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven

God says, I knew you were a transgressor from the womb, right from the beginning.

In Psalm 58, notice what it says in verse 3 regarding why we sin. The Bible says, "The wicked are estranged." In defining the wicked, the Bible says in Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"

That includes you and me. When God says "wicked," He is talking about us. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

This was no surprise to Jesus. He knew from the beginning that we would deal very treacherously. *Treachery* is the Hebrew *bagad* which

means *to deal deceitfully, unfaithfully, to transgress*. Jesus said, I knew that you would be very deceitful. I knew that you would be very unfaithful to Me and transgress My law.

He gives the reason for knowing that we would eventually commit these things: “Thou wast called a transgressor from the womb.” I knew you were going to do it because this is who you are. The Hebrew word for *transgressor* is *pasha*. This verb means *to rebel, to revolt, to break away from just authority, to apostatize, to be in transgression, a transgressor*.

So, Jesus says we broke away from His just authority and were in rebellion to the law of God from the

master teaches him, he will reflect the attributes of his master.

Notice what happened next: “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made, And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye

ment for that. This same lie is deceiving many young people today.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (verse 6).

They chose to obey another master. The Bible says, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” (Romans 6:16)? By choosing a new master they developed his attributes—sin.

Adam was the father of us all. We share the genes which he has passed on throughout all generations. Before Adam sinned, his nature was holy, after the divine nature of God, his Creator. However, after he sinned his nature became sinful or corrupt. That which corrupts will eventually die.

The nature of corruption is that it constantly weakens to the point where it can no more exist, thus the result of sin is death. The question for us now as Adam’s descendants is, Did Adam have children when his nature was holy or when his nature was sinful? That is going to determine how we are.

The Bible says, “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” (Genesis 3:9–12). So, they sinned!

“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the

Though a baby has not committed any sin and can die means there is sin present. This is the condition in which all human beings were born.

womb. We have been transgressors before we were born. We are trapped.

To find out why we are in this condition, we must go back to the beginning. Genesis 2:16, 17 says, “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” A command was given that, if broken, would result in death.

Adam and Eve were created pure and holy. God was their Father and their teacher. While they listened and obeyed all that He said, they would absorb the attributes of their Master. When a master tradesman takes on an apprentice and he copies all that his

shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:1–5).

Our first parents knew what “good” was. They had experienced it in their relationship with God in the garden, but they had no experience of “evil” apart from the knowledge of the consequences if they chose to disobey. They knew the result of evil – death.

The devil said, If you disobey God, you will be as God, knowing good and evil. The word *know* means to *know it intimately* like when the Bible says, Adam *knew* his wife – intimately. The devil said, Do not worry about what God says. You can disobey and still be all right. You can intimately know good and intimately know evil at the same time. There is no punish-

LORD” (Genesis 4:1). Because we are all Adam’s descendants and we came on the scene after his nature changed, after he sinned, that means we are now in trouble.

The Bible says, “Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: ... For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners” (Romans 5:12, 19).

By one man’s [Adam’s] offence, death reigned by one and judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Therefore, as the descendants of Adam and Eve, sin, or the transgression of the law, must be in our genes from the womb. The Bible says, “... one sinner destroyeth much good” (Ecclesiastes 9:18). This is called the law of heredity.

From the book, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 118, we note: “As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents, and imitate their example; so that the sins of the parents are practiced by the children from generation to generation.”

We are in trouble. No one should ever think that they are high and above anyone else. Because of our inherited sin, we are all in the same boat. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it” (Jeremiah 17:9)?

The devil tempted, saying, Listen, you are going to be like God. The devil could not even tell what was going to happen because he did not even know how this would play out. Sin is so strong, so powerful, that the devil himself could not overcome it. Sin is more powerful than Satan himself. Sin is not to be played with—this is the condition of the unrenewed heart.

Jesus said, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications,



You can intimately know good and intimately know evil at the same time. There is no punishment for that. This same lie is deceiving many young people today.

murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21).

Again, we are in trouble, for this is our true state. In this condition, there can be no victory over sin. Without victory, you cannot do anything but sin. Even if we try to do good of ourselves, we are still evil. Look at what Jesus said: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ...” (Matthew 7:11). Even if we do good, we are still evil.

Notice what it says in Job 15:14–16: “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, He [God] putteth no trust in His saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?” God says, We drink sin as if it is water. We are in a bad state.

We have found thus far that we are guilty of sin from conception. We are transgressors from the womb because of the law of heredity. Without committing even one sin, we are still sinners.

In James chapter 4, we found out who we really are, but will God charge us before we understand what is right or wrong, and choose wrong? Notice what it says in James 4:17: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” Praise God. He winks at our ignorance and sin is not charged on us until we understand what is right or wrong, and then choose the wrong.

How does sin have so strong a hold on us? In Romans 7:14, 15, notice what Paul wrote: “For we know that the law [God’s law] is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin [by Adam]. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.”

Paul is being tricked. The things that I hate, that I do not want to do anymore, I find myself doing. Have you ever experienced that before? The things that you want to do – Lord, I want to do this, I want to be holy – you find that you just do not do it. Have you said, Lord, I am not going over there to that place. I am just not doing it, and then you find yourself at that place. Notice what he goes on to say in verse 16: “If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.”

He says, Look, if I find myself looking at those ten commandments and say I cannot keep this thing, I cannot. That thing must be good, and I must be evil.

Then, in verse 17, he says, “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” He says, Lord, I want to do the right thing, but I find myself not doing the right

thing. Therefore, it must be a power within me that is causing me to do the wrong thing.

There is a monster within. We want to do right, but that thing that is in the flesh pushes us to do that which we would not. It is a monster within—sin. Paul goes on to say. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing” (verse 18). He said, I can see clearly now. For to will is present with me, I want to do the right thing, I will to do the right thing, but how to perform that which is good, I do not know how to do it. This is often our experience. Notice

Paul says, I have finally figured it out, sin is a law and a law is a principle. That is why you cannot beat a principle – it is a law.

Notice his conclusion to this dilemma: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (verses 24, 25).

In recapping, He said, The Lord showed me that sin is a law within me and why I just keep sinning, even though I do not want to. It is within

things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh [not ours] through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight.”

”But Thou art He that took me out of the womb: Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts. I was cast upon Thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly” (Psalm 22:9, 10).

Yes, friends, there is hope, even from the womb. “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5).

“For he [John the Baptist] shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from His mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15).

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14).

This is our hope! The only way we can take hold of it is by faith and believing in Jesus, our Deliverer. We cannot pay for our past sins. We are already guilty. Our own works mean nothing. Jesus is our only Mediator. Jesus takes our prayers and presents them to our heavenly Father who answers, not because of our worthiness, but because of Jesus’ worthiness.

Jesus is the only way. He pleads with us to follow Him, trust Him, and rest in His victory. **LM**

Marlowe Parks was a guest speaker at the 2017 Steps to Life Camp Meeting.

As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents, and imitate their example.

verse 19: “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” What is wrong with me?

“Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin [the evil presence] that dwelleth in me” (verse 20). I am controlled by a power within. I do not want to be, but I cannot help it. If you do not receive any help, outside from you, you will automatically sin and sin, and you will not be able to control yourself.

Paul continues, “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man [I want to do the law of God. I love it. I want to keep it]: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (verses 21–23).

my body, within my flesh. I need a power outside of myself to save me from myself.

Therefore, it is impossible to save yourself. All your good works do not mean anything. In fact, the Bible describes them as “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). We need a power outside of ourselves, to save us from ourselves. Remember, the wages of sin is death. Because we have sinned we are already under a death sentence. The only way out is if Someone dies in our place and lives again, that we might be able to live and not die. Do not let anybody tell you that you are somebody without Jesus.

Colossians 1:20–22 states, “And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or



THE FACE OF JESUS

BY LAWRENCE NELSON

The three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6–12 are God's last message of warning of mercy to the world. Then John wrote, "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle" (verses 13, 14).

What is it going to be to see the face of Jesus? Where there is no other message to be given to this world, the message of God's last mercy is now being sounded and as a result Jesus is going to come. Every predicted ingredient in prophecy that Jesus was to come, and what would take place just before His coming is now occurring before our eyes. Political corruption, financial disaster, fantastic weapons of destruction, a great ecumenical movement producing a false revival in which men claim to be following God but openly defy Him. They are placing tradition above the law of God. They are proclaiming a revival without any repentance, without any transforma-

tion of life, without any obedience. They are claiming that all that is necessary is to believe, that all you must have is a faith, which is a presumption that there is no longer any moral standard. These are the things that God told us would happen.

So, in a day just like our day, the day in which we are alive today, when people are buying and selling and building and getting married, a day of uncontrolled crime when men's thoughts are continually evil, something is going to happen. Suddenly there is going to be a darkness that is going to come to this world. Perhaps it could be best explained like the darkness of old Egypt where no one has ever seen anything quite like it. And in the darkness of night, as it settles,

they will also see something they have never seen before, for you have never seen a rainbow without light. But there in the darkness surrounding this world will be a rainbow – not from hill to hill, from valley to valley, but a rainbow that will span the entire world and on every little hill here and there and in the valley, by the sea and over the dale, wherever there is a group of those who have decided to accept the three angels' messages, there will be a little round circle of a rainbow over their group.

Then we are going to hear something that we have never heard since the day that Christ was on this world, for God is going to speak. We will all hear and understand when that great voice echoes through the universe, "Look up!" and we shall be able to look into heaven itself, for God will part the darkness where we are and there we will see up into the very city of God and there we will behold a great throne and we will see God sitting upon that throne. We will see Jesus coming in His chariot. Man has no conception of the greatness of that throne, miles in width. As Jesus comes we will watch in anticipation as He stands before God the Father and we will hear a conversation that will go like this: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (John 17:24). When we hear those words the saints are going to give a shout that will

encircle the world. It will be a shout the likes of which was heard around the Red Sea when Moses lifted his hand and they saw the armies of Pharaoh destroyed. Then there will be signs and wonders. Suddenly the sun will shine even though it is midnight, for the world has been turned upside down. Every law of nature will seem to be turned out of course – the streams will no longer flow, no water will come cataracting down the mountains, the heavens will be filled with angry clouds, but there will be one clear space of indescribable glory, and it is to this that we will keep our eyes glued. Then we will hear God's voice the second time in which He will answer the request of Jesus when He says, "It is done."

There will be a mighty earthquake. Those in California know what earthquakes are, but no one has ever seen anything like this one. There will be voices and thunders and lightning and a great earthquake such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. The mountains we love to go to will shake like leaves in the wind. Great jagged rocks weighing tons will be thrown out into the valleys below. The ocean will boil like a pot. Great tidal waves will engulf the cities that are as wicked as Sodom and Gomorrah. Even the mountains will sink beneath the surface of the earth. As great hailstones of ice, 57 pounds in weight, come tumbling out of the sky, buildings will crumble. Nothing will stand. The tempests will roar like a hurricane; prisons will open; the saints who have been incarcerated will be set free.

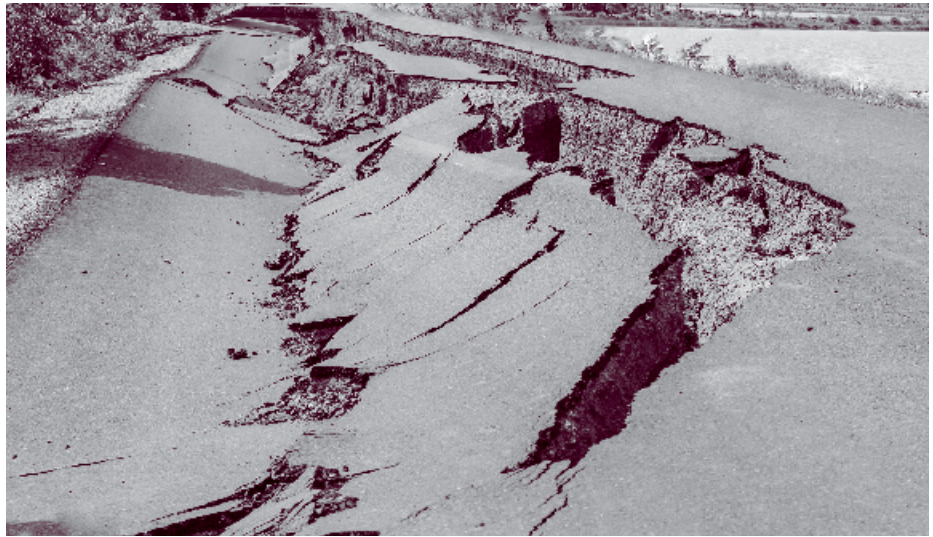
Amid all this that startles and bewilders and wonders, God has another surprise. There will be the special resurrection. Everyone who has died accepting the three angels' messages since the year 1844 will be

Modern Christainity tells us that all you must have is a faith, which is a presumption that there is no longer any moral standard.

brought up out of the graves to see the face of Jesus. I'm looking forward to that moment.

There will also be those there who condemned Jesus. God will bring them forth – Pilate, Herod, the priests, the soldier who thrust the spear, the ones who nailed Him to the cross – to see the face again of Jesus. There will be those raised up out of their graves who have been the most violent oppressors of God's truth, like Nero, some of the popes of Rome, all brought forth to see the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as sheets of flame envelope the earth, as the lightning goes from one end of the heaven to the other and amid it all God will speak the third time. This time He will declare the doom of the wicked. It will be so frightening, it will be so tremendous, it will be so terrible that there are no words to describe it. Even the demons will be terrified. That is the time spoken of in Isaiah when it tells us that men will go into the streets. "In that day a man will cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they have made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty, when He shall arise to shake terribly the earth" (Isaiah 2:20, 21, literal translation). But God will not forget His people.

As He sent the star of Bethlehem to announce that the great event was about to take place, so He will again send a star to give us courage, a star that will be four times brighter than any light you have ever seen in the heavens. When we see it we will know that it is the hope of our lives, that it is Christ coming, that we shall see His face and we shall sing and we shall rejoice and we shall repeat some of the memory gems like the one



There will be voices and thunders and lightning and a great earthquake such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. The mountains we love to go to will shake like leaves in the wind.

found in Psalm 46:1-3: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

When God hears His people quoting these promises He will command an angel and say, "Open up the gates." When the gates are thrown open the glory of the celestial throne of God is going to sweep down onto every little group wherever they are around this world and our faces will light up like the face of Moses.

Then we will behold the greatest theatrical feat that man has ever beheld. As the clouds roll back on a canopy of blue, they will see two hands appear in the sky. In these hands two tables of stone slowly open and there every individual in this world still alive will behold the Ten Commandments. With a finger of fire from the hand of God He will trace every one of the Ten Commandments.

Can you see it? Can you see that finger? "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). Too late for those who have made gods of their business. We'll understand that God meant exactly what He said. Too late in this world for those who have made gods of sex. We will understand that God is unchanging.

Those that have made money and all the things of this world their god will see that finger trace, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (verse 4). Oh I've seen them bow down to wood, to stone, to iron, to mud to worship, but they will know that God means exactly what He says. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (verse 7). Too late will the world see that God has meant exactly that we are to give reverence when we breathe the name of God.

Then the world will be startled, for it will read, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God ..." (verses 8-10).

Seeing this, the people of this world are going to run to their preachers we are told, and ask, "Why did you tell us that the first day is the sabbath? Look!" And they will be set upon by the members of their church.

"Honour thy father and thy mother" (verse 12). Too late will the youth of this last generation realize that God means exactly what He says, that in the Lord we are to give reverence to our parents. We are to honor them. We are to care for them in their old age. We are to love them.

"Thou shalt not kill" (verse 13). There it is, blazing out in letters of fire. The murderer and the men of evil intention will see. Then there will be a

Suddenly someone will shout out, "I see it! I see it!" and we'll all see that tiny cloud about the size of a hand, quickly coming towards us, growing in magnitude. First it is so bright that it looks dark and black, but as our eyes become accustomed we see the glory and the beauty and the wonder of it all. And we will begin to see that it is composed of myriads of angels, all the angels of heaven. And there riding on that cloud is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, with a rainbow above and the music – oh, the glorious music, not the trash we hear today – the music of heaven, not the kind that stomps your feet, but the kind that moves your heart.

rejoice and we will sing with them as "the heavens roll together like a scroll, ... as the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and say to the mountains and the rocks, fall on us; hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand" (Revelation 6:14–17, literal translation)?

As the wicked are scurrying into their holes, attempting to hide, Jesus is going to speak to the wicked. This will be the sixth time the voice of God is heard. He will say something like this, found in Proverbs 1:24 and 25: "I called, and ye refused; I stretched out My hand, but you would not regard; ye have set at nought all of my counsel, and would have none of My reproof" (literal translation). Can you picture Pilate? Oh, what he wouldn't give at that moment, if only when he asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38), he had waited for Jesus to answer. There will be the haughty Herod. He will remember how he smote the Lord, how he jeered. Oh, what he wouldn't give in that moment; if only he had done what his heart had told him to do.

There will be the men who placed the robe upon His body; there will be those mocking soldiers, the one who drove the nails, the soldier who pierced His side. Once again they will look into the face of Jesus and the priests, the rulers who cried, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him" (Luke 23:21)! They will all try to run and to hide as they will be consumed by the brightness of His coming until there is none alive except the righteous.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea ..." Psalm 46:1–2

great shocker. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (verse 14). Millions will realize then that the pill does not make it right. Millions will understand then that there is no cause for divorce other than adultery.

They will see, "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not bear false witness," "Thou shalt not covet" (verses 15–17), blazing in the sky for all to behold. Then God will speak for the fourth time and He will declare the day and the hour of the coming of Jesus. Our hearts will fill with hope, with joy. Our faces will shine like the face of Moses when he was on the mount and we'll be watching in anticipation as the hour comes and, finally, the moment.

As we look, we will see the face of Jesus. As we see how holy He is and we see how pure He is and how kind and how loving, how divine, we will automatically cry out, "Who shall be able to stand before Him?" And then the music will stop. The earth will stop its shaking. It will be so quiet. Every eye of the universe will be riveted on the Lord Jesus Christ as He stands and looks upon those who have stood and made their decision for God, deciding not to accept the mark and He will say, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV).

All the angels will lift a note higher and we will join and we will

Amid the reeling of the earth, the lightning and the thunder and the sobs of the dying wicked, then Christ will speak for the seventh and last time. His voice will ring out as He looks upon the graves of the sleeping saints throughout the ages and His voice calls, "Awake! Awake! Ye that sleep in the dust of the earth, arise" (Ephesians 5:14, literal translation)! And the whole earth will ring with the tread of an exceeding army from every nation and kindred and tongue and people.

The living righteous will give a mighty shout as they see the saints come forth. And those who are resurrected will give a mighty shout and together we will praise the God of heaven, the God of life. Oh, wonderful redemption, for "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:52), we will be given immortal, glorious bodies like unto His, never to have an ache again, never to have a pain, never to know a sorrow. Together those that have just been risen and those of us which are alive will find ourselves leaving this earth. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Don't you like that? Oh, brother, sister, I long for that. Never to be parted, always to behold His face.

For seven days we are going to take that glorious trip past the moon. Let man have his rockets. Past the stars, past the galaxies by the millions and the billions. We are going to get a preview of what we shall be able to see throughout eternity. Somewhere along the way we are going to keep the Sabbath. That's going to be the greatest Sabbath. Here we talk about it, but then "we shall know" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Then we shall realize redemp-



He will again send a star to give us courage, a star that will be four times brighter than any light you have ever seen in the heavens. When we see it we will know that it is the hope of our lives, that it is Christ coming.

tion; then we shall feel redemption; then in our immortal bodies we shall know what salvation really is and we will know that the Sabbath is a sign of the power of God that He has recreated us. Oh, what a glorious Sabbath it will be.

Then we will find ourselves moving to that sea of glass outside the city. There, in the company of Jesus Christ, whose countenance is as bright as the noonday sun, with seven crowns upon His head, He is going to call us each by name. He is going to give us each a crown. On that crown is going to be a new name.

Then He will give each of us a harp. And though you may never have sung in this world, perhaps not even able to carry a note or play an instrument, the angel who took the place of Lucifer, will lift his baton and we will all play the harp and sing. We will all praise Him as we behold His face. I think one of the songs we will sing with the celestial music will be – "Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it! Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; Redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child and forever I am."

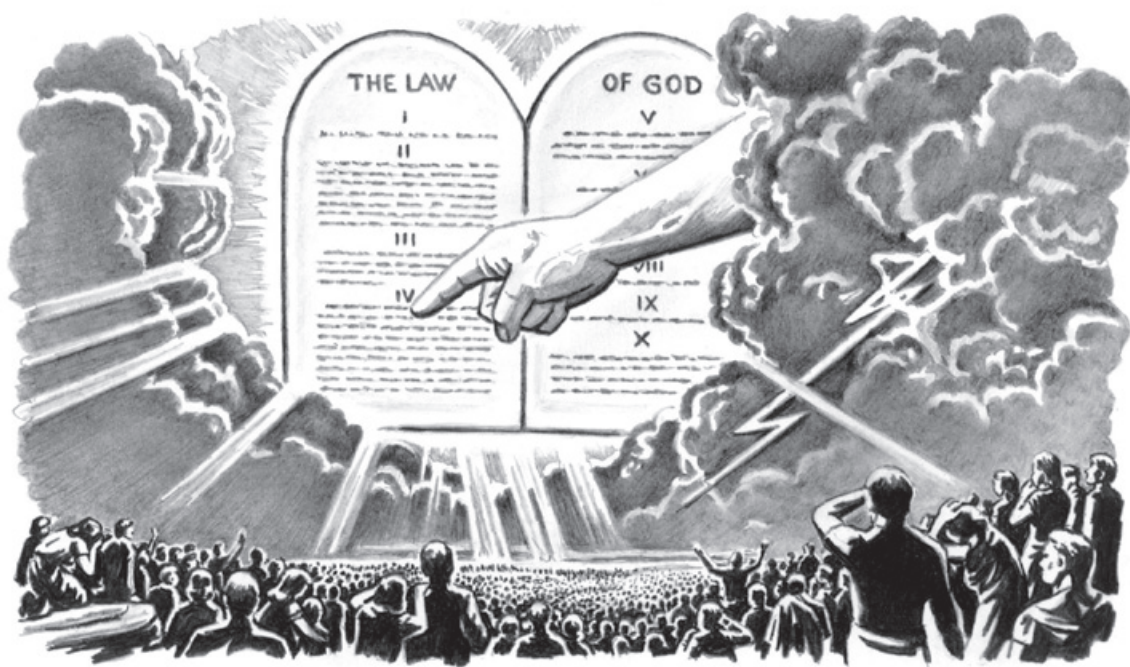
Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It!
Fanny Crosby, 1882.

Glorious redemption!

Then Jesus is going to say, "Follow Me." With His own right hand He is going to open up that pearly gate. For the first time we are going to look down the street of gold straight to the center of that great city, and, oh, what a city – three hundred and fifty miles square. Nothing in the world can compare. We are going to look right straight down to that great throne. When we come up there Jesus is going to introduce us to the Father. Oh, what a moment. Perhaps He will look around and choose you and say, "Come with Me," and you won't be afraid. Together you will ascend the steps to the throne. Can you see yourself climbing higher and higher, miles into the air? You will finally reach the top and Jesus introduces you to the Father. What a moment!

The plan of redemption is beyond comprehension, that God can take a sinner and someday allow him to sit on the throne. Oh, lift your eyes, my dear beloved, to what is coming. Don't get discouraged in this world! Keep your eye on the message! Keep your eye on Jesus Christ!

What a throne it is. The Bible says that the river of life flows forth from



As the clouds roll back on a canopy of blue, God's people will see two hands appear in the sky. In these hands two tables of stone slowly open and there every individual in this world still alive will behold the Ten Commandments.

it. That is no little stream. In Ezekiel the 47th chapter you will find that the prophet began to measure it and as you measure it you will find it is over two miles wide. And then I read of the tree of life which has a trunk on this side and over there over two miles is the other side. That tree must be, for God does everything symmetrical, perhaps seven miles in height? After all, it grows 12 manner of fruits (Revelation 22:2) for the redeemed to have one every month. The redeemed are as the stars of the heavens. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). Oh, what a wonderful, thrilling experience. Don't miss it friend!

Then the greatest of all is going to take place. The two Adams are going to meet. Adam, our first grandfather. Can you see him there? Inspiration tells us he was more than twice as tall as any man alive today – 15, 16 feet

in height. I don't suppose you could put your arms around those biceps. A giant. Then we behold the lovely Jesus head and shoulders above him. As they meet each other, Jesus takes him by the hand and shows him the flowers from the Garden of Eden. Jesus takes him to the tree of life. He plucks it. He gives it to him.

When Adam looks around and sees all of his children, sees heaven, when he comprehends now what fully has come and he looks into the face of Jesus whom he crucified with his sin, he's going to take that crown off his head, put it down at the feet of Jesus, and fall down and worship His Redeemer. Jesus will reach down and put the crown back on Adam's head. With His mighty arm, He lifts that mighty giant to his feet, then puts his arms around him and hugs him. That is love.

I want to tell you my friend, I don't want to miss that for anything in the world. I want to be there. By God's grace, through His marvelous provision

He has made it possible that all may be saved. Take courage friend. Keep your eye focused on that which will happen soon. It is not a long way off. Keep your eye on Jesus Christ. In the book of Jude, we are told in those wonderful verses, 24, 25: "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." **LM**

*For more than fifty years, **Lawrence Nelson** served the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a church pastor, evangelist, and then in Conference, Union, and General Conference leadership. When God laid upon him the responsibility to "tell it like it is" to alert the people how the church was leading them into the worldwide ecumenical movement, he was forbidden to preach in any church within the Oregon Conference. Elder Nelson passed to his rest on April 18, 2012.*

CAN THE BIBLE BE TRUSTED?

According to a new lengthy investigation from one of Israeli's top newspapers, *Haaretz*, the Bible, the creation of the world and the story of the first man are not true.

The headline reads, "Is the Bible a True Story?" then goes on to say, "Despite feverish searching with Scripture in one hand and cutting-edge technology in the other, evidence backing the Bible remains elusive."

It goes on: "No evidence of the events described in the Book of Genesis has ever been found. No city walls have been found at Jericho, from the appropriate era, that could have been toppled by Joshua or otherwise. The stone palace uncovered at the foot of Temple Mount in Jerusalem could attest that King David had been there; or it might belong to another era entirely, depending who you ask."

According to a recent Gallop poll 40 percent say the Bible is the word of God, while 36 percent say it should not be taken literally. Only 24 percent of Americans believe that the holy book was "the actual word of God, and is to be taken literally, word for word."

According to the poll it is the first time in forty years that biblical skepticism has surpassed biblical literalism. About half of Americans say the Bible is the inspired word of God but not all of it should be taken literally. There has been a huge decline in Americans who self-identify as Christians and those defining the Bible as mere stories has doubled since the mid-1970s,



with much of that change occurring in the past three years.

Excerpts from www.newsweek.com/bible-creation-world-and-story-first-man-not-true-claims-israeli-newspaper-695821

We, as inhabitants of this planet, are in trouble. We have lost our true compass and the angels holding back the winds of strife are loosening their hold. We are about to see what life will really be like when God steps back and allows Satan to have full reign.

However, we need not fear for we do have a sure word of prophecy and it is being fulfilled before our very eyes. We read in Revelation the end of the story:

"Then He showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On

either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads" (Revelation 22:1-4 NASB).

"And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4 NASB).

So, do not despair, there is still hope if we reach out today to the only One who has the answer to this world's problems. **LM**

Discovering the Matchless Charms of Jesus

in the Book of John

BY MARCELLA KING

Across

A1	Before whom did Jesus say He existed?	8:58
A15	Jesus is the _____ to heaven	14:6
B7	Can a devil do this to the eyes of the blind?	10:21 (see Ch. 9)
C1	Speaks of the _____ of the Lord	12:38
C12	Jesus is this to the person who would be saved	10:9
D4	The number of husbands a woman had	4:18
D15	What some people want to hide	3:21
E9	Some beheld this pertaining to the Son of God	1:14
F17	Some went and _____ the Pharisees what Jesus had done	11:46
G2	This shows the heart of Jesus	11:35
G7	_____ one another as I have loved you	15:12, 13; 14:23
G12	Nicodemus came at this time to see Jesus	3:2
I4	Jesus asked His followers to do this	15:4
I18	The Jews said to Jesus that He was not yet 50 years _____	8:57
J8	The instrument of crucifixion for Jesus	19:17, 19
K14	John said to the people, _____ the Lamb of God	1:29
L7	Martha to Mary, The _____ is come	11:28
M14	This the believer is to do in Jesus' name	14:13, 14; 15:7
M19	How many have seen God?	1:18
N5	Thomas said when he finally believed (two words)	20:28
O2	Where Jesus turned water into wine	2:1, 11
O17	Money for the poor was held here	12:6
P11	Tree where Nathanael liked to pray	1:50
Q7	Many disciples went _____ away from Jesus	6:66
Q14	God's angels ascend/descend upon this (symbolic)	1:51; Gen 28:12
R4	Before Abraham was Jesus said _____ (two words)	8:58
S7	The Comforter Jesus would send in His place	16:13
T15	Where a blind man was told to go and wash	9:7
U3	The Son of Man has power to execute what?	5:27
U12	Contained something precious to anoint Jesus	12:3; Lk 7:37

Down

A2	Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be what?	3:3, 7
A7	Not the giver of the manna	6:32
A9	In a short time Christ's disciples would no longer do what?	16:16
A15	Who was with God in "the beginning"?	1:1, 14
B19	King Jesus rode into Jerusalem on this	12:14, 15
C5	Jesus is this to the world	8:12
C12	Followers of Jesus will not walk in this	8:12
D17	Believers are to do this, referring to Christ's body	6:53
F20	Jesus said Lazarus was asleep, meaning he was what?	11:11, 14

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Answer key on page 26.

G2	At Jacob's well Jesus said He was the living what?	4:10–14
G4	Jesus gives this to those in a troubled world	14:27
G16	Jesus is the Author of all what?	14:6
H6	Jesus is the resurrection as well as the what?	11:25
H18	This place was by the sheep market	5:2
I14	On this day of the week Jesus did several miracles	5:10; 9:14
J9	Jesus is this to the believer	11:25
K19	Buyers and sellers made the temple like what?	2:15; cf Lk 19:46
L3	Something that had come from heaven	6:31
L12	What Nicodemus called Jesus	3:2
N5	What the Israelites ate in the desert	6:31
N7	What John called Jesus	1:29
N18	Water became grape juice in this	2:7–9
Q2	Jesus is the true _____	15:1
R11	The Holy spirit convicts of what?	16:8
R20	Man healed, took up his bed on the _____ day as the Sabbath	5:9
S16	Jesus told them to do this	6:10



BY ELLEN G. WHITE

The melody of praise is the atmosphere of heaven; and when heaven comes in touch with the earth, there is music and song—"thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isaiah 51:3).

Above the new-created earth, as it lay, fair and unblemished, under the smile of God, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). So human hearts, in sympathy with heaven, have responded to God's goodness in notes of praise. Many of the events of human history have been linked with sacred song.

The history of the songs of the Bible is full of suggestion as to the uses and benefits of music and song. Music is often perverted to serve purposes of evil, and it thus becomes one of the most alluring agencies of temptation. But, rightly employed, it is a precious gift of God, designed to uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul. As the children of Israel, journeying through

the wilderness, cheered their way by the music of sacred song, so God bids His children today gladden their pilgrim life. There are few means more effective for fixing His word in the memory than repeating them in song. And such song has wonderful power. It has power to subdue rude and uncultivated natures; power to quicken thought and to awaken sympathy, to promote harmony of action, and to banish the gloom and foreboding that destroy courage and weaken effort.

It is one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth. How often to the soul hard-pressed and ready to despair, memory recalls some word of God's—the long-forgotten burden of a childhood song—and temptations lose their power, and courage and gladness are imparted to other souls!

The value of song as a means of education should never be lost sight of. Let there be singing in the home, of songs that are sweet and pure, and

there will be fewer words of censure, and more of cheerfulness and hope and joy. Let there be singing in the schools, and the pupils will be drawn closer to God, to their teachers, and to one another.

As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. If the child is taught to realize this, he will think more of the meaning of the words he sings, and will be more susceptible to their power.

As our Redeemer leads us to the threshold of the Infinite, flushed with the glory of God, we may catch the themes of praise and thanksgiving from the heavenly choir round about the throne; and as the echo of the angels' song is awakened in our earthly homes, hearts will be drawn closer to the heavenly singers. Heaven's communion begins on earth. We learn here its keynote.

The Youth's Instructor, March 29, 1904. **LM**



New Homes

BY JUDY HALLINGSTAD

It is sad what the Lord could not fulfill because of sin, but He has opened the door wide through Jesus Christ to a future that is indescribable.

What would have been if there had been no sin

“The home of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as their children should go forth to occupy the earth. ... The blue heavens were its dome; the earth, with its delicate flowers and carpet of living green, was its floor; and the leafy branches of the goodly trees were its canopy. Its walls were hung with the most magnificent adornings—the handiwork of the great Master Artist. In the surroundings of the holy pair was a lesson for all time—that true happiness is found, not in the indulgence of pride and luxury, but in communion with God through His created works. If men would give less attention to the artificial, and would cultivate greater simplic-

ity, they would come far nearer to answering the purpose of God in their creation. Pride and ambition are never satisfied, but those who are truly wise will find substantial and elevating pleasure in the sources of enjoyment that God has placed within the reach of all.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 49.

Our future if we are faithful

“With Jesus at our head we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out, ‘The city, the great city, it’s coming, it’s coming down from God out of heaven!’ And it came and settled on the place where we stood. Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city.

- There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold.
- These were to be inhabited by the saints.
- In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns and lay them on the shelf,
- then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here—no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God.” *The Adventist Home*, 546.

What God has prepared for us we just cannot imagine! We all must be faithful in the little things of this life and not get so caught up in the material things of this world that we lose out on eternal life. What a terrible loss it would be not to get to enjoy the miracle of eternal life in homes that will never rot.

Heavenly Father: You have prepared for me a mansion on land that will never fail. Help me not to collect the baubles of this world or get sidetracked by the devil’s temptations to indulge in worldly luxuries that will be burned up when You appear. Oh Lord, keep my eyes turned to Thee and let nothing of this world turn them away from our heavenly future. Remind me always that I am a sojourner here and my home is with Thee, in heavenly places! Amen. LM

—AR, Texas

—JM, Minnesota

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December 2017

This morning I received news about the death of a very dear friend who has been a soldier for the Lord for many years. He has distributed books and booklets and various missionary publications wherever he has been, including recently physician's offices and hospitals. He has also promoted the work of revival and reformation within the church of those who profess to be waiting for the imminent second advent and who profess it to be their mission to take the three angels' messages to all the world.

“The world needs missionaries, consecrated home missionaries, and no one will be registered in the books of heaven as a Christian, who has not a missionary spirit.” *The Review and Herald*, August 23, 1892.

Your brother in witnessing,

John J. Grosboll

Nut-Cracking Capuchin



By Lynette Golia

Unrivaled when it comes to biodiversity, the lush, tropical, semi-arid region of northeast Brazil is home to more species of plants and animals than any other terrestrial ecosystem on earth, with perhaps 30 percent of the world's species found there. About 80 of the world's approximately 300 primate species are found in the region of Boa Vista, the brown tufted, tool-wielding capuchin monkey considered the most intelligent.

Capuchins often spend their nights high in trees or in the safety of caves, merging each morning to find food. Down in the valley is a particular favorite, a nut palm or tucum. The palm produces large seeds but have strong shells for protection against hungry animals. For the capuchin this is a war of attrition.

After checking which seed is the ripest, he twists until it comes loose, then tears the tough, fibrous husk from the nut, exposing the woody shell. Then he drops the nut to the ground. He's learned the nut should be given a week or so of drying in the sun. Tapping multiple times, thereby gaining information if it's worth the effort of cracking, the

monkey uses a huge flat rock outcrop or boulder as an anvil, deliberately and strategically placing the nut in the most stable position on the stone, preferring a previously made pit or depression requiring the fewest strikes to crack.

The capuchin then selects and tests a large, heavy stone about one-third to one-half its body weight made from a much harder rock from the anvil. If the monkey thinks a stone may not be up for the job of cracking the sturdy nut, he will find another more suitable for the job. If two or three stones look identical the primate picks a stone at random by lifting, moving or tapping to determine if it is heavy enough to crack the tucum but not so heavy the monkey can't lift it.

Using the stone as a hammer something extraordinary happens. Raising high the hard, heavy stone into the air he uses his entire body's force slamming the rock on the nut. Striking repeatedly the shell is cracked exposing the rich oily kernel inside.

Young capuchins up to five years spend most of their time near their mother. During this time, she permits them to sit next to her as

she cracks nuts, touching the stones and her hands. In this way, the mother provides her offspring with a nurturing setting in which learning is supported by observation in watching and imitating her and the older, more experienced adults. They must figure out the details of successful cracking on their own but this is done in an environment that enables this learning. The process is long, with many frustrations. It can take eight years for the youngsters to master this art.

"Children imitate their parents; hence great care should be taken to give them correct models. ... In the family, fathers and mothers should ever present before their children the example they wish to be imitated. They should manifest one to the other a tender respect in word, and look, and action. They should make it manifest that the Holy Spirit is controlling them, by representing to their children the character of Jesus Christ. The powers of imitation are strong; and in childhood and youth, when this faculty is most active, a perfect pattern should be set before the young." *Child Guidance*, 215.



Using Technology to Spread the Truth

We are told in inspired writings: “The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and *the final movements will be rapid ones.*” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 11. [Emphasis added.]

When we consider the vast almost incomprehensible number of souls who know nothing of the three angels’ messages or the efforts of Satan to deceive the whole world, we have to wonder how God’s last message of mercy can possibly reach them all. Yet we know that Christ cannot return until every individual has had an opportunity to accept or reject present truth.

One possibility, although the Lord has a thousand ways of which we know nothing, is through the marvels of the electronic media—the internet, satellite communication, smart phones, and methods which probably have not even been developed yet.

Is it possible that when God’s people are called before the courts to explain why they continue to worship contrary to the laws of man, the news will spread worldwide in a matter of hours through these electronic means?

If you would like to assist Steps to Life in preparing to meet the demands of the final, rapid movements in the great controversy, please mark your 13th Sabbath offerings *Electronic Evangelism*.

December Sermon of the Month

The Sin of Meroz

By John J. Grosboll

Who will answer that call and use their talents to help in the saving of others? Who will be willing to sacrifice all, even give their life for the Lord?

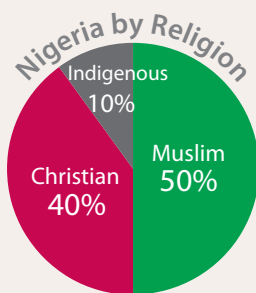
All who have donated in the past month will automatically receive this Sermon of the Month free of charge.



Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation of 190 million people. About 62% of the population is under the age of 24.

Pallet Distribution in Nigeria

By Daniel Terence



Source: cia.gov

In November 2015 plans were made for a pallet of literature to be sent to Nigeria. This was finally delivered to Makurdi in March 2017 where the materials were sorted out and distributed among the brethren across the country.

On the pallet were Spirit of Prophecy books, *Foundation and Pillars of the Christian Faith*, trifolds and booklets in the thousands, Ellen G. White CD ROMS, children's story books, felts, calendars, *Remember the Sabbath* booklets, Bible Concordance and E. G. White Comments. Included also was a box of much needed herbs for the clinic in Gboko as well as other gift items. It is indeed a rich treasure of materials and a great blessing for the outreach effort in Nigeria. Praise God!



LandMarks magazines are utilized in Nigeria for church education of all age groups.

Altogether, 13 Bible workers and 14 churches have received materials of varying quantities for their outreach efforts. Church members in the central region of Nigeria will now have access to the books from the libraries that have been set up. This will be carefully monitored to ensure the books are returned so they can stay in circulation.

A week long medical missionary training program was organized at the health center in Gboko for the women in our local churches. Instruction was given in caring for children's diseases, common women's health issues, physiology, hydrotherapy, and the application of the eight laws of health to combat these health issues as well as cooking classes. Most importantly was the connection between the medical missionary work and the proclamation of the third angel's message. Materials were given to the women to encourage them to cooperate with their husbands in finishing the work. A future medical training for the women is being planned.

Some of the churches have already conducted evangelistic efforts and have been grateful for the donated materials to share with the participants.

In April, the Makurdi church organized an eight-day program at a place in Vandeikya in the local council area called Naa, which is about 200km away from Makurdi. Three evangelists spent about three weeks going house to house to meet the people of the community and announce the program. An average of 100 persons attended every night. During the day, medical missionaries helped many people who came with health issues. The Lord blessed throughout the time and no rains interrupted the program.

On the Sabbath, 40 persons attended worship under a mango tree and many made a commitment to serve the Lord as they were exposed to truths of the investigative judgment, the Sabbath and other Bible truths for the first time. Many questions were answered and those who attended the program received

gifts. A crowd of 400 attended the final program.

When 28 persons wanted to begin Sabbath worship services the Lord had already made ready a place. A young man who had made his sports hall available to store our materials offered it to be used for worship service until a more suitable permanent place could be found. Evangelist Collins Atese is already there now to help organize these new believers into a local congregation.

One woman, once terrified of the burning in hell forever belief now rejoices that she can serve the Lord from love and not out of fear. An elderly man of over 80 years trekked over a mile each night and for the first time has committed to attend a church and serve the Lord. The small group came together to observe their second Sabbath together and evangelist Collins believes the number will surely increase in the coming weeks.

More outreach is in the planning. We praise God for the gift of the materials we now have to share with others.

Question

Explain who are the “sons of God” and “daughters of men” in Genesis 6:2.

Answer

“That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.”

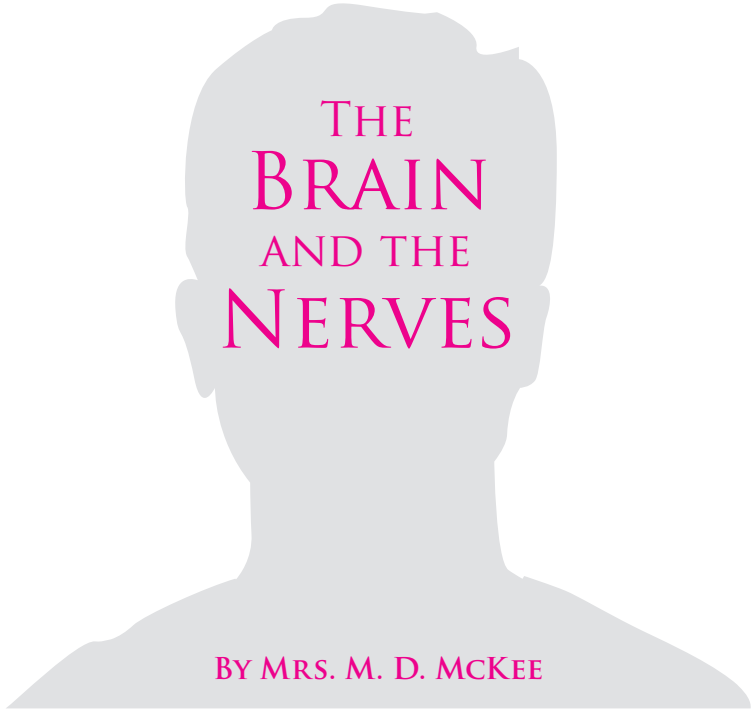
Genesis 6:2

“The **descendants of Seth** were called the sons of God; the **descendants of Cain**, the sons of men. As the sons of God mingled with the sons of men, they became corrupt and, by intermarriage with them, lost, through the influence of their wives, their peculiar, holy character, and united with the sons of Cain in their idolatry. Many cast aside the fear of God and trampled upon His commandments. But there were a few that did righteousness, who feared and honored their Creator. Noah and his family were among the righteous few.” *The Story of Redemption*, 62. [Emphasis supplied.]

“The Scriptures briefly state the reason for the prevailing iniquity in Noah’s day. The sons of God married the daughters of men. Those who still cherished the knowledge of God united themselves with the ungodly and corrupt, and as a result became assimilated to them in character. The message of warning would have been received by a larger number, had it not been for their connection and association with those who despised and derided the word of God.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 16, 1882.

“For some time the two classes 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. ... 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’ (Genesis 6:2). 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. ...” *Christ Triumphant*, 38.

“The great crime in the marriages of the days of Noah was that the sons of God formed alliances with the daughters of men. Those who professed to acknowledge and revere God associated with those who were corrupt of heart; and without discrimination they married whom they would.” *Messages to Young People*, 456. **LM**



THE BRAIN AND THE NERVES

BY MRS. M. D. MCKEE

There is a strange relation between the mind and the body. Diseases of each affect each. Involuntary actions of the heart, digestion, etc., are affected by the mind. Certain nerve-cells in the brain restrain other nerve-cells. One center causes contraction of the small blood-vessels: If this continued, the contraction would be too severe and prolonged. Another center therefore restrains the action of the first, thus balancing up the work of contraction, so that the proper supply of blood goes to all the body. This principle is called “inhibition.” Coughing and sneezing may be controlled by opposite nerve-cells. Cells that inhibit action of other cells lie in the front part of the large brain, or cerebrum. Here lies the power to exercise the will.

We can inhibit wrong desires and curb evil inclinations. At first self-indulgence is a moral sin; then it becomes a physical disease. If we allow certain cells to act daily, always in certain ways, – that is, in our thoughts –

this action becomes easier the oftener done; in other words, habit is formed. When we do a wrong act once, it is easier the next time, and becomes easier with each repetition. So with right ways. If we conquer evil and do right, it will become habitual. God gives us power if the will is submitted to him to overcome habit. While we cannot understand the will wholly, we know it is that which makes character, and character is what we are. This will live forever if the individual believes in Jesus Christ, and lives with the will submitted to Him.

As one accustoms himself to think along certain lines, so the brain-cells become set, and thought runs in a certain groove, or channel. Think pure, sweet, happy thoughts, in harmony with the love of God and Christ’s example, and the brain and mind are thus attuned to heaven’s music. Philippians 4:8 is a good mental exercise. Proverbs 23:7 states a fact. A man once confessed to a Christian worker that it was impossible for him to think pure

thoughts. Even Scriptures read in his hearing were, in his evil mind, associated with impurity in some form. He said that he had allowed his mind so to develop that it was impossible for him to be saved, for he could not think of anything but sin. God hates sin, and he will pour out his wrath upon it; but he does not destroy men: this they do themselves. How? – By thinking on evil, and then acting it out. In this way it becomes ingrained in them, a part of them; in fact, it is they themselves, SIN! This God will consume in the last day, because it has already consumed the man. If we heed the invitation of mercy before this condition of mind becomes fixed, there is hope. God wrought miracles in the past, and healed the lesions of the brain-cells, so that it was possible for pure thoughts to travel their course, and thus affect the character; and where a heart is now truly desirous of such a change, God freely gives it.

The Youth’s Instructor, December 13, 1900. **LM**



S. PAUL PREACHING TO THE THESSALONIANS

A RICH FOOL

BY JOHN J. GROSBOLL

Ironically, there is temporal gain in this world that later results in great loss, and there is also temporal loss that later results in great gain. A wise person considers the long-term effects of day-by-day decisions.

When Jesus was on earth, He taught that there were consequences to all decisions that may be completely different from what was expected. For instance, recorded in Matthew 16:24–26, literal translation, is this seeming paradox: “Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?’ ”

That is interesting, for the result is the opposite of what is expected. If you save your life, you will lose it, and if you lose your life for Christ's sake, you will end up finding it. Jesus mentioned this several times (see also Mark 8:35 or Luke 9:24). If you find what you think is success in this world and have not denied yourself by taking up your cross and following Jesus, you may have gained the whole world, but you could eventually lose your own soul. Jesus asked, "What have you gained?" In light of eternity you have gained nothing because any gain on this earth is temporary.

hundred fold those who are prepared to put all on the line in order to follow Him.

The Bible gives many stories of people who made both decisions. There is nothing in this world more valuable than the offer of eternal life. In Luke 12:18–21 there is a story about a rich man who said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool!

and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' ... So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'

After that encounter, Paul could not see anything for the light had completely blinded his eyes. So he arose and had to be led by the hand by his fellow traveling companions into the city. The Bible records that after a few days he was baptized by Ananias in the river. Paul was given back his eyesight; however, the vision that he had on the Damascus road affected his eyesight for the rest of his life.

After Paul's baptism, he went back into the city to fellowship with the Christians. Now, instead of taking them prisoners, he shared with them his testimony of how, during his three days of blindness and fasting, he had reviewed in his mind the knowledge he had of the Old Testament prophecies. He now saw how the Old Testament prophecies pointed specifically to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and how everything fit perfectly together. He knew the time prophecies in Daniel and saw that Jesus had come at exactly the time predicted in Daniel 9. He connected the prophecies in the minor prophets predicting that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and that He would be born of the lineage of David. He recalled from the prophecies in Isaiah that the Messiah's work would be headquartered in the territory of Galilee.

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The scales were lifted from Paul's eyes, and through his blindness, he now understood that the prophecies in the Psalms and Isaiah predicting that the Messiah would be rejected by the Jews had been fulfilled.

However, there have been those who have apparently lost everything who will end up gaining more than they lost. Matthew 19:27–29 says, "Peter answered and said to Him [Jesus], '... See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?' So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit ever-lasting life'" (literal translation). Jesus greatly rewards a

This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The apostle Paul, before he met the Lord on the Damascus road, was a zealous persecutor of the Christian church. In fact, he was on his way to Damascus with orders from the high priest in Jerusalem to take captive any that were found in the city of Damascus who were Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem bound for judgment and punishment when Jesus caught his attention in a mighty way.

It says in Acts 9:3–6, "... suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground,

that the Messiah would be rejected by the Jews and that He would be killed as a criminal by His own people had been fulfilled. He knew well from memory the prophecies in the Psalms, and in Isaiah, and in Jeremiah, and the minor prophets, in Daniel, and the prophecies given by Moses concerning the Messiah. But now he was able to see how these prophecies pointed directly to Jesus as the Messiah.

With this new understanding, he began to preach. First, he preached to the Jews and showed them from prophecy that this Jesus, who had been put to death, was really the Son of God. His arguments from prophecy were so convincing and conclusive, and his preaching was attended by the power of God so much, that the Jews who opposed him were confounded and unable to answer him.

In Acts 9:20–22, the Bible says, “Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. Then all who heard were amazed, and said, ‘Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?’ But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ.”

Paul showed them that his change of mind was not brought about by some impulse or fanaticism, but had been brought about by overwhelming evidence from Scripture.

As he presented it, he saw more and more clearly that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. There was no more argument, for all the Bible prophecies of the Old Testament proved it. Paul met such fierce opposition from the Jews in Damascus that he had to leave. Instead of being converted by



If you find what you think is success in this world and have not denied yourself by taking up your cross and following Jesus, you may have gained the whole world, but you could eventually lose your own soul.

the evidence presented, they developed an intense hatred of him. The same result is often true today. When the gospel is presented, some people accept it, but most people resist it and when the evidence becomes exceedingly powerful that what is being resisted is the truth, people develop hatred against the presenter. That has been true for thousands of years.

The same intense hatred was now exhibited toward Paul as was manifested before toward Jesus. Paul’s life in Damascus was in peril and he was directed by the Lord to leave there for a time, so he went to Arabia. In that land, he had opportunity for close contemplation and communion with God. He had time to search his own soul to deepen his repentance and to prepare himself by study and prayer for the work that he was about to engage in, which seemed to him to be too great and too important for him to undertake.

The Lord had already plainly told him that his work was to be among the Gentiles. To the Galatians Paul wrote, “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem ...” (Galatians 1:15–18).

The time spent in Arabia was to him a time of great soul-searching, prayer, and study. He wanted to know for sure that his great sin against Christ and His followers had been forgiven. Jesus had told him that it was He whom Paul was persecuting. When you persecute a Christian, a person who is a real follower of Jesus Christ, not only by

profession but in character, the persecution is accounted as being done to the Lord Himself.

In the book of Matthew Jesus pulls back the veil from the future and tells us what is going to happen when He returns to this world again. Matthew 25:31–33 says, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the

2 Corinthians 5:14, literal translation, “The love of Christ constrains us.”

That is the force that God uses, the force of His love. If that doesn’t draw you, then there is no other weapon that God will use to win you. Revelation 22:17 says, “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”

In the books of Daniel and Revelation, all persecuting powers are described as Satanic. God does not use compulsion, except for the force of love to draw and to attract. In

in our world between two supernatural powers, and the methods that we use when we deal with each other reveal which side of this controversy we stand on (see Revelation 12).

Unable to resist the wisdom spoken by Him, the Jews decided that they would kill Jesus to get Him out of the way. They did the same with the apostles. James was the first to be killed. They wanted to kill Peter, but his time to die was not yet and they were not allowed to do it. The Jews decided to kill Paul in Damascus and the disciples in Damascus did not know what to do. It says in Acts 9:23–25, “After many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul (Paul). And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.”

After he made his escape from Damascus, Paul went to Jerusalem to see the great apostle Peter, who was with James, but there he met with a lot of trouble because the Christians would not receive him, remembering him as a persecutor. He had no way to even contact the apostles.

Paul had been away from Jerusalem for three years. He had many friends, acquaintances, and relatives living there and he thought that they would be excited about hearing the wonderful experience he had. He thought that they would accept Christ, too, but he misjudged his former friends and associates. Not only did they reject what he said, but their rage and anger against him knew no bounds. They sought to kill him. This is often the same reaction today when a person finds Jesus, the Pearl of great price, that is worth more than anything in the world. Often that person who is so excited to share their new love and hope in the One

His arguments from prophecy were so convincing and conclusive, and his preaching was attended by the power of God so much, that the Jews who opposed him were confounded and unable to answer him.

goats on the left.” Notice what He says to both groups. To the ones on His right side He says, “‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’” To those on the left side, He will say to them, “‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me’” (verses 40, 45).

When Paul went back to Damascus preaching boldly in the name of Jesus, the Jews could not withstand his arguments. So they counseled together to silence his voice by force, the only argument left to a sinking cause. In 2 Corinthians 5:11, Paul says, “We persuade men.” The only force that the apostles used was the constraining love of Christ. Paul said in

Jeremiah 31:3, literal translation, the Lord says, “With an everlasting love I have loved you, therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.” But, the only argument left to a sinking cause is to silence the voice by force that cannot be silenced by persuasion or any logical arguments. When you look down through human history you find that this has happened millions and millions of times. If you cannot gain the best of your opponent by logic or reason, or persuade him of the righteousness of your cause, and he is determined to resist, the only thing left to do is to kill him. When you do that, of course, you reveal which side of the great controversy between Christ and Satan that you are on. There is a great controversy going on

described as “altogether lovely,” the “Prince of Peace,” the only Person in the universe who can deliver you from the guilt of your sin and the power of sin, and put joy and peace and love in your heart, is met with ridicule and rejection.

When a person finds Christ, he knows he has found such a treasure so wonderful that he immediately wants to tell his friends, acquaintances, and relatives what he has found. But it is still true today, just as it was in those days, that the eyes of those who are perishing are blinded by the god of this world, so that they should not see the light of the gospel. The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, says, “If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”

Not only did Paul meet with disappointment from his former fellow associates and friends, but the Christians would not accept him either because they were afraid that this was a set-up to flush them out and then destroy them. “When Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to Him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus” (Acts 9:26–30).



Instead of being converted by the evidence presented the Jews developed an intense hatred of Paul. The same is often true today. When the gospel is presented, some people accept it, but most people resist it and when the evidence becomes exceedingly powerful that what is being resisted is the truth, people develop hatred against the presenter.

Throughout the ages, the person who knows the truth and wants to share it with others has been forced to flee because so many will not accept it. Paul was willing to stay in Jerusalem even if it meant giving his life to try to save his former associates. But while he was there, he said, “It happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance and saw Him (Christ) saying to me, ‘Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.’ So I said, ‘Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’ Then He said to me, ‘Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles’ ” (Acts 22:17–21).

Although the Jews rejected the Lord Jesus, divine wisdom saw that there were multitudes in the Gentile world that if they heard the gospel

would accept it. There are still people scattered here and there around the world who accept the gospel when hearing it.

Have you accepted the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you surrendered yourself to Him? Has He become the Sovereign of your life so that He can deliver you from the guilt and power of sin, and give you an inheritance among those that are sanctified? Have you found the real reason that you are here, the real reason for living? Do you have security for the future because you are following the One who never makes a mistake?

(Unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, Bible texts are from the New King James Version.) **LM**

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DEARER TO HER THAN LIFE

BY BRENDA DOUAY

*“And it came to pass, that, as He (Jesus) was praying
in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His dis-
ciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John
also taught his disciples. And He said unto them,
When ye pray, say, Our Father ...”*

Luke 11:1, 2

If I call someone “Father” that means I am the child, and in the Bible God tells children how they are to be towards their parents. Exodus 20:12 says, “Honour thy father and thy mother,” and the Lord says through Paul, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right” (Ephesians 6:1).

Jesus tells us, through His child Ellen White, “But if you call God your Father you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest. It will be your joy to recognize and honor your relation to your Father and to every member of His family. You will rejoice to do any act, however humble, that will tend to His glory or to the well-being of your kindred.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 105, 106.

Margaret lived in Scotland in the sixteenth century when Covenanters, followers of Christ through His servant John Knox, were thrown into prison, and many were martyred for their faith. Margaret was a Covenanter who ended up in jail for nothing more than belief in the Scriptures.

There she became friends with Mrs. Lauchlison, a fellow Covenanter who insisted on obeying Scripture rather than the king’s religion. The two encouraged one another in their cell, quoting Bible verses and praying for strength to endure to the end.

The day came when soldiers tied the hands of Mrs. Lauchlison and led her away to her execution. “Let me go too!” Margaret begged. Guarded by soldiers, she walked beside her friend to the beach where a wooden stake already stood at the water’s edge. Margaret watched as they bound her friend to the wooden pole. She stared



The two encouraged one another in their cell, quoting Bible verses and praying for strength to endure to the end.

as the tide came in, slowly raising the water level about the woman tied to the stake. Each wave brought the water higher about her body.

“What has the old woman done?” someone cried out of the crowd.

“She was found on her knees in prayer,” a guard answered.

As Margaret kept staring at her friend, the old woman’s wrinkled face seemed aglow with heavenly light. Margaret strained to catch her words above the crash of the waves. “I have promised to obey Thee, heavenly Father. Help me now when I am tested.”

The faint strains of a hymn sounded above the pounding waves. Margaret watched as they washed over the old woman’s head. “*Lord, help me to be as faithful to Your word,*” she breathed a silent prayer of commitment.

The next day Margaret was the one tied to the stake. As the tide came in, she recited Romans 8:31–39: “If God be for us, who can be against us? Who can divide us from the love of Christ? ... For I am persuaded that neither death,

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Margaret and her friend Mrs. Lauchlison both honored their Father in heaven. To do anything different than they did would have been to dishonor, disobey and deny Him. Though their obedience to their heavenly Father cost them their lives on this earth, they are simply sleeping in their temporary beds until the great waking up morning, when their Saviour and Lord will awaken them to the joys of eternal life.

Pray that each one of us will make the same commitment to our heavenly Father that Margaret and Mrs. Lauchlison made, to be faithful no matter the cost. Then we also, on that great waking up morning when Jesus returns, will be with our Father and His only begotten Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, for eternity. **LM**



DEATH & SUNSET

BY N. J. BOWERS

Once listened to a certain preacher who, when speaking of death, said substantially: “Though the Bible represents that man really dies, as in the expression ‘Abraham is dead’ (John 8:52), yet we are to no more take the statement literally than we are the oft-repeated declarations about the sun’s rising and setting. It, as a matter of fact, does not really rise and set, but only *appears* to. So man does not really die; the Bible only speaks of appearances when it says, ‘Man dieth’ (Job 14:19). We only *appear* to die as the sun *appears* to set. We also hear people continually talking about sunrise and sunset, and we talk about it, and so do astronomers even, who know better; yet we all speak of merely what seems to be, and not of reality.”

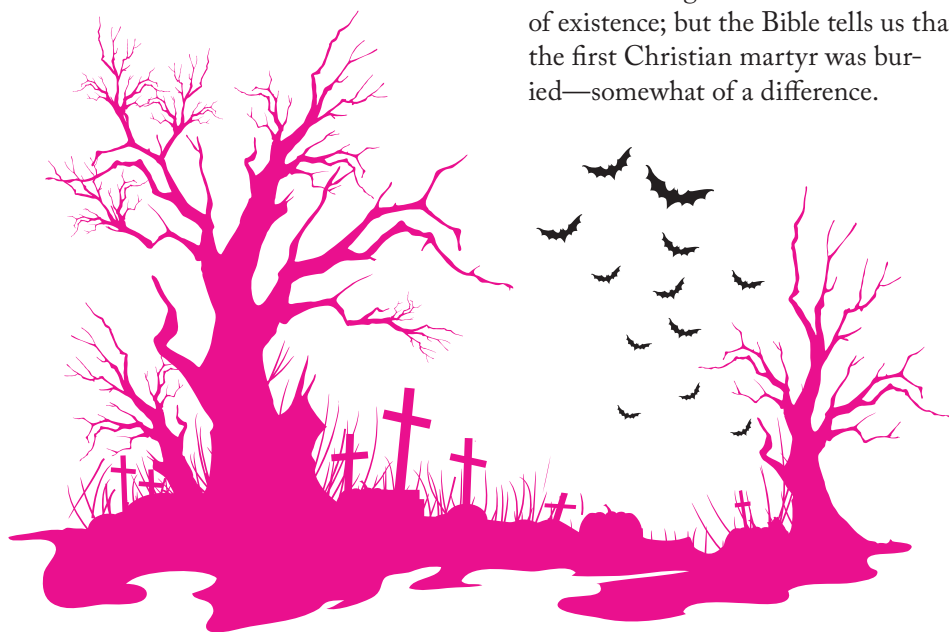
1 The Bible does not set out to teach astronomy. If it did, it certainly would not teach that the sun rises and sets when it does not. It is not a text-book of natural science. Man is its subject, and not the sun, moon, and stars. It tells of his creation—how he came to be, of the place he occupies in creation, of his capabilities and powers, of his nature, of his condition in death, and of his ultimate destiny. It instructs in regard to all this, because it is this that lies in the field of its design, and we must take what we find as a rigid reality. This is not the place for “appearances,” but for realities. The Bible as a revelation has to do with man, and its declarations are to be taken as they stand, without any gloss. The preacher’s idea was that only the body died, the man himself living right on as before; so when the Bible says, “Abraham is dead,” “Moses my servant is dead,” “Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead” (John 8:52; Joshua 1:2; John 6:58), and the like, it means that only their bodies died, but their souls did not.

2 We can but regard this as a piece of thorough, theological quackery, the smallest and most shameful kind of trifling with sacred things. It is taking the whole question for granted. How does he know that only the body dies, and the soul or spirit does not? Not from anything the Bible says, but simply because he thinks so, and is going to have it so anyway, if he does have to ride rough-shod over Scripture, reason, and common sense. The Bible tells us that “man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” In Heaven? No. In hell? No. “Man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep” (Job 14:10–12); the same man “that liveth,” “dieth,” and “lieth down” in death, not the *body of man* as distinguished from the intelligence, but *man*. The difference is he is *dead*. “Devout men carried Stephen to his burial” (Acts 8:2). Stephen was dead, and they went and buried him. Some say a man cannot be buried, but his body can be. The real man goes into another state of existence; but the Bible tells us that the first Christian martyr was buried—somewhat of a difference.

3 The Bible informs us that “the dead know not anything” (Ecclesiastes 9:5); that their love and hatred and envy is now perished (verse 6); that “they are extinct” (Isaiah 43:17); that those that have been long dead are in darkness (Psalm 143:3; Lamentation 3:6); that in the day of death the “thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4); that “the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence” (Psalm 115:17); and that the dead in Christ shall come forth from their graves when the Lord comes to judgment (1 Thessalonians 4:14–16). Then no part of man remains alive from death to the resurrection. In order for man to live *again*, he must die (Job 14:14; Revelation 20:5). So when the Bible says “Abraham died” (Genesis 25:8), we believe it wholly, not in part.

4 Men say that the sun rises and sets, yet they know that really it does not. So we say men die, but we know they do not really. Now do we know as precisely that men do not literally die as we know that the sun does not literally rise? No. Science demonstrates that the sun, as related to the earth, is stationary. Every school boy knows that. But does science demonstrate that a part of man remains alive after a part of him dies? No. On the contrary, facts strongly indicate that consciousness is destroyed in death. Men can demonstrate that the sun does not rise and set, but they cannot show that a man is alive when he is dead. [All emphasis author’s.]

The Review and Herald, May 3, 1881. **LM**



The Crisis in Heaven

Key Text

“I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible” (Isaiah 13:11, *last part*).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 33–43.

Introduction

“The bulwarks of Satan will never triumph. Victory will attend the third angel’s message. As the Captain of the Lord’s host tore down the walls of Jericho, so will the Lord’s commandment-keeping people triumph, and all opposing elements be defeated.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 410.

Sunday

1 WHO IS JESUS, REALLY?

- a. What must we realize about the role of Jesus Christ in the creation of the universe and its inhabitants? John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1, 2.

Note: “The Father wrought by His Son in the creation of all heavenly beings.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

- b. What contrast exists between all creatures and Christ who was, by decree, to become our Saviour? Hebrews 1:6–8, 13, 14; Luke 1:30–35.

Note: “From Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life that is original—unborrowed, underived life. In Him is the fountain of life.” *The Review and Herald*, August 6, 1914.

“In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God.” *The Signs of the Times*, August 29, 1900.

Monday

2 THE HEAVENLY GOVERNMENT

- a. What are some attributes of the government with which the Creator has always ruled the universe? Psalm 89:14; Romans 7:12.

Note: “The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1886.

“The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.

“So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34, 35.

- b. What has always been the attitude of the unfallen, holy angels with regard to Christ? Revelation 5:11, 12. What did the Father, as King of the Universe, also declare concerning Christ? Hebrews 1:3–6.

Note: “The Son of God shared the Father’s throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. ... Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to

execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God's plan, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 36.

Tuesday

3 THE ANOINTED CHERUB'S CHOICE

- a. Under the figure of the king of Tyrus, what can we learn about Lucifer, the anointed cherub, who later became Satan, the adversary? Ezekiel 28:11-15.

Note: "Satan was once an honored angel in heaven, next to Jesus Christ. His countenance was mild, expressive of happiness like the other angels. His forehead was high and broad, and showed great intelligence. His form was perfect. He had a noble, majestic bearing." *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, 17.

"Satan had led the heavenly choir. He had raised the first note, then all the angelic host united with him, and glorious strains of music had resounded through Heaven in honor of God and His dear Son." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 28.

- b. What led to the fall of Lucifer? Ezekiel 28:17, *first part*.

Note: "Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. ... Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 35.



The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it.

- c. How uncontrollable is the spirit of envy and jealousy? Proverbs 27:4; 6:34. What happened when the Father, the Son, and the angels tried to reason with Lucifer?

Note: "Lucifer's disposition to serve himself instead of his Creator aroused a feeling of apprehension when observed by those who considered that the glory of God should be supreme. ... But the warning, given in infinite love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to prevail, and became the more determined." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 35, 36.

Wednesday

4 SUBTLE DECEPTION

- a. What was Isaiah shown about the attitude that Lucifer strangely adopted? Isaiah 14:12-14.

Note: “The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them, but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy. ... The high honors conferred upon Lucifer were not appreciated as God’s special gift, and therefore, called forth no gratitude to his Creator. He gloried in his brightness and exaltation and aspired to be equal with God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 36, 37.

b. How did Lucifer’s attitude disrupt heaven? James 3:16.

Note: “The exaltation of the Son of God as equal with the Father was represented as an injustice to Lucifer, who, it was claimed, was also entitled to reverence and honor. If this prince of angels could but attain to his true, exalted position, great good would accrue to the entire host of heaven; for it was his object to secure freedom for all. But now even the liberty which they had hitherto enjoyed was at an end; for an absolute Ruler had been appointed them, and to His authority all must pay homage. Such were the subtle deceptions that through the wiles of Lucifer were fast obtaining in the heavenly courts.

“There had been no change in the position or authority of Christ. ... Many of the angels were, however, blinded by Lucifer’s deceptions.

“Taking advantage of the loving, loyal trust reposed in him by the holy beings under his command, he had so artfully instilled into their minds his own distrust and discontent that his agency was not discerned. Lucifer had presented the purposes of God in a false light—misconstruing and distorting them to excite dissent and dissatisfaction. He cunningly drew his hearers on to give utterance to their feelings; then these expressions were repeated by him when it would serve his purpose, as evidence that the angels were not in full harmony with the government of God. ... While secretly fomenting discord and rebellion, he with consummate craft caused it to appear as his sole purpose to promote loyalty and to preserve harmony and peace.

“The spirit of dissatisfaction [was] thus kindled.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 37, 38.

Thursday

5 THE OUTCOME OF THE REBELLION

a. When the archdeceiver finally instigated open rebellion in heaven, what was the outcome? Revelation 12:7–9. What will be his final end? Isaiah 14:15–17.

b. What was the real object at stake in the war in heaven? Psalm 119:126.

Note: “He [Lucifer] began to insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that though laws might be necessary for the inhabitants of the worlds, angels, being more exalted, needed no such restraint, for their own wisdom was a sufficient guide.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 37.

c. What reveals God’s perfect wisdom in handling this crisis? Jude 6; 1 Corinthians 6:3, *first part*; Philippians 2:10, 11.

Note: “Had he [Satan] been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 42.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we answer some common misconceptions about who Christ is?
- 2 Why can we say that God’s government is balanced and just?
- 3 What was the root of Lucifer’s problem?
- 4 Trace the steps that he took that spoiled the sweet harmony of heaven.
- 5 Why didn’t God simply blot Satan out of existence immediately?

January 7–13

The Voice in the Wilderness

Key Text

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God” (Isaiah 40:3).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 9–13.

Introduction

“Our work of heralding the second coming of Christ is similar to that of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ at His first advent. We are to proclaim to the world the message, ‘The great day of the Lord is near’ (Zephaniah 1:14). ‘Prepare to meet thy God’ (Amos 4:12). We are to do much more than we have yet done.” *Reflecting Christ*, 201.

Sunday

1 HOPE FOR THE DESPONDING

- a. What is one of the most beloved messages Isaiah was ever directed to pen? Isaiah 40:1, 2.

Note: “The covenant mercy of God led Him to interpose in behalf of His people Israel after their severe chastisement before their enemies. Israel had chosen to walk in her own wisdom and righteousness in the place of the wisdom and righteousness of God, and as a result her nation was ruined. God permitted them to suffer under a double yoke, that they might be humiliated and repent. But in their dispersion and captivity, the Jews were not left in a hopeless state. Encouragement was given them, for through this humiliation they were to be brought to seek the Lord. God gave to Isaiah a message for this people: [Isaiah 40:1, 2 quoted].”

“When the Jews were dispersed from Jerusalem, there were among them young men and women who were firm as a rock to principle, men and women who had not pursued a course to make the Lord ashamed to call them His people. These were sad at heart for the backsliding which they

could not prevent. These innocent ones must suffer with the guilty; but God would give them strength sufficient for their day. It was to them that the message of encouragement was sent. The hope of the nation lay in those young men and maidens who would preserve their integrity.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1144.

Monday

2 A PROPHESED MESSENGER

- a. With what description did Isaiah prophesy of John the Baptist? Isaiah 40:3; Luke 3:2–4. In what sense was John to be “a voice in the wilderness”?

Note: “There was a great work appointed for the prophet John, but there was no school on the earth with which he could connect. His learning must be obtained away from the cities, in the wilderness.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1115.

- b. What enabled John, like Isaiah and Elijah before him, to stand fearless before the people in carrying out his lifework? Isaiah 33:17; 6:5.

Note: “John did not feel strong enough to stand the great pressure of temptation he would meet in society. He feared his character would be molded according to the prevailing customs of the Jews, and he chose the wilderness as his school, in which his mind could be properly educated and disciplined from God’s great book of nature. In the wilderness, John could the more readily deny himself and bring his appetite under control, and dress in accordance to natural simplicity. And there was nothing in the wilderness that would take his mind from meditation and prayer. Satan had access to John, even after he had closed every avenue in his power through which he would enter. But his habits of life were so pure and natural that he could discern the foe, and had strength of spirit and decision of character to resist him.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1115.

“Under the guiding of the divine Spirit, he [John] studied the scrolls of the prophets. By day and by night, Christ was his study, his meditation, until mind and heart and soul were filled with the glorious vision.

“He looked upon the King in His beauty, and self was lost sight of. He beheld the majesty of holiness, and knew himself to be inefficient and unworthy. It was God’s message that he was to declare. It was in God’s power and His righteousness that he was to stand. He was ready to go forth as Heaven’s messenger, unawed by the human, because he had looked upon the Divine. He could stand fearless in the presence of earthly monarchs, because with trembling he had bowed before the King of kings.” *Gospel Workers*, 54.

Tuesday

3 MAKING THE STRAIGHT HIGHWAY

- a. How does history’s wise man summarize our fallen human condition? Ecclesiastes 1:15. Nonetheless, what hopeful message was John the Baptist to bring, in harmony with Isaiah’s prophecy? Isaiah 40:4; Luke 3:5.

Note: “Everything that God could do has been done in behalf of man. Every want has been anticipated; every difficulty, every emergency, has been provided for. The crooked places have been made straight, the rough places smooth, and therefore no one will be excused in the day of judgment, if he has cherished unbelief and resisted the workings of the Holy Spirit.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 251.

- b. In the last days, how are we to allow the Holy Spirit to work through us in ways that we never thought possible? Isaiah 40:5; Luke 3:6.

Note: “The Lord gave him [John the Baptist] his message. Did he go to the priests and rulers and ask if he might proclaim this message?—No, God put him away from them that he might not be influenced by their spirit and teaching. He

was the voice of one crying in the wilderness [Isaiah 40:3–5 quoted]. This is the very message that must be given to our people; we are near the end of time, and the message is, Clear the King’s highway; gather out the stones; raise up a standard for the people. The people must be awakened. It is no time now to cry peace and safety.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 410.

“Let those who have special aptitude, work for unbelievers in the high places as well as in the low places of life. Search diligently for perishing souls. ...

“Let your light shine forth in such clear, steady rays that no man can stand up in the judgment, and say, ‘Why did you not tell me about this truth? Why did you not care for my soul?’

“Then let us be diligent in the distribution of literature that has been carefully prepared for use among those not of our faith. Let us make the most of every opportunity to arrest the attention of unbelievers. Let us put literature into every hand that will receive it. Let us consecrate ourselves to the proclamation of the message, ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God’ (Isaiah 40:3)! ... Now is the day of our responsibility.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 189, 190.

Wednesday

4 HUMBLENESS NOT TO BE SLIGHTED

- a. What timeless principle shows how God can crown with success even the smallest efforts of those who are sincerely seeking to promote His cause? Zechariah 4:9, 10.

Note: “The way of the world is to begin with pomp and boasting. God’s way is to make the day of small things the beginning of the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness. Sometimes He trains His workers by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulties. ...

“If they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, God will make the way clear. Success will come to them as they struggle against difficulties. Before the intrepid spirit and unwavering faith of a Zerubbabel, great mountains of difficulty will become a plain; and he whose hands have laid the foundation, even ‘his hands shall also finish it.’ ‘He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it’ (Zechariah 4:9, 7).” *Prophets and Kings*, 595.

- b. Through what means can we cooperate with God to enlighten the inhabitants of this dark planet? Zechariah 4:6.



Note: “The Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 300.

- c. How does the message we are called upon to bear reflect the first part of John the Baptist’s message? Matthew 3:2; Luke 3:8–14.

Note: “[Matthew 3:2 quoted.] This same message, through the publications from our printing houses, is to be given to the world today.” *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 139.

Thursday

4 NONE GREATER THAN JOHN THE BAPTIST

- a. Explain the goal of John’s teaching. Matthew 3:4–12.

Note: “Christ bore the same message that John bore. [Matthew 4:17 quoted.] But while John preached in the wilderness, Christ’s work was done among the people. That He might reach sinners where they were, He encircled the race with His long human arm, while with His divine arm He grasped the throne of the Infinite, uniting finite man to the infinite God, and connecting earth with heaven.” *The Review and Herald*, August 15, 1899.

Let those who have special aptitude work for unbelievers in the high places as well as in the low places of life. Search diligently for perishing souls.

- b. Which commandment did John present before Herod, and what was the result? Mark 6:17–29. What did Jesus say about John? Luke 7:28.

Note: “Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John, and with deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother’s wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that this was not lawful. Herod was unwilling to make any sacrifice. He married his brother’s wife, and through her influence, seized John and put him in prison, intending however to release him. ... Soon John was beheaded, through the influence of Herod’s wife. I saw that the humblest disciples who followed Jesus, witnessed His miracles, and heard the comforting words which fell from His lips, were greater than John the Baptist; that is, they were more exalted and honored, and had more pleasure in their lives.” *Early Writings*, 154, 155.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What hope does God offer to all who submit to His chastening rod?
- 2 What should we learn from John’s concern about his surroundings?
- 3 How can our literature be especially helpful in the times in which we live?
- 4 Why will God surprise us with His manner of enlightening the world?
- 5 What are some things we can learn from the life and ministry of John the Baptist?

January 14 – 20

Meeting the Messiah

Key Text

“He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isaiah 40:11).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 629–635.

Introduction

“Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He cares for His feeble, sickly, wandering sheep. He knows them all by name. The distress of every sheep and every lamb of His flock touches His heart of sympathizing love, and the cry for aid reaches His ear.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 346.

Sunday

1 GOD’S MIGHT AND OUR MORTAL FRAILTY

- a. As we consider our plans for the future, what should we remember? Isaiah 40:6–8. What other illustration also shows God’s greatness and, at the same time, relates a piece of scientific information? Verse 22, *first part*.

Note: “At this time, before the great final crisis, as before the world’s first destruction, men are absorbed in the pleasures and the pursuits of sense. Engrossed with the seen and transitory, they have lost sight of the unseen and eternal. For the things that perish with the using, they are sacrificing imperishable riches. Their minds need to be uplifted, their views of life to be broadened. They need to be aroused from the lethargy of worldly dreaming.

“From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the pages of Holy Writ, they need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and its magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld—power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring—how completely has it passed away! As ‘the flower of the grass’ it has perished. So perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose and expresses His character can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows.” *Education*, 183.

Monday

2 THE ONLY TRUE GOD

- a. As Isaiah prophesied of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, what did he reveal about the work of the Messiah? Isaiah 40:9–11.

Note: “The truths of the third angel’s message have been presented by some as a dry theory; but in this message is to be presented Christ the Living One. He is to be revealed as the first and the last, as the I AM, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star. Through this message the character of God in Christ is to be manifested to the world.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 20.

“In Christ is the tenderness of the shepherd, the affection of the parent, and the matchless grace of the compassionate Saviour. His blessings He presents in the most alluring terms. He is not content merely to announce these blessings; He presents them in the most attractive way, to excite a desire to possess them. So His servants are to present the riches of the glory of the unspeakable Gift. The wonderful love of Christ will melt and subdue hearts, when the mere reiteration of doctrines would accomplish nothing. ... Tell the people of Him who is ‘the Chiefest among ten thousand,’ and the One ‘altogether lovely’ (The Song of Solomon 5:10, 16). Words alone cannot tell it. Let it be reflected in the character and manifested in the life. ... In everyone Christ’s long-suffering love, His holiness, meekness, mercy, and truth are to be manifested to the world.” *The Desire of Ages*, 826, 827.

- b. Where are we to look for salvation, and why? Isaiah 45:21, 22.

Note: “Come with your whole heart to Jesus. Repent of your sins, make confession to God, forsake all iniquity, and you may appropriate to yourself all His promises.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 634.

“Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the

sorrowing, the hope for every believer. If we can awaken an interest in men's minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ, we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God. They thus receive their lesson." "Ellen G. White Comments," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1113.

Tuesday

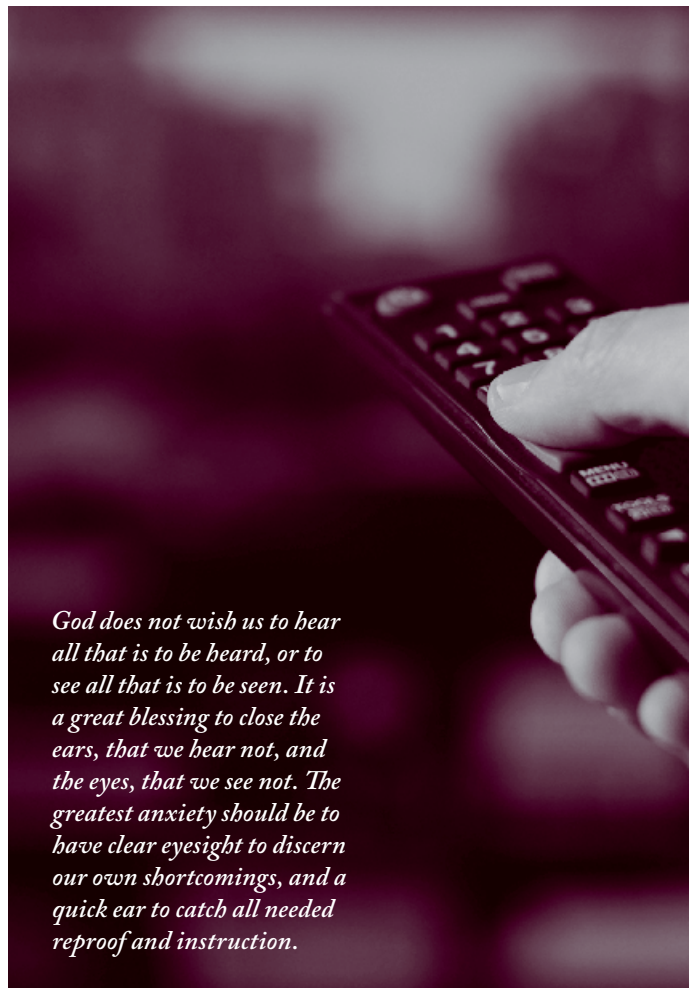
3 AN ENDURING UNION

- a. How does the Lord depict the tender care He has for His children? Isaiah 49:15, 16; Matthew 12:50; Galatians 3:29. How can we be sure to be included among those children?

Note: "Those who share Christ's suffering and reproach now will share His glory hereafter. He 'is not ashamed to call them brethren' (Hebrews 2:11). His angels minister to them. His second appearing will be as the Son of man, thus even in His glory identifying Himself with humanity. To those who have united themselves to Him, He declares: 'Though a mother may forget her child, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands.' Thou art continually before Me' (Isaiah 49:15, 16). ...

"A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 230, 231.

- b. As we surrender our entire being to the guidance of the Good Shepherd, what assurance comes to us? Psalms 36:7; 34:22.
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God does not wish us to hear all that is to be heard, or to see all that is to be seen. It is a great blessing to close the ears, that we hear not, and the eyes, that we see not. The greatest anxiety should be to have clear eyesight to discern our own shortcomings, and a quick ear to catch all needed reproof and instruction.

Note: "He who took humanity upon Himself knows how to sympathize with the sufferings of humanity. Not only does Christ know every soul, and the peculiar needs and trials of that soul, but He knows all the circumstances that chafe and perplex the spirit. His hand is outstretched in pitying tenderness to every suffering child. Those who suffer most have most of His sympathy and pity. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He desires us to lay our perplexities and troubles at His feet and leave them there." *The Ministry of Healing*, 249.

Wednesday

4 MAGNIFYING THE LAW

- a. What work would Jesus have us do for souls who are in darkness? Isaiah 42:5–7.
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Note: “As a people we are to be reconverted, our lives sanctified to declare the truth as it is in Jesus. In the work of scattering our publications, we can speak of a Saviour’s love from a warm and throbbing heart. God alone has the power to forgive sins; if we do not speak this message to the unconverted, our neglect may prove their ruin. Blessed, soul-saving Bible truths are published in our papers. There are many who can help in the work of selling our periodicals. The Lord calls upon all of us to seek to save perishing souls. Satan is at work to deceive the very elect, and now is our time to work with vigilance. Our books and papers are to be brought before the notice of the people; the gospel of present truth is to be given to our cities without delay. Shall we not arouse to our duties?”

“If we are making the life and teachings of Christ our study, every passing event will furnish a text for an impressive discourse. It was thus the Saviour preached the gospel in the highways and byways; and as He spoke, the little group that listened to Him swelled to a great company.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 63.

- b. How does God regard His law? Isaiah 42:21. What can we learn from this?

Note: “We must strive to arouse church members, and those who make no profession, to see and obey the claims of the law of Heaven. We are to magnify this law and make it honorable.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 403.

“The very One who ages before had spoken the law from Mount Sinai, now came to magnify it and make it honorable. In His Sermon on the Mount He explained the law, showing what each precept comprehended. Covetousness was shown by Him to be idolatry, lust adultery, and anger murder. He made manifest the spirituality of the law, and pointed out that it reaches to every phase of life.

“Before the universe of heaven, before the fallen angels, and before those whom He had come to save, Christ lived the law of God. By His supreme obedience to its requirements, He exalted and enforced it. ...

“As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the strong for strength.” *The Signs of the Times*, March 4, 1897.

Thursday

5 GUARDING OUR EYES AND EARS

- a. What does the Lord want us to do with our eyes and ears? Isaiah 42:19, 20. Why?

Note: “God does not wish us to hear all that is to be heard, or to see all that is to be seen. It is a great blessing to close the ears, that we hear not, and the eyes, that we see not. The greatest anxiety should be to have clear eyesight to discern our own shortcomings, and a quick ear to catch all needed reproof and instruction, lest by our inattention and carelessness we let them slip and become forgetful hearers and not doers of the work.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 707, 708.

“It makes every difference what we give our minds and souls to feed upon. We can let our minds dwell upon romance and castle-building, and what will it do for us? It will ruin us, soul and body. ... We want to have that power that will enable us to close our eyes to scenes that are not elevating, that are not ennobling, that will not purify and refine us; and to keep our ears closed to everything that is forbidden in God’s word. He forbids us to imagine evil, to speak evil, and even to think evil.” *Our High Calling*, 334.

- b. What does God want us to behold? Hebrews 12:1, 2.

Note: “Let us look to Jesus and consider the loveliness of His character, and by beholding we shall become changed into the same likeness.” *Our High Calling*, 334.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How does a sense of our own mortality give us a better perspective on life?
- 2 In what ways should we tell others of Jesus and His love?
- 3 Explain the depth of a genuine union with Christ.
- 4 In what sense did Christ magnify the law in His teaching and example?
- 5 To what things should we close our eyes and ears?

January 21 – 27

The Creator's Comfort and Care

Key Text

“He [God’s servant] shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law” (Isaiah 42:4).

Study Help: *The Ministry of Healing*, 29–43.

Introduction

“By studying the word of God we shall see that we are not left to our weakness, to our doubts, and that there is no occasion for sinking under discouragement. Talk faith; act faith. Cultivate the faith that works by love and purifies the soul.” *The Review and Herald*, May 19, 1896.

Sunday

1 A PATTERN FOR US

- a. Where does God the Father urge all of us to look—and why? Isaiah 42:1.

Note: “Jesus was the fountain of healing mercy for the world; and through all those secluded years at Nazareth, His life flowed out in currents of sympathy and tenderness. The aged, the sorrowing, and the sin-burdened, the children at play in their innocent joy, the little creatures of the groves, the patient beasts of burden—all were happier for His presence. He whose word of power upheld the worlds would stoop to relieve a wounded bird. There was nothing beneath His notice, nothing to which He disdained to minister.

“Thus as He grew in wisdom and stature, Jesus increased in favor with God and man. . . . The atmosphere of hope and courage that surrounded Him made Him a blessing in every home. . . .

“He lived to please, honor, and glorify His Father in the common things of life. His work began in consecrating the lowly trade of the craftsmen who toil for their daily bread.

He was doing God’s service just as much when laboring at the carpenter’s bench as when working miracles for the multitude. And every youth who follows Christ’s example of faithfulness and obedience in His lowly home may claim those words spoken of Him, . . . ‘Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth’ (Isaiah 42:1).” *The Desire of Ages*, 74.

Monday

2 THE UNIQUE MASTER TEACHER

- a. What is meant by Isaiah’s prophecy about the voice of Jesus? Isaiah 42:2.

Note: “The voice of Christ was not heard in the street, in noisy contention with those who were opposed to His doctrine. Neither was His voice heard in the street in prayer to His Father, to be heard of men. His voice was not heard in joyful mirth. His voice was not raised to exalt Himself, and to gain the applause and flattery of men. When engaged in teaching, He withdrew His disciples away from the noise and confusion of the busy city to some retired place more in harmony with the lessons of humility, piety, and virtue, which He would impress upon their minds. He shunned human praise and preferred solitude and peaceful retirement to the noise and confusion of mortal life. His voice was often heard in earnest, prevailing intercessions to His Father; yet for these exercises He chose the lonely mountain, and frequently spent whole nights in prayer for strength to sustain Him under the temptations He should meet, and to accomplish the important work He came to do for the salvation of man. His petitions were earnest and mingled with strong cries and tears. And notwithstanding the labor of soul during the night, He ceased not His labor through the day. In the morning He would quietly resume His work of mercy and disinterested benevolence.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 30, 31.

“In marked contrast to the teachers of His day was the Saviour to conduct Himself among men. In His life no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause, was ever to be witnessed. The Messiah was to be hid in God, and God was to be revealed in the character of His Son.” *Prophets and Kings*, 693.

- b. What did those who heard Jesus' words say of His manner of speaking? John 7:46.

Note: "Jesus is our example. His voice was musical, and was never raised in high, strained notes while He was speaking to the people. He did not speak so rapidly that His words were crowded one upon another in such a way that it made it difficult to understand Him. He distinctly enunciated every word." *The Review and Herald*, March 5, 1895.

"They [the disciples in the upper chamber] beheld the hands and feet marred by the cruel nails. They recognized His voice, like no other they had ever heard." *The Desire of Ages*, 803.

Tuesday

3 REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

- a. What else did Isaiah prophesy concerning Jesus? Isaiah 42:3. What did the Lord's work include? John 10:16; Matthew 12:20, 21.

Note: "The church has not been properly educated to work outside of their own people. Many souls out of the church might have been enlightened, and a great deal more light brought into the church, if every church member in every country, who claims to have the advanced light of truth, had worked with heart and soul and voice to win souls to the truth. Altogether too little work is being done by church members for those who need the light, those who are outside of the church of Seventh-day Adventists. ... The Lord has pointed out the duty of every soul. In the judgment no one will have any excuse to present for not doing his duty." *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 127, 128.

"To the heart of Christ the very presence of trouble was a call for help. The poor, the sick, the desolate, the outcasts, the discouraged, the desponding, found in Him a compassionate Saviour, a Mighty Healer. ... Christ identifies His

interests with those of suffering humanity, and He tells us that whatever we do to relieve a sufferer, we do for Him." *Medical Ministry*, 121.

- b. For what purpose did Jesus come to this world? John 3:17. What shows His patience with sinners?

Note: "When Judas joined the disciples, he was not insensible to the beauty of the character of Christ. He felt the influence of that divine power which was drawing souls to the Saviour. He who came not to break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax would not repulse this soul while even one desire was reaching toward the light. The Saviour read the heart of Judas; He knew the depths of iniquity to which, unless delivered by the grace of God, Judas would sink. In connecting this man with Himself, He placed him where he might, day by day, be brought in contact with the outflowing of His own unselfish love. If he would open his heart to Christ, divine grace would banish the demon of selfishness, and even Judas might become a subject of the kingdom of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 294.

"Jesus hungered for his [Judas'] soul. He felt for him such a burden as for Jerusalem when He wept over the doomed city. His heart was crying, How can I give thee up? The constraining power of that love was felt by Judas." *Ibid.*, 645.

Wednesday

4 AN UNFAILING HELPER

- a. What was Jesus' attitude toward difficult situations, and how can this example help us? Isaiah 42:4.

Note: "He [Jesus] reached to the very depth of human misery and woe, to take man as He found him, a being tainted with corruption, degraded with vice, depraved by sin, and united with Satan in apostasy, and elevate him to a seat upon His

throne. But it was written of Him that 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged,' and He went forth in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice, giving us an example that we should follow in His steps. We should work as did Jesus, departing from our own pleasure, turning away from Satan's bribes, despising ease, and abhorring selfishness, that we may seek and save that which is lost, bringing souls from darkness into light, into the sunshine of God's love. We have been commissioned to go forth and preach the gospel to every creature. We are to bring to the lost the tidings that Christ can forgive sin, can renew the nature, can clothe the soul in the garments of His righteousness, bring the sinner to His right mind, and teach him and fit him up to be a laborer together with God." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 199.

- b. What assurance comes to all who are seeking to work for God in their sphere? Isaiah 40:30, 31.

Note: "Wonderful are the possibilities before the youth to grasp the assurances of God's word. Scarcely can the human mind comprehend the spiritual attainments which can be reached by them as they become partakers of the divine nature. Daily correcting mistakes and gaining victories, they grow into wise, strong men and women in Christ. ...

"The man who waits upon the Lord is strong in his strength, strong enough to hold firm under great pressure. Yet he is easy to be entreated on the side of mercy and compassion, which is the side of Christ. The soul that is submissive to God is ready to do the will of God; he diligently and humbly seeks to know that will. He accepts discipline, and is afraid to walk according to his own finite judgment. He communes with God, and his conversation is in heaven.

"Linked to the Infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of evil have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ's righteousness." *My Life Today*, 277.

Thursday

5 HOW GREAT A GOD WE SERVE!

- a. What does Isaiah tell us of the power of God? Isaiah 40:26–29.

Note: "In the song of the bird, the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day. And as we behold His power in nature we find comfort, for the word that created all things is that which speaks life to the soul. He 'who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Corinthians 4:6)." *The Desire of Ages*, 281, 282.

"The stars also have a message of good cheer for every human being. In those hours that come to all, when the heart is faint and temptation presses sore; when obstacles seem insurmountable, life's aims impossible of achievement, its fair promises like apples of Sodom; where, then, can such courage and steadfastness be found as in that lesson which God has bidden us learn from the stars in their untroubled course?" *Education*, 115.

- b. As we consider the greatness of God, what will this lead us to do? 1 Samuel 12:24; Mark 5:19; Psalm 31:19.

Note: "The tree of the desert is a symbol of what God means the life of His children in this world to be. They are to guide weary souls, full of unrest, and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to the living water." *Education*, 116.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can Christians—including the young—fulfill Isaiah 42:1 in their daily life?
- 2 What made Christ's style of teaching distinctive in this world?
- 3 How can we follow Christ's example of helping those who are outside of the church?
- 4 As we grow in wisdom, what will we be doing every day?
- 5 What lesson can we learn from the stars?

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Immune-boosting *Nutrition*

By Lynette Golia

Our marvelous immune system acts like a protective physical and biochemical bubble around the human body, defending against threats from both outside and inside. Most often, the external threats are infections caused by invading bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi, while abnormal or cancerous cells pose the major internal threats. In addition, this complex system oversees the repair of tissues that are injured by wounds or disease.

The immune system is capable of making more than 100 billion types of antibodies, so it can recognize and attack just about anything it comes into contact with. Its most remarkable characteristic is its memory for every foreign protein it encounters. Confronted with a virus or other invading organism, the immune system creates an antibody that will recognize and attack against it at any future encounter. It will remember, and if the germ ever comes back, the appropriate antibodies will quickly go into action. By constantly adapting, the body can also fight against bacteria or viruses that change over time.

Feeding the body certain foods will keep the immune system on guard, having a major influence on immune health. The body's most powerful protection is achieved by eating a well-balanced diet containing a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, seeds, and nuts. These foods are high in nutrients and antioxidants that protect cells from damage caused by unstable molecules called free radicals. In a study at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada, researchers

found that people who got the most of a variety of nutrients, including antioxidants such as beta-carotene and vitamins C and E in their diets, were able to produce greater numbers of natural killer cells (immune cells that search out and destroy bacteria and other invaders) and virus-killing lymphocytes (specialized white blood cells), than those getting the least.

Foods high in beta-carotene include orange-colored foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes, yams and squash. Red pepper, spinach, kale, watercress, mangoes, and apricots are also excellent sources. Eating just one sweet potato and one carrot, providing nearly 30 mg daily value (DV), can have a significant impact on immunity.

Sources of high antioxidant vitamin E foods include hazelnuts,

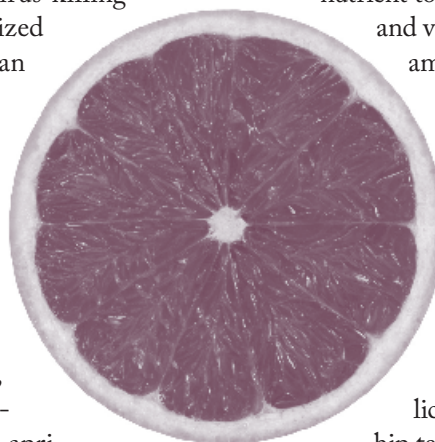
almonds, sunflower seeds, dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, avocados, tofu, peanuts, olives and olive oil. Also included are tomatoes, bell peppers, papaya, and dried herbs.

Because our body does not synthesize vitamin C internally, it is a crucial nutrient to consume. Many fruits and vegetables contain high amounts of vitamin C.

Black currants and guava are excellent sources as well as cantaloupe, strawberries, peppers and pineapple. Spring greens, brussels sprouts, broccoli, onions, garlic, ginger, berries, rose hip tea and citrus fruits are

highly rated sources as well.

Keeping our immune system healthy is important, no matter the season, but increasing antioxidant foods during cold and flu season will provide nutrients to fend off illness or shorten the duration if one does succumb. **LM**



Recipe

Cold and Flu Home Remedy Drink

1/8 red onion, diced

1 lemon, juiced

1-2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 large orange, peeled and chopped

1 thumb-size piece of ginger

2 Tbsp. honey

Add to blender onion, garlic cloves and ginger; pulse. Add lemon juice and orange chunks and pulse until orange is finely blended. Pour into glass; whisk in honey. Sip slowly.

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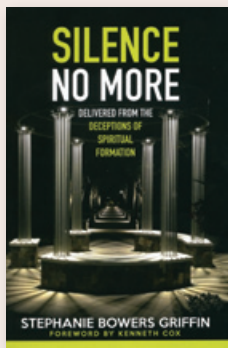
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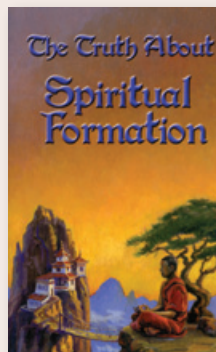
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