


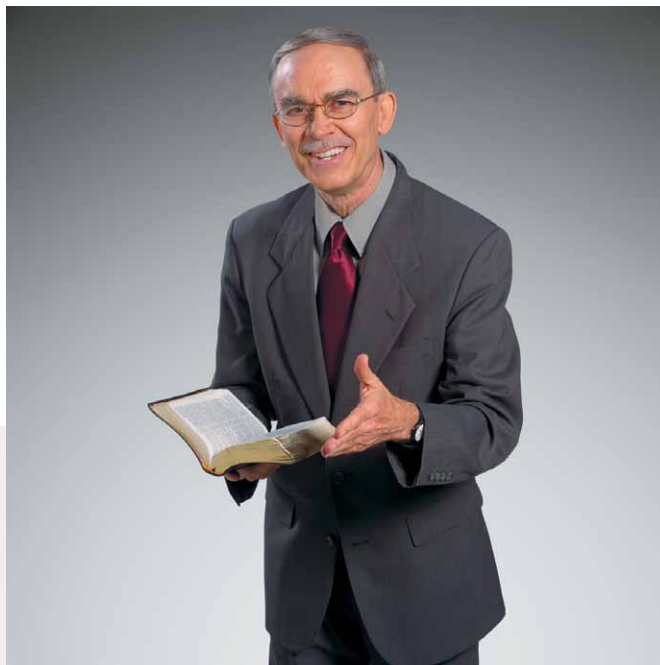
HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM



The soil of the heart may thus early be
prepared for casting in the precious
seeds of truth, which in due time will
spring up and bear a rich harvest.

Ellen G. White



Editor's Letter

John J. Grosboll

Are You Ready?

The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 463.

Seventh-day Adventists will need to be able to explain the following beliefs:

1 God's special warning messages, found in Revelation 14:6–12, to prepare mankind for what is coming:

The world is now in the time of judgment which began in 1844, according to Daniel 8 and 9.

Because of this all men everywhere are to fear God, which means to hate evil (Proverbs 8:13).

Because of this all men everywhere are to glorify God in their body and in their spirit.

Because of this all men everywhere are to worship God as the Creator by acknowledging the day He has set aside

as a memorial of His creation (Exodus 20:8–11).

Flee out of Babylon, that is, out of false religious systems which teach people to break the law of God (Revelation 18:1–4; 14:8).

Do not to worship the papacy, which is the beast power described in Revelation 13:1–10.

Do not worship the image of the papacy, which is a union of church and state in the United States for the purpose of eliminating freedom of the conscience, as was done in the Dark Ages (Revelation 13:11–17).

Avoid the mark of the papacy, which is the substitution of Sunday worship for worship according to the law of God (Exodus 20:8–11).

God's children in the very last days will be a people who keep God's commandments and who have the same kind of faith Jesus had, which was a faith that resulted in obedience to every Word that proceeded from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4; Revelation 14:12).

2 When a person dies, he goes into an unconscious state and knows nothing (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6). Therefore, those spirits masquerading as spirits of the dead are actually the spirits of demons impersonating the dead and should be shunned. A person should order his life according to the word of God and not according to the miracles worked by spirits (Revelation 16:13, 14).

3 The plan of salvation is going to come to an end. When Jesus comes the second time, there will be no more atonement for sin, there will be no further chance for salvation. Anybody who is saved must be saved before the close of probation, which occurs a short time before Jesus returns again (Revelation 22:11, 12). If we ignore the opportunity to be saved now, there will be no future time after the close of probation or after we die when we can be saved (Luke 16:19–31; 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2).

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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By John J. Grosboll

A tipping point is that point at which you cannot turn back and must continue.

In flying, commercial aircraft pilots would call voice signals to each other to indicate the various stages of the flight. When the copilot calls during take-off, “V-2,” it means you must take off at that point. Once you have gone so far down the runway at so fast a speed, you must take off. You have reached the tipping point—the point at which you cannot turn back and you must continue.

There is an artist's conception of the sinking of the Titanic, which occurred on April 14, 1912, after scraping an iceberg. The Titanic was on its maiden voyage with some of the wealthiest people in the world on board. Most of them drowned. Of the 2,024 people on the ship, only 705 were saved. There were only enough lifeboats for 1,178 people, but all the boats were not filled.

One survivor, 40 year old Elizabeth Schutes, was a governess to Margaret Graham who was traveling with her parents in a first-class cabin when she felt a shutter travel through the ship. At first she was comforted in her belief in the safety of the ship, but her composure was soon shattered by the realization of imminent tragedy.

She said, "Suddenly a strange quivering ran under me, apparently the whole length of the ship. Startled by the very strangeness of the shivering motion, I sprang to the floor. With too perfect a trust in that mighty vessel I again lay down. Someone knocked at my door, and the voice of a friend said: 'Come quickly to my cabin; an iceberg has just passed our window; I know we have just struck one.'"

There was "no confusion, no noise of any kind, one could believe no danger imminent. Our stewardess came and said she could learn nothing. Looking out into the companionway I saw heads appearing asking questions from half-closed doors. All was still, no excitement. I sat down again. My friend was by this time dressed; still her daughter and I talked on with Margaret pretending to eat a sandwich.

"Her hand shook so that the bread kept parting company from the chicken. Then I saw she was frightened, and for the first time I was too, but why get dressed, as no one had given the slightest hint of any possible danger? An officer's cap passed

the door. I asked: 'Is there an accident or danger of any kind?' 'None, so far as I know', was his courteous answer, spoken quietly and most kindly. This same officer then entered a cabin a little distance down the companionway and, by this time distrustful of everything, I listened intently, and distinctly heard, 'We can keep the water out for a while.' Then, and not until then, did I realize the horror of an accident at sea. Now it was too late to dress; no time to waste, but a coat and skirt were soon on; slippers were quicker than shoes; the stewardess put on our life-preservers, and we were

stepped back on deck. Later they went to an honoured grave.

"Our lifeboat, with thirty-six in it, began lowering to the sea. This was done amid the greatest confusion. Rough seamen all giving different orders. No officer aboard. As only one side of the ropes worked, the lifeboat at one time was in such a position that it seemed we must capsizes in mid-air.

"At last the ropes worked together, and we drew nearer and nearer the black, oily water. The first touch of our lifeboat on that black sea came to me as a last good-bye to life, and so we put off – a tiny boat on a great sea –

The Bible talks in Ezekiel 7 and in Revelation 18 about a time when the tipping point will be passed, and as a result, the whole world economy will shut down.

just ready when Mr. Roebling came to tell us he would take us to our friend's mother, who was waiting above. ...

"No laughing throng, but on either side of the staircases stand quietly, bravely, the stewards, all equipped with the white, ghostly life-preservers. Always the thing one tries not to see even crossing a ferry. Now only pale faces, each form strapped about with those white bars. So gruesome a scene. We passed on. The awful good-byes. The quiet look of hope in the brave men's eyes as the wives were put into the lifeboats." Women and children were put on the lifeboats first.

"Nothing escaped one at this fearful moment. We left from the sun deck, seventy-five feet above the water. Mr. Case and Mr. Roebling, brave American men, saw us to the lifeboat, made no effort to save themselves, but

rowed away from what had been a safe home for five days.

"The first wish on the part of all was to stay near the Titanic. We all felt so much safer near the ship. Surely such a vessel could not sink. I thought the danger must be exaggerated, and we could all be taken aboard again. But surely the outline of that great, good ship was growing less. The bow of the boat was getting black. Light after light was disappearing, and now those rough seamen put to their oars and we were told to hunt under seats, any place, anywhere, for a lantern, a light of any kind. Every place was empty. There was no water – no stimulant of any kind. Not a biscuit – nothing to keep us alive had we drifted along. ...

"Sitting by me in the lifeboat were a mother and daughter. The mother



Once you have gone so far down the runway at so fast a speed, you must take off. You have reached the tipping point—the point at which you cannot turn back and you must continue.

had left a husband on the Titanic, and the daughter a father and husband, and while we were near the other boats those two stricken women would call out a name and ask, 'Are you there?' 'No,' would come back the awful answer, but these brave women never lost courage, forgot their own sorrow, telling me to sit close to them to keep warm. ... The life-preservers helped to keep us warm, but the night was bitter cold, and it grew colder and colder, and just before dawn, the coldest, darkest hour of all, no help seemed possible. ...

"The stars slowly disappeared, and in their place came the faint pink glow of another day. Then I heard, 'A light, a ship.' I could not, would not, look while there was a bit of doubt, but kept my eyes away. All night long I had heard, 'A light!' Each time it proved to be one of our other life-boats, someone lighting a piece of paper, anything they could find to burn, and now I could not believe. Someone found a newspaper; it was lighted and held up. Then I looked and saw a ship. A ship bright with lights; strong and steady she waited, and we were to be saved. A straw hat was offered so it would burn longer. That same ship that had come to save us might run us down. But no; she is still. The two, the

ship and the dawn, came together, a living painting."

There are pictures of what is believed that ship looked like as it was going down, one showing that it split in two on the way down and another showing it at a very steep angle with over a thousand people standing up on the upper deck climbing to the back of the ship as it was going down.

and 2012 the number of people in the United States with disability rose seven times faster than the number of new jobs created. There are many people in this country who are very alarmed about this situation.

Closely related to that situation is health care. The percentage of our gross domestic product in the United States spent on health care in 1960 was 5.2%.

If a person refuses to surrender to the pleadings of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, finally he will not hear the voice anymore. If that happens, that person has reached a tipping point.

This horrific sight was witnessed by the people in the life boats. It was ready to go under with the back of the ship all that was left above the water. Nothing could be done to save it. It had reached the tipping point. It had gone so far that its course could not be reversed.

There are many areas in life where you can reach a tipping point and be unable to return to where you were before. For instance, between 2009

But in 2008 we spent 15.2%. How long can that keep going up, and at which point will something break down?

What would happen if there were more sick people to be taken care of than there were well people to take care of them? In that case, the health care system would have reached a tipping point.

What if a large number of people decided that the hope of a reward was

not worth the economic risk involved? The result of that decision would be that the job market would absolutely dry up and there would not be jobs. The job market would have reached a tipping point.

There is a large number of people in the world who make their living in sales or in selling. You cannot sell anything unless there is a buyer. That precise condition is described in Revelation 18. It says there are no buyers (verse 11). If there are no buyers, your business and the economy collapse.

The Bible talks in Ezekiel 7 and in Revelation 18, about a time when the tipping point will be passed, and as a result, the whole world economy will shut down.

When I was a small child, we had one neighbor whose only transportation was his horse. For the most part, we had already passed the tipping point where automobiles had taken the place of transportation by animals, and there was no way to go back to the way it was before.

If a person refuses to surrender to the pleadings of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, finally he will not hear the voice anymore. If that happens, that person has reached a tipping point. He is not going to be able to return to the way it was before when the Holy Spirit was pleading with him.

In *The Desire of Ages*, page 383, Ellen White describes what happened with Jesus and His disciples the day after the feeding of the 5,000. "When Christ forbade the people to declare Him king, He knew that a turning point in His history was reached."

What was that turning point? She says, "Multitudes who desired to exalt Him to the throne today would turn from Him tomorrow. The disappointment of their selfish ambition would turn their love to hatred. ..." Ibid. That is the way the human mind



It is difficult to tell someone that he/she is wrong. They cannot take it. That was one of the major reasons Jesus was crucified. He told people when they were in error.

works. Disappointment can turn love very quickly into hatred.

Ellen White said: "The disappointment of their selfish ambition would turn their love to hatred, and their praise to curses."

That disappointment resulted in a turning point. It says, "From the first He [Jesus] had held out to His followers no hope of earthly rewards. ... If men could have had the world with Christ, multitudes would have proffered Him their allegiance; but such service He could not accept. Of those now connected with Him there were many who had been attracted by the hope of a worldly kingdom. These must be undeceived. The deep spiritual teaching in the miracle of the loaves had not been comprehended. This was to be made plain. And this new revelation would bring with it a closer test." Ibid.

"Because they were too vain and self-righteous to receive reproof, too world-loving to accept a life of humility, many turned away from Jesus." Ibid., 392.

They turned away from Jesus because they were too vain and too self-righteous to accept reproof. And they were too world-loving to accept a life of humility. They had loved

Jesus, and they had praised Him, coming by the thousands to listen to Him. They believed that He was the Messiah until they found out that He also reproved their sins and told them that He was meek and lowly in heart and they needed to become like He was. So many people turned away that Jesus turned to the twelve and said, "Are you going to turn away too?"

For this same reason, many do the same thing today. Being able to accept the slightest, kindest, mildest rebuke or reproof is one of the rarest traits to be found in the Adventist church. However, if you are going to be saved, at some point, the Lord is going to arrange things so that your sins will be rebuked.

"Souls are tested today as were those disciples in the synagogue at Capernaum. When truth is brought home to the heart, they see that their lives are not in accordance with the will of God. They see the need of an entire change in themselves." Ibid.

She says, "They see the need of an entire change in themselves; but they are not willing to take up the self-denying work. Therefore they are angry when their sins are discovered." Ibid.

If my sins are discovered, I should say, Lord, thank You for making it possible for me to be saved. If I now know what is wrong, I can go to the Lord and ask that it be taken away from me so I can be changed. Many, when their sins are discovered, instead of saying, Lord, I want to be changed, get mad. How dare you talk to me that way? We are warned, "Praise and flattery would be pleasing to their ears, but the truth is unwelcome; they cannot hear it." Ibid.

In the book by Dale Carnegie called *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, one of the things that he

to be born again. With that prayer, a miracle can happen in your life. But if you get angry when something happens that reveals your sins, you will become stuck and find that there is no way for you to be saved.

Continuing in *The Desire of Ages*, 392, Ellen White says concerning those people the day after the feeding of the 5,000, that decision was never reversed. There may have been over 20,000 made up of 5,000 men besides women and children that you will never meet in the kingdom of heaven.

So many ate of the miracle bread and fish. They watched Jesus open the

It hurts. If you accept it and say, Lord, I yield to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, if this is not pleasing in Your sight, I want not only forgiveness, but I want to be changed.

If you are willing to yield to that pleading, that convicting of the Holy Spirit, a miracle will take place in your life and you will start to realize the victory. And when you begin to realize the victory, the Holy Spirit will put His finger on another problem. The Holy Spirit will never use any form of coercion or force. If I turn away, the Holy Spirit will let me go. Sadly, Jesus let the people turn away from Him.

If you resist the spirit of God you first will have a guilty conscience. It is your friend to encourage you to do something about the problem, but by continual resistance you find that you do not feel as bad as you used to and are on the way to commit unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin is not instantaneous like falling off a cliff but like walking down ten thousand steps. The Holy Spirit pleads with you, and you say, "Not now." Again, "Not now." Again, "Not now," thousands and thousands of times. But eventually, your conscience does not bother you anymore and you reach the tipping point—too far to turn back.

"As those disaffected disciples turned away from Christ, a different spirit took control of them. They could see nothing attractive in Him whom they had once found so interesting." Ibid., 392.

"They rejected their Saviour, because they longed for a conqueror who would give them temporal power. They wanted the meat which perishes, and not that which endures unto everlasting life." Ibid.

Judas, the betrayer of Jesus, reached a tipping point. "Christ's discourse in the synagogue concerning the

Being able to accept the slightest, kindest, mildest rebuke or reproof is one of the rarest traits to be found in the Adventist church.

teaches is that you do not ever tell somebody that they are wrong. They cannot take it. That was one of the major reasons Jesus was crucified. He told people when they were in error.

The unwelcome truth that most cannot hear is the truth about their condition. If you will make them feel good, then they are willing to be friends and willing to go to heaven together, but do not tell them all that is wrong with them.

There are so many people who think they are going to heaven but the Bible says they will be disappointed. They reach a tipping point when their sin is revealed. They neglect to say Lord, I want to be saved; I want to be with Jesus; please take my sins away and give me Your Holy Spirit so that I can change. I want

eyes of the blind and heal those that were deaf. They watched Him heal the lepers and some of them had seen Him raise the dead. They knew that He had power to heal all manner of disease and they loved Him until they were reprovved and their sin was pointed out. Then their love turned to hatred.

She says, "When the crowds follow, and the multitudes are fed, and the shouts of triumph are heard, their voices are loud in praise; but when the searching of God's Spirit reveals their sin, and bids them leave it, they turn their backs upon the truth, and walk no more with Jesus." Ibid.

The first thing that the Holy Spirit does when it comes to any person is convict of sin. It is not pleasurable to have the Holy Spirit point out what is wrong in your life.

bread of life was the turning point in the history of Judas. He heard the words, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you' (John 6:53). He saw that Christ was offering spiritual rather than worldly good. He regarded himself as farsighted, and thought he could see that Jesus would have no honor, and that He could bestow no high position upon His followers. He determined not to unite himself so closely to Christ but that he could draw away. He would watch. And he did watch." Ibid., 719.

There are many Christians like that today. They are part of the church, but stay in a position where they can back out if they need to. Another sad occasion when a group of people reached a turning point occurred in the church Christ attended as a youth. The people in the church had known Jesus since He was a little child. They had witnessed His blameless life. But, "... they were offended in Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in His own country and in His own house.' Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:57, 58, literal translation).

At first, they had an almost irresistible conviction that this was the Son of God. They had witnessed His life for the last 28 years or so, but they were "offended in Him" when He didn't work things out as they had supposed.

Luke 4:23: "He said to them, '... You will surely say this proverb to Me, "Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country!"' Then He said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, No prophet is accepted in His own country.'"

They really got angry when He said, "... I tell you truly, many



Many, when their sins are discovered, instead of saying, Lord, I want to be changed, get mad. How dare you talk to me that way?

widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow" (verses 25, 26).

He said, "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian" (verse 27).

It was too much for them to hear Jesus say that the heathen were in a better condition than they were and they refused to accept that. He meant the heathen who live up to all the light they have, are better in His sight than God's chosen people who are not living according to what they know. These people He had known all His life were offended.

Ellen White says, "Here was the turning point with that company. As Christ's divinity flashed through humanity, their spiritual sight was quickened. A new power of discern-

ment and appreciation came upon them, and the conviction was almost irresistible that Jesus was the Son of God. But Satan was at hand to arouse doubts, unbelief, and pride. They steeled their hearts against the Saviour's words. As they yielded to the control of Satan, they were fired with uncontrollable rage against Jesus." *The Signs of the Times*, September 14, 1882.

Here you have the very same thing. They had an irresistible conviction that He was the Son of God but they hated the rebuke that He gave them. They had such uncontrollable rage that they determined to kill him. In anger, they became a mob and hustled Jesus, hustling up to the top of a mountain. They would have cast Him down headlong to kill Him if the angels had not rescued Him.

Human nature has not changed. There is a tipping point for all but those who desperately want to be saved and are prepared at whatever the pain or cost to receive the rebuke of the Lord to be changed into His image and become what He wants them to be.

Pray, Lord, What do you see in me that needs to be changed? What re-proof do I need so that I do not reach a tipping point that will bring me to everlasting destruction?

God has devised a way so that even the weakest and the chief of sinners could be saved if we are willing to submit to His plan for saving us.

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

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Jesus

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

BY JOHN PEARSON

“**N**ow I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:11–16).

These texts contain much hidden treasure, but the ore that is to be mined in this article is the several references to a name. In the above quote, there are four references to Him who sat on the white horse.

First, we are told that He was called “faithful and true.” That probably does not need much explanation, especially considering who the rider was. The simple fact that “in righteousness He judges” clearly indicates the divine nature of the rider. He could not judge righteously were He not faithful and true.

Next there is a “name written that no one knew except Himself.” Third, we are told that “His name is called The word of God.” And fourth, we are told that “He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Let’s begin by looking at a “name written that no one knew except Himself.” There is similar wording in Revelation 2:17, where Christ is speaking to the overcomers in Pergamum: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

“The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 585.

The church in Pergamum represents the period from approximately A.D. 313 to 538. The persecution of Christians had ceased and Christianity was declared “official” by

Constantine, who is called in history the first Christian emperor of Rome. He ruled from A.D. 306 to 337. Roman Catholics and most Protestant Christians regard his conversion as the turning point in the Christian church, the point at which the persecuted Christians gained the support of the state. As a result, the Christians, through the church, eventually became the persecutors, though for that to fully develop took several hundred years.

In reality, this “legitimizing” of Christianity was the beginning of Satan’s increasingly stronger grasp on what became the Roman Catholic

So it seems from our historical perspective that assuming the Christian appellation—that is, calling yourself a Christian—resulted in a definite change from being the one who was persecuted to one who did the persecution.

It also seems from our reading in Revelation 19:12 that not only does Christ have a name that no one but He knows, so does each of His faithful saints (Revelation 2:17). Revelation 19:8 tells us that the fine linen, clean and bright that the saints are arrayed in is their righteous acts. We also know from the inspired writings of God’s prophet to the remnant

Though the Reformation was a start in freeing Christianity from the grasp of the enemy, it eventually failed in obtaining a full release from Satan’s influence.

church. And though the Reformation was a start in freeing Christianity from the grasp of the enemy, it eventually failed in obtaining a full release from Satan’s influence. Indeed, the majority of the Protestant churches have never yet achieved complete allegiance to the word of God.

Nevertheless, after the “conversion” of Constantine and the Roman nation, taking the name of Christ no longer resulted in guaranteed persecution by the state. Indeed, just the opposite happened. If you failed to take the name of Christ in the manner dictated by the church, you became the persecuted. Having lost the power of the Holy Spirit, the church turned to the state to enforce its dogmas.

that one’s acts are a reflection of one’s character. “Actions make habits, and habits, character.” *Christian Education*, 92. It is easy, therefore, to conclude that the fine linen that the saints are robed in is a reflection of their righteous character, which we know can only be acquired through faith in Jesus Christ.

We also know from inspired counsel that one’s name was of great importance to the children of Israel. In *Prophets and Kings*, 481, we read: “Great significance was attached to the names given by Hebrew parents to their children. Often these stood for traits of character that the parent desired to see developed in the child. The prince

in whose charge the captive youth [in Babylon] were placed, 'gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego' (Daniel 1:7).

"The king did not compel the Hebrew youth to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry, but he hoped to bring this about gradually. By giving them names significant of idolatry, by bringing them daily into close association with idolatrous customs, and under the influence of the seductive rites of heathen worship, he hoped to induce them to renounce the religion of their nation and to unite with the worship of the Babylonians."

Thus we see the significance that is sometimes placed on one's name. So let's continue looking at a few of the many names that Scripture gives to our Saviour and at the significance of those names.

Isaiah 7:14 is one of the early sources for the name of Jesus: "Therefore the Lord

Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." The significance of that name cannot be underestimated. Literally, it means "God with us," but do we fully understand the implication, the importance, the significance of the fact that the text clearly states God with us? We need to meditate on each of those three words: "God" "with" "us." It is indeed humbling to realize that God Himself humbled Himself—He quit being solely God—to be with (alongside, accompany, next to, among) us, sinful, mortal human beings, living on the only planet in the universe that chose to rebel against His clearly stated, loving instructions. What an incredible act of self-sacrifice!

John 1:14 tells us, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

This verse tells us far more than we might think on initial reading. Not only are we informed that Christ in His humanity was the fullness of

AND EVERYONE
WHO CALLS ON
THE NAME
OF THE LORD
WILL BE

Saved

ACTS 2:21

grace and truth as the word of God became embodied in human flesh, but it also helps us to understand more clearly the "begotten-ness" of Christ.

Jesus Christ in His humanity was the only human being created by God through the human birth process—the "only begotten" of the Father, although in His divinity, He existed "from the beginning."

Let's look at a few texts that clarify Christ's eternal existence.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he wrote in Ephesians 3:9, "And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hid-

den in God who created all things through Jesus Christ."

There is nothing before the beginning, else it would not be "the beginning."

Next, let's look at John 1:15. The opening chapter of John is full of wonderful truths and is worthy of much study in addition to the perusal we are giving it here.

"John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, 'This was He of whom I said, "He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me."'"

Have you ever contemplated what the Baptist meant when he said, "He was before me"?

When Gabriel spoke to Mary about her having a child, the chronology of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus is made clear. The exchange is detailed in Luke 1:26–37.

"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man

whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, 'Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!'

"But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive [future tense] in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the

house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’

“Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’

“And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived [past tense] a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.’ ”

How much wonderful truth this passage contains! It is easy to get sidetracked here to dig into the treasured ore in these texts. However, we need to stick to our main subject.

Clearly, we see that John was at least six months older than Jesus, yet John himself stated that “He [referring to Christ] was before me.” In simple, unambiguous language, John is acknowledging that Christ existed before His incarnation as the Son of Mary.

For more Scriptural light on the eternal existence of Christ, see Ephesians 3:9, John 1:15, 1 John 1:1, and 1 John 2:14. Clearly it will take eternity to understand fully, if we ever can, the mystery of the incarnation and that mysterious blending of the divine with the human (1 Timothy 3:16).

Within the record of the conversation between Mary and the angel, we are given additional names for Christ. In Luke 1:31, He is called Jesus. Chronologically, this is the first time that name is given to the Lord and Saviour of mankind. As the conversation continues, Christ is referred to as the Son of the Highest, that Holy One, and the Son of God (verse 35). A bit of meditation on each



Having lost the power of the Holy Spirit, the church turned to the state to enforce its dogmas.

of these titles will provide a deeper understanding of the divine nature of the Word Made Flesh.

In the uplifting prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17, Jesus makes another statement that deserves deep thought and analysis to fully comprehend. As He prays so fervently to His Father on behalf of His disciples—not only the eleven who were with Him, but “for those who will believe in Me through their word” (verse 20)—He concludes His prayer in verse 26 with these enlightening words: “And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” [Emphasis supplied.]

The Greek word translated *declared* means to *make known* or *clarify*. In

some Bible versions it is translated *manifested*. This sublime truth should encourage us to make a deep study of the life of Christ to discern how He acted in the many and varied situations through which the providences of God led Him. Such a study will reveal to us not only His Holy character, but will be a wonderful lesson in righteous conduct in all situations and all circumstances.

As Peter wrote, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously” (1 Peter 2:21–23 KJV).

More powerful truths here! Let's ponder the several aspects of Jesus' character that Peter highlights in these texts.

- Suffered selflessly ("suffered for us")
- Sinless ("did no sin")
- Truthful ("no ... guile found in His mouth")
- Patient and forgiving ("when He was reviled, reviled not again")
- Peaceful ("He threatened not")
- Faithful and trusting ("committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously")

In summary, we can conclude that Christ was the embodiment of the purest love. Therefore, if I claim that I am a "Christian," do I manifest each and all of these characteristics—at all times and under all circumstances?

Power in the Name of Christ

The power inherent in the name of Christ is made evident throughout the writings of Paul.

In Romans 10:13, Paul wrote, "For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.'" This reference by Paul to Joel 2:32 is erroneously and unfortunately used by many "broad-road" Christians today to claim that simply because they call themselves "Christian," they are eternally saved—regardless of their conduct or character.

In 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, Paul counsels the Corinthian believers to deliver one ensnared by Satan in sexual immorality to deliver that soul "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 4). Clearly, Paul understands the power in that name.

In the very next chapter, Paul again refers to the power in that name when he lists the various sins in which the Corinthians had been engaging in when he states: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were

sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

When writing to the Ephesians, Paul notes the importance of "giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20). What a powerful, powerful statement, stressing the importance of (1) giving



thanks, (2) always, (3) for all things, (4) to God, (5) the Father, (6) in the name of our Lord, (7) Jesus Christ. Only through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit could Paul have packed so much truth into 18 words!

There are also references to the power inherent in Christ's name and to the need of reverence for and giving thanks in the name of Christ in Philippians, Colossians, 1st Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, and Hebrews. However, some of the most encouraging statements about the power of calling upon the name of Christ were spoken by Christ Himself.

In Jesus' last interaction with His disciples, recorded in John, chapters 13 through 16, as He is providing His last words of inspiration to those who had been His most faithful followers, several times Jesus states plainly that in His name, their prayers will be answered. Interestingly, however, He does not make these statements until after Judas has left the gathering.

- "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).
- "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14).
- "... whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you" (John 15:16).
- "... Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23, 24).

The Bible is clear. Indeed, "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

May the peace and blessings of Jesus abide with us as we face the challenges of these last days, overcoming in the name of Jesus Christ.

All quotes NKJV unless otherwise noted. **LM**

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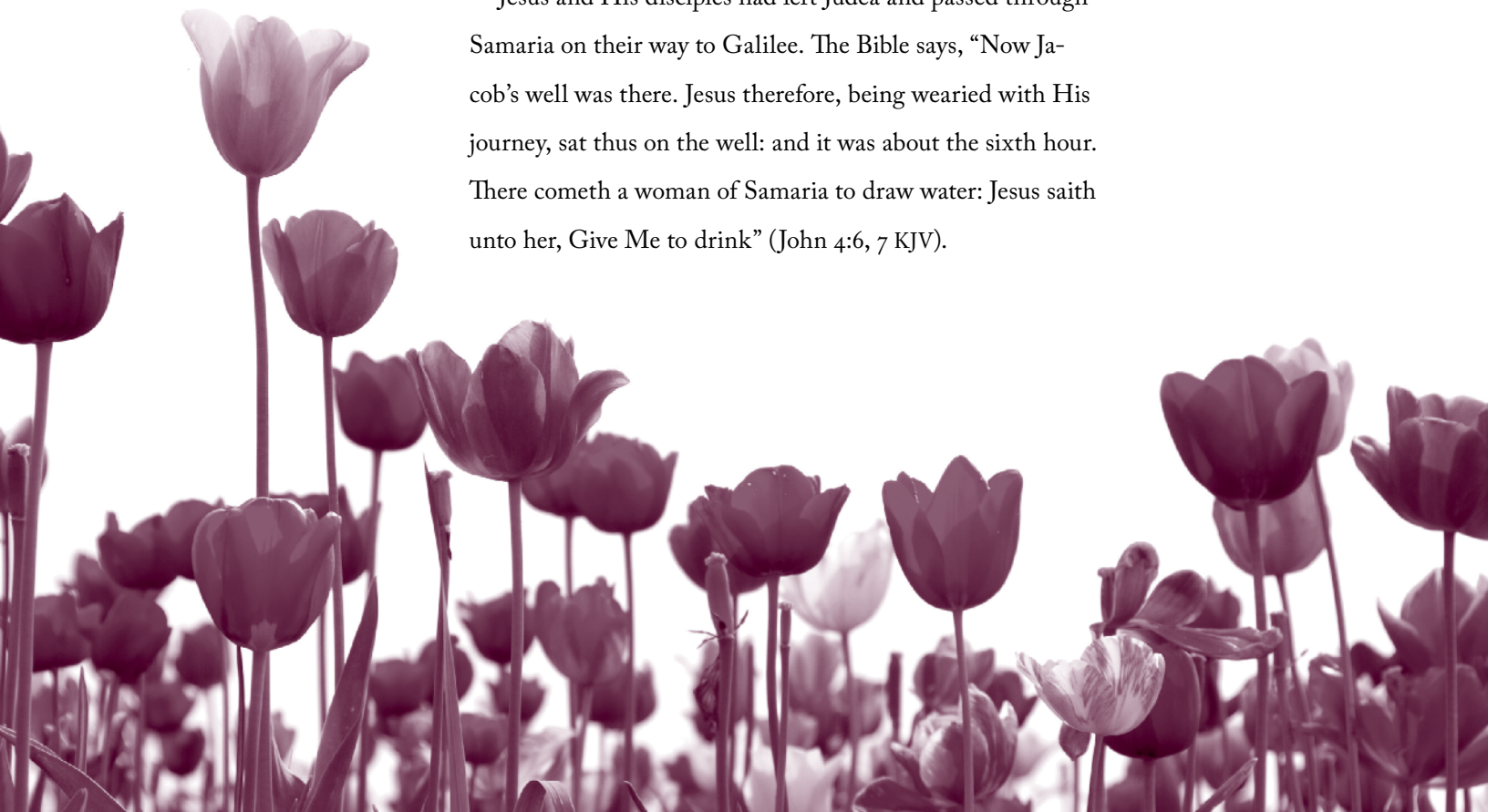
Love

The Spelling of Love
REBUKE
— *or* —
DISCIPLINE
— *or* —
THE GREATEST BLESSING

BY BRENDA DOUAY

The topic of this study is a necessary precursor for many other studies. To grasp this truth will change our entire viewpoint and make an eternal life difference in how we view our God, His Word, and life on this earth.

Jesus and His disciples had left Judea and passed through Samaria on their way to Galilee. The Bible says, “Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give Me to drink” (John 4:6, 7 KJV).



In just minutes after meeting this woman Jesus turned the conversation from a drink of water to the woman's personal relationships. When He tells her to call her husband she replies that she has no husband. In response He said, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly" (John 4:17, 18 NKJV).

Put yourself in this woman's shoes. A total stranger, a stranger of a hated people, has just walked into your space, space that you have chosen carefully and well to shield yourself from public contact. This stranger

see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe" (John 4:46–48 NKJV). Again, let us put ourselves in the shoes of this nobleman. Here he is in a heart-wrenching situation, seeking healing for his greatest earthly treasure—his son who is at the point of death. Moments may very well determine life or death—and Jesus meets him with reproof.

Spirit of Prophecy expounds on this: "When the nobleman came to Him asking Him to heal his son, He [Jesus] met him with a reproof for their unbelief. 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.' Thus was his eager entreaty met. He

We read another incident in the life of Jesus, "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:12, 13 KJV).

"He [Jesus] looked upon them and, with indignant sorrow, He poured out the money of the changers; He overthrew the tables, and with a whip of small cords, drove the cattle and people out of the court. With majestic authority He commands, 'Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandise' (John 2:16). 'It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.' " *The Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1876.

Pointed, public rebuke of sin. And this was not the rabble, the outcasts of society, the lower classes. Inspiration continues, "This language was close and cutting indeed. It was not addressed to the rabble, but to the chief priests, to the teachers of the people." Ibid.

Jesus, the gentle, meek, loving, mild, long-suffering, patient, courteous, kind Saviour, rebuked and reproofed those who would seem to be perfect strangers, those in power, those who had a high opinion of themselves and of their righteousness.

These are just a few examples of the courteous rebuke in Scripture. We could add Nicodemus, David, Cain, Saul—the first king of Israel, Saul who turned to Paul, and the list goes on. Somehow, I think we have a real problem or difficulty accepting the reality of this side of Christ. But as Inspiration says, there was a wise purpose in everything Christ said and did. So, what was His purpose? What

The sacrificial offerings were designed and ordained by God to be to man a perpetual [continuous] reminder of his sin.

then initiates conversation, and within just a few minutes is laying bare those very secrets that compelled you to draw water during the hottest hours of the day, those same hours when others choose the cooler comforts of home!

"Christ, at Jacob's well, laid open the sinful life and character of the woman of Samaria. 'Unnecessary, uncourteous,' say many." *The Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1876. Is this your view also? Are you among the "many" that are referred to here?

Let's turn to another story. "There was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, 'Unless you people

was not only greatly disappointed, but chagrined." *The Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1876. What would have been your response?

Now we turn to yet another scenario. At the very time when sin first entered this world, God instituted a ceremony, carried out by divine decree, twice a day—the sacrificial service. Of this service Inspiration says, "The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a *perpetual reminder* ... of his sin." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 68. [Emphasis supplied.] God Himself designed, ordained, instituted and instructed Adam and Eve regarding this service. It was God who intended it to be a *perpetual*, that means ongoing or continuous reminder of their sin. Twice a day God, in love, saying, "You are a sinner. You are a sinner." Why?

was, and is, His purpose in being so pointed about our sin?

There is a very compelling and real reason. REBUKE or DISCIPLINE truly spell LOVE. How so? Here is why.

“Christ, at Jacob’s well, laid open the sinful life and character of the woman of Samaria.” Pointed, explicit exposure of sin. Why? Here is the reason. “Jesus knew that this was the only way to reach the case. But how many would complain of such a way of saving souls. When the nobleman came to Him asking Him to heal his son, he met Him with a reproof for their unbelief. ‘Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.’ Thus was his eager entreaty met. He was not only greatly disappointed, but chagrined. ...” Ibid.

Speaking of people’s assessment of Jesus’ treatment of the nobleman Inspiration says, “But how many in these days would have allowed the feelings of their own natural heart to overbear their judgment, and become impatient and unreconciled to Jesus’ manner of working? They would have said, ‘Why pain and seemingly disappoint the father, when He might have healed his son at once with His word.’” The Inspired word explains. “He [Jesus] designed that the repulse should expand the feeble faith of the parent, and it had this effect.

“His work was to bless and save. He covered His glory with humanity, bringing from Heaven the very best gifts which could be given to man; spoke peace, gave messages of light and hope. But all these gifts were considered as matters of course; the gift was received but the Giver forgotten. They walked in the light with no thought of gratitude to Him from whom its beams proceeded. When the chastisement came in reproof, in warning, or by affliction, to save from apostasy and ruin, then there was a



The greatest danger of the world is that sin does not appear sinful. This is the greatest evil existing in the church; sin is glossed over with self-complacency.

turning upon Jesus with a defiant, stubborn, impenitent resistance which was fearful. And why, says the proud, perverse spirit, must I be crushed by rebuke? Why must I be humiliated? They forget all the light, all the favors previously given, and feel that they are abused because God takes with them the only course which will bring them to a knowledge of themselves, that they may find peace in Him through submission, penitence for sin, and confiding trust in God. For this reason God sends to the church the greatest blessing He can give them in a knowledge of themselves. Satan is alluring them to sin that they may be lost; God gives a clear presentation of their sins that they may repent and be saved. The greatest danger of the world is, that sin does not appear sinful. This is the greatest evil existing in the church; sin is glossed over with self-complacency. Blessed indeed are they who possess a sensitive conscience; who can weep and mourn over their spiritual poverty and wanderings from God; who are poor

in spirit and can receive the reproof God sends them; and who, with confessions and brokenness of heart, will take their places, all penitent, in humiliation at the cross of Christ. God knows it is good for men to tread a hard and humble path, to encounter difficulties, to experience disappointments, and to suffer affliction. Faith strengthens by coming in conflict with doubt, and resisting unbelief through the strength of Jesus.

“They who despise reproof will be left to their own devices.” Ibid.

Friends, Jesus rebukes because He knows it is the greatest blessing He can give us, a knowledge of ourselves; that is, an understanding that we are sinners, exposed to the wrath of a holy God, doomed to the second death. He does this so that we will come to Him and be cleansed from sin, healed from the fatal disease of sin. He knows that we cannot be saved in our sin, so He points out that sin that we might repent and be saved *from* it.

Let’s turn to a few illustrations of the practical outworking of this

principle. We will begin with two examples of people that rejected the “greatest blessing,” or love (R-E-B-U-K-E), Jesus’ true, principled love.

“Judas saw the sick, the lame, the blind, flock to Jesus from the towns and cities. He saw the dying laid at His feet. He witnessed the Saviour’s mighty works in healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead. He felt in his own person the evidence of Christ’s power. He recognized the teaching of Christ as superior to all that he had ever heard. He loved the Great Teacher, and desired to be with Him. He felt a desire to be changed in character and life, and he hoped to experience this through connecting himself with Jesus.” *The Desire of Ages*, 717.

no high position upon His followers. He determined not to unite himself so closely to Christ but that he could draw away. He would watch. And he did watch.” Ibid., 719.

And then still further in the chapter, Inspiration records these tragic words: “In all that Christ said to His disciples, there was something with which, in heart, Judas disagreed. Under his influence the leaven of disaffection was fast doing its work. The disciples did not see the real agency in all this; but Jesus saw that Satan was communicating his attributes to Judas, and thus opening up a channel through which to influence the other disciples. This, a year before the betrayal, Christ declared. ‘Have not I chosen you twelve,’ He said, ‘and one

the soul is led captive at his will.” Ibid., 720.

Judas’ spirit rose up in pride and in opposition to the rebuke of Jesus, though the heart of our Saviour was bleeding with pain over the sin cherished in one of His loved disciples. Because Judas refused the lesson in the rebuke, he later became the betrayer of Divinity, the very One who had come to save him from himself, from his sin, from his pride and offer to him the precious boon of eternal life. The greatest blessing rejected brought eternal ruin.

“When Cain saw that his offering was rejected, he was angry with the Lord and with Abel; he was angry that God did not accept man’s substitute in place of the sacrifice divinely ordained, and angry with his brother for choosing to obey God instead of joining in rebellion against Him. Notwithstanding Cain’s disregard of the divine command, God did not leave him to himself; but He condescended to reason with the man who had shown himself so unreasonable. And the Lord said unto Cain, ‘Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?’ Through an angel messenger the divine warning was conveyed: ‘If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door’ (Genesis 4:7). The choice lay with Cain himself. If he would trust to the merits of the promised Saviour, and would obey God’s requirements, he would enjoy His favor. But should he persist in unbelief and transgression, he would have no ground for complaint because he was rejected by the Lord.

“But instead of acknowledging his sin, Cain continued to complain of the injustice of God and to cherish jealousy and hatred of Abel. He angrily reproached his brother, and attempted to draw him into controversy con-

Jesus, the gentle, meek, loving, mild, patient, rebuked and reproved those in power, those who had a high opinion of themselves and of their righteousness.

This description sounds like that of a converted, dedicated person. But Jesus knew the depths of Judas’ heart. Christ knew that Judas had a covetous disposition, and that, left untreated, this evil would work his ruin.

Then we read, “Christ’s discourse in the synagogue concerning the bread of life was the turning point in the history of Judas. He heard the words, ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you’ (John 6:53). He saw that Christ was offering spiritual rather than worldly good. He regarded himself as farsighted, and thought he could see that Jesus would have no honor, and that He could bestow

of you is a devil’ (John 6:70)?

“Yet Judas made no open opposition, nor seemed to question the Saviour’s lessons. He made no outward murmur until the time of the feast in Simon’s house. When Mary anointed the Saviour’s feet, Judas manifested his covetous disposition. At the reproof from Jesus his very spirit seemed turned to gall. Wounded pride and desire for revenge broke down the barriers, and the greed so long indulged held him in control. This will be the experience of everyone who persists in tampering with sin. The elements of depravity that are not resisted and overcome, respond to Satan’s temptation, and

cerning God's dealings with them." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 73, 74.

For what purpose did God rebuke both Judas and Cain? Was it from vengeance, from anger, from retaliation or revenge? No, it was from a heart yearning with love. Hear the words of this same God to a group of people who were in rebellion, in rejection of His warnings and reproofs.

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the LORD God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel" (Ezekiel 33:11)? Friends, do you hear the pathos, the longing in the voice of our God? He sees the end of sin not as a human can see it. He sees the reward of humility and repentance. It is a great heart of love that rebukes.

Let us turn to two examples of rebuke received.

"The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, 'There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

"Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

"David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, 'As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this must die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.'



God knows it is good for men to tread a hard and humble path, to encounter difficulties, to experience disappointments, and to suffer affliction. Faith strengthens by coming in conflict with doubt, and resisting unbelief through the strength of Jesus.

"Then Nathan said to David, 'You are the man!' " "Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord' " (2 Samuel 12:1-7, *first part*, 13 NIV).

David accepted the rebuke. He was forgiven. He was restored to a relationship with His God, the Life-Giver.

"When Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

"When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, 'You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How

is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs' " (Galatians 2:11-14 NIV)?

Inspiration says of Peter's response to this rebuke, "Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing it as far as possible." *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 72. Peter, one of the lead apostles, publicly rebuked by Paul, gratefully acknowledging his error, accepted the rebuke, and immediately did what he could to repair the damage.

If we are to inherit eternal life, we must learn to not only accept rebuke, but appreciate it for what it is, God's love, His yearning, His purpose to save us.

God reproves because He loves. And His instructions to us are life. We must learn to see, understand and value this aspect of our God, and the absolute necessity for it in our own lives, not the life of our neighbor, our friend, our husband or wife, but in our own life.

There is a beautiful description God gave us of how we are to accept His rebuke. It is my prayer that you will study this instruction carefully, prayerfully, and cherish the attitudes portrayed in it.

“Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 257.

“It is not pleasing to human nature to receive reproof, nor is it possible for the heart of man, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, to realize the necessity of reproof or the blessing it is designed to bring. As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense or his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness: ‘Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked’ (Revelation 3:17). When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true. Is he therefore to reject the warning? No. God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the *Testimonies*; and, having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof? Because they know it not,



Instead of acknowledging his sin, Cain continued to complain of the injustice of God and to cherish jealousy and hatred of Abel.

God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late. “Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived; but those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them.”

“Those who are most closely connected with God are the ones who know His voice when He speaks to them. Those who are spiritual discern spiritual things. Such will feel grateful that the Lord has pointed out their errors.” *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 682, 683.

This instruction requires the setting aside of pride and protection of self, but, of what do we have to be proud? We are sinners. Why deny the truth and lose the opportunity of cleansing, of healing, of eternal life? We would consider it foolish for one to reject and become angered over a medical

diagnosis of an illness that would be terminal without treatment. Sin is no different. Sin is a terminal disease—and there is a cure, a complete, total, perfect cure! But in order to receive that treatment, it requires the acceptance of rebuke and discipline, private or public, and maybe both. Is eternal life worth it to you? Is a home in the Kingdom of Glory and a seat on the throne with our Saviour for eternity worth accepting, with thanksgiving and gratitude, the rebuke of the God who loves us and knows that rebuke is our only hope of that salvation?

Remember, “God gives a clear presentation of their sins that they may repent and be saved. The greatest danger of the world is, that sin does not appear sinful. This is the greatest evil existing in the church; sin is glossed over with self-complacency. Blessed indeed are they who possess a sensitive conscience; who can weep and mourn over their spiritual poverty and wanderings from God; who are poor in spirit and can receive the reproof God sends them; and who, with confessions and brokenness of heart, will take their places, all penitent, in humiliation at the cross of Christ. God knows it is good for men to tread a hard and humble path, to encounter difficulties, to experience disappointments, and to suffer affliction. Faith strengthens by coming in conflict with doubt, and resisting unbelief through the strength of Jesus.” *The Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1876.

Please, contemplate this truth. Choose to appreciate God’s spelling of the word love. Appreciate REBUKE or DISCIPLINE for what they really are, God’s heart of yearning love for us, seeking to reach us in the only way that He can truly save us. **LM**

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"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?"

BY MARY M. BUCKLAND

What think ye of Christ, my brother?
What is He to you?
Do you love Him, would you serve Him
With a purpose true?

Have you given yourself to Jesus?
Would you be His child?
Will you choose Him for your portion
Through this desert wild?

We may stand and look at others,
Watching faults to see.
But this question each must answer,
What is Christ to me?

Will we choose to follow Jesus
In the narrow way?
Do we know He is our Saviour?
Can we trust Him?

Each must choose the path to follow.
Will our choice be right?
Will it lead beyond the river
To that land of light?

The Signs of the Times, June 8, 1882

According to the world

In an article by Lindsey Bever, Sarah Kaplan and Abby Ohlheiser, published in *The Washington Post* 01/25/2018, they wrote:

The Doomsday Clock is now just 2 minutes to ‘midnight,’ the symbolic hour of the apocalypse.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists advanced the symbolic Doomsday Clock a notch closer to the end of humanity Thursday, moving it ahead by 30 seconds after what the organization called a “grim assessment” of the state of geopolitical affairs.

“As of today,” Bulletin president Rachel Bronson told reporters, “it is two minutes to midnight” — as close as the world has ever been to the hour of apocalypse.

The organization — which has 15 Nobel laureates on its board — now believes “the world is not only more dangerous now than it was a year ago; it is as threatening as it has

been since World War II,” Bulletin officials Lawrence M. Krauss and Robert Rosner wrote in an op-ed published Thursday by *The Washington Post*. “In fact, the Doomsday Clock is as close to midnight today as it was in 1953, when Cold War fears perhaps reached their highest levels.”...

At a news conference Thursday, Bronson and a group of colleagues that included Krauss and Rosner listed a litany of grim developments over the past year: North Korea made rapid progress in developing a thermonuclear weapon capable of reaching the United States. Relations between the United States and Russia deteriorated. ...

The decision to move the clock forward was motivated largely by the Bulletin’s sense of looming nuclear peril. But the danger is compounded by humanity’s continued inaction on climate change. ...

The clock is symbolic, sitting at the intersection of art and science, and it has wavered between two and 17 minutes until doom since its inception in 1947. ...

Since then, the Bulletin’s board has determined when the clock’s minute hand will move, usually to draw attention to worldwide crises that it believes threaten the survival of the human species. ...

Several times, the Bulletin members reiterated that their goal is not to scare people — just to warn them and, hopefully, to motivate them to act.

“People of the world: If governments are not acting to protect you as they should, you need to take the lead,” Krauss said. “It is not yet midnight, and we have moved back from the brink in the past. Whether we do so in the future may be in your hands.”

According to God

“The world is no more ready now to credit the warning than were the Jews in the days of our Saviour. Come when it may, the end will come unawares to the ungodly. When life is going on in its unvarying round; when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business,

in traffic, in money-making; when religious leaders are magnifying the world’s progress and enlightenment, and the people are lulled in a false security—then, as the midnight thief steals within the unguarded dwelling, so shall sudden destruction come upon the

careless and ungodly, ‘and they shall not escape.’” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 38.

“Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing or in the morning” (Mark 13:35). **LM**



Father: Breathe new life into my soul for I sincerely desire to serve Thee; touch my lips with a live coal from off Thine altar and cause me to become eloquent with Thy praise. Make me strong to bear courageous testimony to Thy truth. And most of all, Father, help me to walk with Thee moment by moment each day.

PERSONAL WALK WITH GOD

BY JUDY HALLINGSTAD

A personal religion is something that is individually claimed. It is special and very intimate. A personal religion occurs when you commune with God. Are you experiencing that special relationship that is unique to you and God?

“Religion means the making of a daily consecration of yourself to God.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1893.

- **Pray:** “Here, Lord, am I, Thy property; take me, use me today. I lay all my plans at thy feet; I will have no way of my own in the matter. My time is Thine; my whole life is Thine. Thou hast bought me with a price.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, 307.

Religion means “meekness and lowliness of heart.” *Medical Ministry*, 22.

- **Pray:** “I am nothing and Thou art everything. Thou hast said,

‘Without Me ye can do nothing’ (John 15:5, *last part*). Now Lord, I must have Thee abiding in me, that I may abide in Thee.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 1092.

“It [religion] means to take everything that comes to you as a blessing, to let praise flow back to God. . . .” *The Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1893.

- **Pray:** I praise Thee for every opportunity to confess my faith in the face of danger, and amid sorrow, sickness, pain and death because I know that all things work together for good to them that love You and that are called according to Your will.

“At morning, noon, and night we should meditate upon the

goodness and love of God, that we may know God; for this is life eternal. The Father has given the best gift, the greatest treasure of heaven, to us, and we are of value to God, and should render praise to Him.” Ibid.

- “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice.” Psalm 55:17.

“The Lord says, ‘Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me.’ As we praise God, the soul becomes strong in spiritual power.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1893.

Personalize your walk with God each day by opening your heart to God, not once, not twice, but continually throughout the day. Make sure you take special times for special prayers as shared herein. Make a daily consecration to God. **LM**



THE DISCIPLINE OF SUFFERING

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

All who in this world render true service to God or man receive a preparatory training in the school of sorrow. The weightier the trust and the higher the service, the closer is the test and the more severe the discipline.

Study the experiences of Joseph and of Moses, of Daniel and of David. Compare the early history of David with the history of Solomon, and consider the results.

David in his youth was intimately associated with Saul, and his stay at court and his connection with the king's household gave him an insight into the cares and sorrows and perplexities concealed by the glitter and pomp of royalty. He saw of how little worth is human glory to bring peace to the soul. And it was with relief and gladness that he returned from the king's court to the sheepfolds and the flocks.

When by the jealousy of Saul driven a fugitive into the wilderness, David, cut off from human support, leaned more heavily upon God. The uncertainty and unrest of the wilderness life, its unceasing peril, its necessity for frequent flight, the character of the men who gathered to him there—"everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented" (1 Samuel 22:2)—all rendered the more essential a stern self-discipline. These experiences aroused and developed power to deal with men, sympathy for the oppressed, and hatred of injustice. Through years of waiting and peril, David learned to find in God his comfort, his support, his life. He learned that only by God's power could he come to the throne; only in His wisdom could he rule wisely. It was through the training in the school of hardship and sorrow that David was able to make the record—though afterward marred with his great sin—that he "executed judgment and justice unto all his people" (2 Samuel 8:15).

The discipline of David's early experience was lacking in that of Solomon. In circumstances, in character, and in life, he seemed favored above all others. Noble in youth, noble in manhood, the beloved of his God, Solomon entered on a reign that gave high promise of prosperity and honor. Nations



The pride of prosperity often brings separation from God.

marveled at the knowledge and insight of the man to whom God had given wisdom. But the pride of prosperity brought separation from God. From the joy of divine communion Solomon turned to find satisfaction in the pleasures of sense. Of this experience he says:

"I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards: ... I got me servants and maidens: ... I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem. ... And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labor. ... Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun. And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the

man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done."

"I hated life. ... Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 2:4–12, 17, 18).

By his own bitter experience, Solomon learned the emptiness of a life that seeks in earthly things its highest good. He erected altars to heathen gods, only to learn how vain is their promise of rest to the soul.

In his later years, turning wearied and thirsting from earth's broken cisterns, Solomon returned to drink at the fountain of life. The history of his wasted years, with their lessons of warning, he by the Spirit of inspiration recorded for after generations. And thus, although the seed of his sowing was reaped by his people in harvests of evil, the lifework of Solomon was not wholly lost. For him at last the discipline of suffering accomplished its work.

But with such a dawning, how glorious might have been his life's day had Solomon in his youth learned the lesson that suffering had taught in other lives!

Education, 151–154. LM

Prayer request from lady in prison

"I am requesting prayer for my CDA opportunity that could send me home this 2017 Christmas to be my son's Christmas present this year. To have family reconciliation, reconnection, and reunification to start 2018 out with a clean slate at home with my family. For my marriage to be reconciled and to be whole again. To be the mom, wife and daughter and law-abiding citizen. For courage and strength, to be true to my God and myself. My heart desires so much to be home this 2017 Christmas to my son. ... I pray for halftime to be implemented and to relieve the overcrowding of the prisons. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

—AL, Washington

We pray that God will continue to work on answering the prayer according to His will in His time.

Crossword Puzzle (p. 37) Answers

A	2	3	4	5	6	7	F	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	S	19	20	T	22	23	L	A	
B	S	I	N	G			A	B	A	B	E	S					I	P	R	A	Y	E	R		
C				A			C	E			E	G	Y	P	T				A			A	C		
D			G	R	A	V	E		A	B	E								N		P	D			
E	C	M	I	F	R	I	E	N	D		P	O	O	R		S	O	N							
C	A	U	S	E	N	O		T	T		P					G								F	
G	T	N	E	A	R	S	H	A		P	R	E	P	A	R	E									
H	C	O	L	T	G	S		L	B		N					E			P	H					
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J				B	R	O	K	E	N	H	E	A	R	T	E	D		S		I	J				
K	L						E		H							P	R	O	P	H	E	T			
L	I	B	R	O	K	E	N		I	M	M	A	N	U	E	L									
M	G			E	Y		S		M							C	S			T	M				
T	H	I	R	T	Y	E		A		G						H								T	
O	T			H		S		P	A	R	A	B	L	E		P	I	E	R	C	E	D	O		
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Q	R	E	J	E	C	T	E	D		V	I	R	G	I	N				S	A	V	E			
R	I			N					L		J					R					I	B			
S	C							T	H	R	O	N	E		F	A	L	S	E		H	A	N	D	S
1	H	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	E	14	15	H	17	18	N	20	21	22	23	24	25	

From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

March 2018

Dear Friend,

The responsibility to take the three angels' messages to all the world is not a responsibility that rests on only experienced Christians and ministers or professional people, but a responsibility that is to be borne by every church member.

"Although you may feel that you are the least of all saints, you are members of Christ's body, and through Him you are identified with all His human agencies. ... There are to be no silent partners; every member is to be a living stone in the building, catching the rays of divine light from the Sun of Righteousness, and reflecting them to the world." *The Medical Missionary*, May 1, 1891.

Here is a prayer that you can pray if you are wondering how to witness: "Lord I want to be used by you to find your lost sheep. I do not know who they are, so I am asking you to lead me and guide me to somebody that I can study the Bible with to help him or her find salvation. I am asking this on behalf of my Savior who died for them as well as for me, for His sake and in His name, Amen."

Your brother in the responsibility,



John J. Grosboll

Inspired: "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. But we can do nothing without sanctified energy. Just as soon as the missionary spirit is lost from the heart, and zeal for the cause of God begins to wane, the burden of our testimonies and plans is a cry for prudence and economy, and real backsliding begins in the missionary work. Instead of diminishing the work, let all the councils be conducted in such a manner that increased purpose may be manifested to carry forward the great work of warning the world, though it may cost self-denial and sacrifice. If every member of the church was constantly impressed with the thought, I am not my own, but have been bought with a price, each would feel that he is under the most sacred obligation to improve every ability given of God, to double his usefulness year by year, and have no excuse for spiritual negligence." Ibid. Aug 23, 1892.



By Judy Hallingstad

The platypus is one of the most unusual creatures in the animal kingdom. Platypuses (which is the correct plural form, not “platypi”) have a paddle-shaped tail like a beaver; a sleek, furry body like an otter; and a flat bill and webbed feet like a duck. In fact, the first time a platypus was brought from Australia to

The bill of a platypus, sometimes called a duck-billed platypus, has a smooth texture that feels like suede. It is also flexible and rubbery. The skin of the bill holds thousands of receptors that help the platypus navigate underwater and detect movement of potential food, such as shrimp. ...

their food in the water where they live. As they swim, they try to detect food along the muddy bottom of the river, stream, pond or lake using their sensitive bills. When platypuses find something interesting, like shellfish, insects, larvae or worms, they scoop it up in their bills, store it in their cheek pouches and swim to the surface. Since they only have grinding plates and no teeth, platypuses use any gravel or dirt they can scoop up while on the bottom of the waterbed to mash their food into digestible pieces. ...

Platypus

Britain, people couldn't believe that it was a real animal. ...

A typical platypus is 15 inches from its head to the end of its rump. Its tail adds an additional 5 inches to the animal's length. An individual weighs about 3 lbs. ... Platypuses have dense, thick fur that helps them stay warm underwater. Most of the fur is dark brown, except for a patch of lighter fur near each eye, and lighter-colored fur on the underside.

Their front feet have extra skin that acts like a paddle when the animals are swimming. When platypuses are on land, their webbing retracts, making the claws more pronounced. The animals walk awkwardly on their knuckles to protect the webbing.

These creatures make their homes in the freshwater areas that flow throughout the island of Tasmania and the eastern and southeastern coast of Australia. While they are in the water a lot, they will also waddle onto the riverbanks to dig burrows with their claws. These burrows are tunnels that have rooms or chambers. Platypuses also live under rock ledges, roots or debris. ...

Platypuses usually spend their time hunting for food, and a hunt can last 10 to 12 hours. They are most active during nighttime and dusk, because they are nocturnal. This means they sleep during the day. When not hunting, they stay in their burrows. ... They hunt for

Platypuses swim with their front feet and steer with their tails and back feet. They have waterproof fur, skin that covers their ears and eyes, and noses that seal shut to protect the animals while they are underwater. Though platypuses are made for the water, they can't stay completely submerged. They can only stay underwater for 30 to 140 seconds.

Excerpts from: www.livescience.com/27572-platypus.html

“O LORD, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts” (Psalm 104:24, 25).



If you would like to assist us in making *LandMarks* available to our brethren in the faith in foreign lands, please mark your Thirteenth Sabbath offering *LandMarks*.

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

LandMarks magazine has proven to be a very useful tool for those hungering and thirsting for the truth, not only in the United States but in many foreign lands as well. We often receive expressions of gratitude from our brothers and sisters who receive the magazine at no cost.

Here are excerpts from emails we received from around the world:

@ Kenya

“Just wanted to say thank you so much for your dedication in getting the gospel to the world. We are enjoying the lessons in our monthly *LandMarks* very much. We do use them in our morning devotions and evening devotions in our houses, and in our churches. May our Lord continue to bless your efforts.”

Zachary Okeyo Makworo

@ Ghana

“*LandMarks* enhances our spiritual growth and broadens our knowledge of historic Adventist truths. We are happy that Steps to Life is reaching out to the world with the three angels’ messages. Interest in the magazine is so strong that people call most of the time for their copies before they are available.”

Joseph-Class Peters

@ New Zealand

“We give these out to SDAs who enjoy receiving them. One lady works in the office for Honda Cars, and after she reads them, she puts them in the waiting room. She knows some people do read and take them.

“We love the articles, and some of the articles form the basis for sermons at times by my husband.”

Maxine Henham

March Sermon of the Month

Who and What Makes up the Church?

By Marshall Grosboll

God’s church is composed of those who “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth” (Revelation 14:4). In Jesus’ day, many worshiped the temple and failed to recognize Jesus. So, today, many worship the church and fail to follow Him where He leads.

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



La Plaza Municipal in Lima, Peru

A Growing Work in Peru

Training Workers to Prepare a People

By Domingo Nunez

“I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying angel cried out with awful solemnity, ‘Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come.’”

Early Writings, 119

In 1970, a group of four families in Lima, Peru, saw the need for a historic independent association to defend and to preach the three angels’ historical messages. During the early years of their work, they met for their Sabbath worship service at the homes of each family, sharing the joys of God’s word and encouraging each other as they pressed forward in the work.

Every Sabbath a family would open their home for Sabbath worship. For several years the group was growing and growing until they realized the need of an organized effort to prosecute the work.



Upper photo: *Early morning worship, APICA, in Lima, Peru*

Lower row from the left:

1. *Gilberto Rodriguez Bartolo, APICA Office Manager*
2. *Administrators of APICA*
3. *Pastor Domingo Nunez preaching in Lima, Peru*

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

Matthew 24:44

Thus, in the early 1980s, the group had grown and decided to work together to establish a historic independent association. By God's grace the Asociación en Perú de las Iglesias Adventistas (APICA) was established and registered in Lima, Peru. The brothers of APICA, since the very beginning, have been working hard to share the truth while facing many forms of winds of doctrines and all kinds of attacks from Satan.

From time to time, they have faced mountains of discouragement, but they felt God's encouragement to continue pressing on for this historic three angels' messages movement.

I came across with a group of brothers of APICA in 2005 and we have been working together

to assist others not only in Lima but to the whole country of Peru.

Today by God's grace there are eight churches through all Lima with a total of 782 members of APICA.

At the end of 2017, I was invited to be part of the annual meeting to help with organization, to discuss plans for continued growth, and assist in planning their outreach efforts.

We at Steps to Life and APICA see the need for a training school in Lima because of the time that we are living in today. We recognize the need for leaders and workers to prepare for the second coming of our Lord.

We need your support and prayers. Together, for the honor and glory of God, we can establish a training school and

program to assist APICA to prepare the people to become leaders in their churches and to prepare Peru and Latin America for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have already started preparations for the location and the building for the training school. Together we can work to make this happen.

I am happy to inform you all that the preparations for the training school in Lima have begun so that we can prepare workers, missionaries, evangelists, Bible workers and pastors to work together in Lima and many other places around Peru and Latin America, preparing people for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Question

Who makes a “covenant with death and with hell”?

Answer

Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves” (Isaiah 28:15).

“In the class here described are included those who in their stubborn impenitence comfort themselves with the assurance that there is to be no punishment for the sinner; that all mankind, it matters not how corrupt, are to be exalted to heaven, to become as the angels of God. But still more emphatically are those making a covenant with death and an agreement with hell, who renounce the truths which Heaven has provided as a defense for the righteous in the day of trouble, and accept the refuge of lies offered by Satan in its stead—the delusive pretensions of spiritualism.

“Marvelous beyond expression is the blindness of the people of this generation. Thousands reject the word of God as unworthy of belief and with eager confidence receive the deceptions of Satan. Skeptics and scoffers denounce the bigotry of those who contend for the faith of prophets and apostles, and they divert themselves by holding up

to ridicule the solemn declarations of the Scriptures concerning Christ and the plan of salvation, and the retribution to be visited upon the rejecters of the truth. They affect great pity for minds so narrow, weak, and superstitious as to acknowledge the claims of God and obey the requirements of His law. They manifest as much assurance as if, indeed, they had made a covenant with death and an agreement with hell—as if they had erected an impassable, impenetrable barrier between themselves and the vengeance of God. Nothing can arouse their fears. So fully have they yielded to the tempter, so closely are they united with him, and so thoroughly imbued with his spirit, that they have no power and no inclination to break away from his snare.” *The Great Controversy*, 560, 561.

“Thus saith the Lord God ... Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it” (Isaiah 28:16–18).



BREAKFAST

GREAT BENEFITS

There are many people who are not breakfast eaters. I listen to some of their excuses for not eating breakfast which include: “I do not have time” or “It’s easier to combine it with lunch,” and so on. Our bodies suffer the consequences. An interesting article in *The New York Times* shares the following:

“Many of us grab coffee and a quick bite in the morning and eat more as the day goes on, with a medium-size lunch and the largest meal of the day in the evening. But a growing body of research on weight and health suggests we may be doing it all backward.

“A recent review of the dietary patterns of 50,000 adults who are Seventh Day [sic] Adventists over seven years provides the latest evidence suggesting that we should front-load our calories early in the day to jump-start our metabolisms and prevent obesity, starting with a robust breakfast and tapering off to a smaller lunch and light supper, or no supper at all.

“More research is needed, but a series of experiments in animals and some small trials in humans have pointed in the same direction, suggesting that watching the clock, and not just the calories, may play a more important role in weight control than previously acknowledged. ...

“Perhaps not surprisingly, the latest study found that those who supplemented three meals a day with snacks tended to gain weight over time, while those who ate only one or two meals a day tended to lose weight, even compared with those who just ate three meals a day.

“But the researchers also found that those who ate their largest meal early in the day were more likely to have a lower body mass index than those who ate a large lunch or dinner. Breakfast eaters tended to keep their weight down generally, compared with breakfast skippers. The lowest B.M.I.s were recorded in the fraction of people — about 8 percent of the total sample — who finished lunch by early afternoon and did not eat again until the next morning, fasting for 18 to 19 hours.”
www.nytimes.com/2017/08/21/well/eat/the-case-for-a-breakfast-feast.html

More assets provided through eating breakfast!

“Some reason that because they were not hungry in the morning, skipping breakfast would help them eat fewer calories during the day and would thus favor weight loss. This is a myth. The truth is that eating a good

breakfast should be part of any weight loss program.

“Years ago Dr. Charles Cupp proposed that weight gain is the result of inappropriate *timing* of food intake in relation to the evening sleep time. During a medical practice that spanned a remarkable seven decades, Cupp instructed hundreds of patients on his novel approach to weight control. Overweight patients were instructed to change their meal pattern from a heavy meal and snacks in the evening to a heavy morning meal, moderate lunch, and a light supper. They were to eat their last meal ideally at noon but by no means later than 3:00 p.m., and they were instructed not to go to sleep for at least eight and a half hours after the last intake of food. Of significance, they were not asked to change their food choices nor the amount of calories they ate. Intrigued researchers in the Department of Nutrition at Tulane University’s School of Public Health analyzed the records of 595 of Cupp’s overweight patients. The results of their study are: (All patients who followed his instructions lost weight.)

- Those who ate only breakfast averaged 10 lbs. weight loss a month.
- Those who ate breakfast, lunch, and snacks averaged 5 to 6 lbs. a month.
- Those who lost from 20-30 lbs. showed an increase in hemoglobin level.
- Blood sugar levels of diabetic patients who lost 30 lbs. or more were normalized.
- Hypothyroid patients showed a reduction in daily thyroid maintenance requirements.

“Note that some additional benefits accrued from eating breakfast: improved blood hemoglobin level, reduced blood sugar, and improved thyroid function.

Breakfast and Heart Attacks

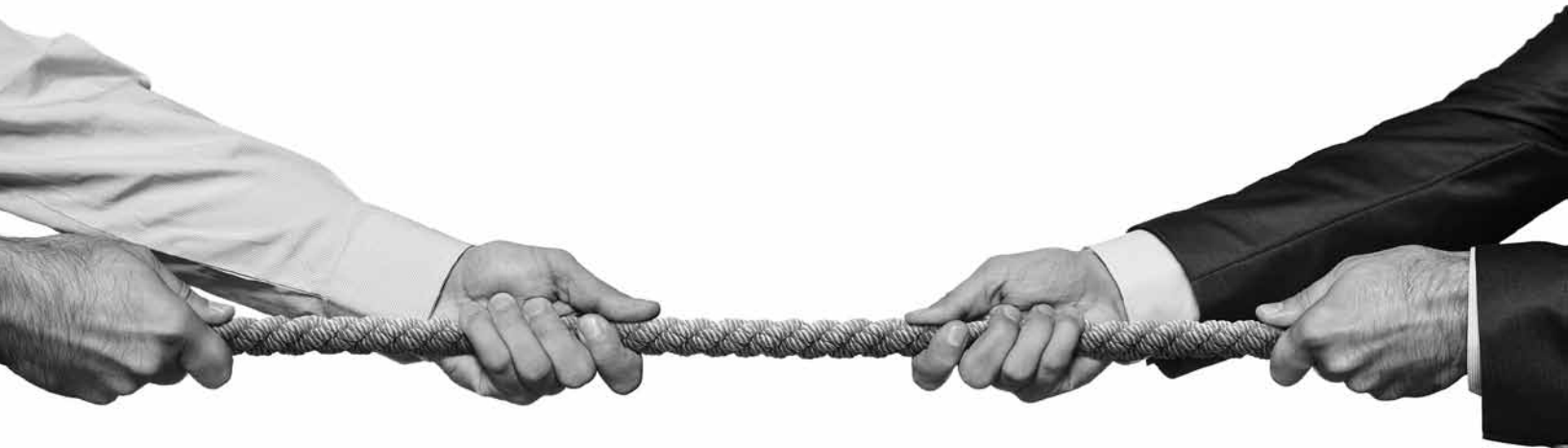
“Adults may be able to reduce their risk of heart attacks by eating breakfast regularly. Platelets, the body’s blood clotting cells, become ‘stickier’ in the morning before breakfast. This increases the tendency for a blood clot to form during the morning hours. If such a clot occurs in a heart blood vessel, a heart attack can result. As expected from this physiology, most heart attacks occur between 7 a.m. and 12 noon. Eating breakfast can help the platelets to become less sticky and thus decrease the risk of morning heart attacks.

Breakfast and Mental Capacity

“There are additional benefits from eating a good breakfast beyond longevity. In August of 1995, the Pediatrics Department at the University of California at Davis hosted a number of physiologists, neuroscientists, nutritionists, and physiologists to review the scientific studies on breakfast. The researchers concluded that the ‘eating of breakfast is important to learning, memory, and physical well-being in both children and adults.’ Good breakfast habits are essential for maximum efficiency, both mental and physical, particularly during the late morning hours. Breakfast eaters demonstrate better attitudes and improved scholastic performance.”

Excerpts from *Proof Positive, How to Reliably Combat Disease and Achieve Optimal Health through Nutrition and Lifestyle*, Neil Nedley, M.D., pages 5, 6.

Amazing what happens to our bodies and its response to the times we eat. We are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14) and we need to preserve what God has given to us. Most of the time it is our own mindset, including our habits, that prevents us from doing what is best. **LM**



OPPOSING FORCES

BY JOHN GROSBOLL

The problem of racism is thousands of years old. The Bible repeatedly speaks about it. Is there a solution and would you accept the real solution if you found it?

Preaching to the Greeks in Athens, Paul said, “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:24).

Why is it then, if God has made of one blood all nations, that the different races or nations cannot get along? The reason is because we are listening to two different spirits. Notice what the Holy Spirit does for those that follow the Lord. It says, “He [Jesus] Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie and wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (Ephesians 4:11–15, literal translation).

There you have a recipe for unity, how different peoples, different nations, different races can all be in harmony and unity. However, not all are listening to the same spirit. It is the Holy Spirit only that brings unity, not only in the church but also in the nation.

There was infighting in the church at Corinth. Paul indicates that some would preach *another* Jesus (2 Corinthians 11:4). Two Jesus, two beliefs—disunity.

There is more than one Jesus preached in the world today, just like there was back then. Many people say they believe in Jesus, but they don’t all believe in the same Jesus. There are two supernatural spirits seeking control of this planet. These two spirits are at enmity with one another. Everybody is under the control of one or the other. One is the Spirit of God and the other is an evil spirit.

Paul wrote that the *other* Jesus would preach a different gospel, one which they have not accepted—but they may well put up with it! Those listening to the voice of a different spirit will believe in a different Jesus, believe in a different gospel, and then there will be strife. We are all under the control of supernatural forces, whether we know it or not.

It says in Acts 14:1–7, “Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews

claim the gospel and what it involves, those who do not believe do not want to accept the provisions it provides. They want to be saved a different way, their own way. There are many philosophies in the world today offering salvation through many different systems. But the Bible says, there is only one Person who can save you—Jesus, God’s dear Son.

Peter said there is no other name under heaven by which you can be saved (Acts 4:12).

So, after they had preached the gospel they fled. There were many that believed, but there also was a lot of

As in ancient times, even today people who do not believe the gospel want to destroy those who proclaim it or believe it.

stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

“But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe . . . And they were preaching the gospel there.”

That still happens today. People who do not believe the gospel want to destroy those who proclaim it or believe it. There are several reasons for this. One is, when people pro-

opposition. Jesus had told them that if, when they preach, the people won’t believe, flee, shake the dust off their feet and go to another place. So they fled to another place. They went to Lystra and Derbe, and some terrible things happened there also. Saul, who later became the apostle Paul, was one of those who had consented to the stoning of Stephen. And in Lystra, eventually the apostle Paul was stoned himself. Thinking him to be dead, they dragged him out of the city but he was not dead.

The gospel, if it is not accepted, can stir up the worst passions in the human heart, because most people do not want to turn their life over to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. They do not want to bring their life into subjection to the government of heaven,

to the law of heaven. They want to live and do whatever they please. There are a lot of theologies today teaching people that you can be saved just the way you are.

The Bible does not teach that. The Bible says that if you are going to be saved, you must be changed, be born again and receive a new heart and a new spirit. There is no way you can be saved unless this miraculous change happens in your heart and in your mind. Jesus told this to Nicodemus in John 3.

The Bible says, “And in Lystra a certain man without strength in

tious, heathen people hearing the gospel for the first time, but they had still imbibed much of their pagan philosophy so they got the priest of the Zeus, and they brought oxen and garlands to the gate intending to sacrifice with the multitudes and offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas, believing them to be gods.

Verses 14–17: “But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out and saying, ‘Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you

people wanted to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas. Not being allowed to do that they became disappointed.

It is very interesting to see what happens when people are disappointed. It is often a time when they exercise very poor judgment. We often see it happen among young people. Somebody is jilted in a love affair, but something goes wrong and they flip. In a very short time, without adequate time to think things over, they marry somebody they do not know very well. Whether it turns out good or bad is a matter of conjecture, nobody knows. Often when a person is disappointed it is possible while under that kind of emotional situation, to make some very poor judgments. Especially is this the case if you have just experienced a death in your family or some traumatic event. It is very dangerous to trust poor counselors that encourage you to do something that, if you were in a different frame of mind, you would know it was not the wisest thing to do.

“Paul and Barnabas scarcely restrained them from offering sacrifices to them” (verse 18, literal translation). It says in verse 19, “Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.”

These Jews persuaded the multitudes that Paul and Barnabas were not only gods, but they were doing these miracles by means of evil spirits of demons whom these men served. They denied that God had any part in this miracle that had been worked. These superstitious people were acquainted with demons because, in the pagan religions, they actually worshiped devils and were acquainted with the idea that there were good and evil forces in the world. Now, the very people who wanted to sacrifice

The gospel, if it is not accepted, can stir up the worst passions in the human heart because most people do not want to turn their life over to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother’s womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, ‘Stand up straight on your feet!’ And he leaped and walked” (Acts 14:8–10).

Right there in public a miracle is worked. A man, crippled from the time he was born, is instantly healed; he can leap and walk. Then it says, “Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, ‘The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!’ And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker” (verses 11, 12). These were supersti-

that you should turn from these useless [vain] things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, giving us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.’ ”

With these sayings, they could scarcely restrain the multitude from sacrificing to them. During their journeys, the apostles ran into all kinds of faiths and religions. They were brought in contact with the Jewish bigotry and intolerance, with sorcery and blasphemy, unjust magistrates, superstition and idolatry. Now, these

to Paul and Barnabas as gods, were deceived into believing that this miracle was not worked by the God of heaven, but it was accomplished through demons and were about to destroy them.

This was the same class of people that formerly had accused Jesus Christ of casting out devils through the power of the devils. Matthew 12:24–28 says, “Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, ‘This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’ But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.’”

The people were deceived by these Jews who were prejudiced against the apostles and against the gospel of Jesus Christ, into thinking that these were false teachers and had worked this miracle by the power of demons, just as was the accusation against Jesus. The characters of Paul and Barnabas were misrepresented so that the heathens thought that they were now worse than murderers and whoever should put them out of the world would be doing a service for God. So, the Bible says, “They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.”

It is still true today, that those who believe and teach the truths of God’s word, meet opposition from unprincipled persons who refuse to accept the truth and will not hesitate to prevaricate, and to even circulate



There are many philosophies in the world today offering salvation through many different systems. But the Bible says, there is only one Person who can save you—Jesus.

the most glaring falsehoods, in order to destroy the influence and hedge up the way of a person, whom God has sent, with a message of warning to the world. There are many people who do not want to hear the message of warning, especially that message found in Revelation the 14th chapter, the three angels’ messages.

These warn that we are living in the hour of God’s judgment. Most people do not want to believe there is a judgment and that we are all going to be called to account for the lives that we have lived in this world. The multitudes decided to stone Paul. Immediately the experience of Stephen came vividly into his mind as he was one of those who had consented for Stephen to be stoned. Now he was to share Stephen’s fate and he remembered that man of God when he was being stoned said, “I see the heavens opened and I see the Son of man standing at the right hand of the throne of God” (Acts 7:56, literal translation)!

This could have been Paul’s last moments in this world. He was stoned until he was unconscious and the people thought he was dead and dragged his body outside of the city while the Christians who were around him mourned. You too would mourn if one of the leaders in your church was stoned to death and his or her body was lying outside the gate of the city.

As the Christians mourned over him, all of a sudden, he came to with rejoicing that he had been allowed to suffer for the name of Christ. “When the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God’” (Acts 14:20–22).

Today, multitudes want an easy religion. They are not interested in a religion that involves hardship. They want to go to heaven as it is said, “sitting down.” But that is not the gospel, that is not the religion of the New Testament. Notice what Paul says about his experience in 2 Corinthians 11:23–26: “In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in

in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’ All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’

“Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?’ And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These

have overcome the world.” Jesus has not promised to His followers that they would have no tribulation in this world. In fact, He said just the opposite. He said you will have trouble, but be of good courage.

Paul told the Christians, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” A vision was given to John the revelator in Revelation 7. Who are these people who make up the countless multitude from all nations who are saved? They are those who have come out of great tribulation.

We live in a world of suffering, pain, sickness, and death, and these things happen to Christians as well as non-Christians. God has not promised us a free ride in this world, but He has promised us something much better. He has promised to sustain us, to support us, and to help us in all of our tribulation.

In 1 Corinthians 10:12, 13 it says, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

God has promised to “never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). He will support you and help you so that you will be able to endure the trouble that you have in this world.

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

God has not promised us a free ride in this world, but He has promised to sustain us, to support us, and to help us in all of our tribulation.

perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.” This was the tribulation the apostle Paul endured. He encouraged the Christians to continue in the grace of God and said, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

The apostle John was given a vision of the future when those who had endured these tribulations in the Christian walk inherited eternal life. He says, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues [or languages], standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches

are the ones who come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ... They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’” (Revelation 7:9–17).

The day is coming when tribulation will be over, but that is not in this world, that is in the next world. Jesus said to His followers, just before His crucifixion, in John the 16th chapter, verse 33: “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I

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GOD'S LITTLE LAMP

Because Mother and Dad had gone to a distant city on business, Aunt Jane had come to spend the night with Randy.

Now it was time for bed. Randy took his bath. Then he decided to surprise Aunt Jane, so he put on the pajamas she had given him for Christmas.

Aunt Jane was very pleased.

"How about a story?" she asked. Aunt Jane was a very good storyteller.

"Two?" Randy came back.

And two it was.

"Now your prayer," Aunt Jane said when she had finished telling the stories.

Randy knelt beside his bed and began to pray,

"Jesus, tender shepherd, hear me
Bless Thy little lamb tonight.
Through the darkness be Thou near me
Keep me safe 'til morning light.

"All this day Thy hand has led me
And I thank Thee for Thy care ...
Thou hast warmed me, clothed me, fed me.
Listen to my evening prayer.

"Let my sins be all forgiven
Bless the friends I love so well—
Take us all at last to heaven
Happy there with Thee to dwell."

Aunt Jane was smiling when he was through. Randy wondered why. Then she told him.

"Randy, when I was a little girl, I prayed that very same prayer. But for years I prayed it a wee bit differently. When Mother taught it to me, I thought she said, 'Bless Thy little *lamp* tonight.' You see, I had a small kerosene lamp in my bedroom. I loved the lamp very much. So, it seemed quite all right to ask God to bless it.

"One night Mother realized I was saying lamp not lamb. She told me I should say lamb, because I was God's little lamb.

"But when I grew older, I came to believe my prayer wasn't too wrong at that."

"How come?" Randy asked.

"Well," Aunt Jane answered, "All who love Jesus are meant to be lamps for Him. So He needs to bless His lamps, too. See?"

Randy nodded. And, sometimes in the nights that followed, he would pray, "Bless Thy little lamp tonight." When he did, he always remembered what Aunt Jane had told him.

If Jesus is a Shepherd, who are His lambs? If Jesus is the Light of the world, how can we be His lamps? Where should our light shine?

"Ye are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Dear Lord Jesus, we thank You for caring for us as a shepherd does for his sheep. We thank You for giving Your light so we can shine as lamps for You. Help us to give a bright light wherever we go. In Thy name. Amen.

Happy Moments With God, Margaret J. Anderson, 27, 28. **LM**

Life of Jesus Predicted in the Old Testament

Clues (use Old Testament spelling)

BY ROB HAGAR

Across:

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| B2 | What Jesus would make the dumb to do | Isaiah 35:6 / Matthew 15:31 |
| B10 | These little ones would praise Him | Psalms 8:2 / Matthew 21:16 |
| B20 | He would do this for His enemies | Psalms 109:4 / Luke 23:34 |
| C14 | He would come out of this place | Hosea 11:1 / Matthew 2:14, 15 |
| D4 | He would be redeemed from this | Psalms 49:15 / Matthew 28:6 |
| E9 | He would be betrayed by a _____ | Psalms 41:9 / Luke 22:47, 48 |
| E16 | He will cause these to rejoice | Isaiah 29:19 / Luke 6:20 |
| E21 | He would be called this of God | Psalms 2:7 / Matthew 3:16, 17 |
| F1 | He would be hated without this | Psalms 69:4 / John 15:25 |
| G7 | He would cause these to hear | Isaiah 35:5 / Mark 7:37 |
| G16 | A messenger would do this for His way | Isaiah 40:3-5 / Luke 3:3-6 |
| H2 | He would enter Jerusalem upon this | Zechariah 9:9 / Mark 11:7-11 |
| J6 | He would heal these | Isaiah 61:1, 2 / Luke 4:18, 19 |
| K19 | He would be called this | Deuteronomy 18:15 / Acts 3:20, 21 |
| L4 | None of His bones would be this | Psalms 34:20 (Exodus 12:46) / John 19:34, 36 |
| L11 | One of His names would be this | Isaiah 7:14 / Matthew 1:23 |
| N1 | He'd be sold for _____ pieces of silver | Zechariah 11:12, 13 / Matthew 27:9, 10 |
| O10 | He would teach people with this | Psalms 78:2-4 / Matthew 13:34, 35 |
| O18 | His body would be this | Zechariah 12:10 / John 19:34, 37 |
| Q2 | Rather than accepted He'd be _____ | Isaiah 53:3 / John 1:11 |
| Q12 | One of these would conceive | Isaiah 7:14 / Luke 1:26-31 |
| Q22 | What He would do for us all | Isaiah 35:4 / Matthew 18:11 |
| S8 | His kingdom would be on David's _____ | Isaiah 9:7 / Luke 1:32 |
| S15 | What kinds of witnesses would speak? | Psalms 35:11 / Mark 14:57, 58 |
| S21 | These would be pierced | Psalms 22:16 / John 20:25-27 |

Down:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A8 | This would be spit upon | Isaiah 50:6 / Matthew 27:30 |
| A18 | What He'd do on God's right hand | Psalms 110:1 / Mark 16:19 |
| A21 | He would die with these | Isaiah 53:12 / Matthew 27:38 |
| A24 | He would make the lame to do this | Isaiah 35:6 / Luke 7:22 |
| B5 | These would be parted | Psalms 22:18 / Matthew 27:35 |
| B10 | What He would do with our sins | Isaiah 53:11 / Romans 5:8 |
| B14 | He would be this of a woman | Genesis 3:15 / Galatians 4:4 |
| D7 | This would be offered to Him | Psalms 69:21 / John 19:28-30 |
| D12 | He would be born here | Micah 5:2 / Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-6 |
| E3 | This would happen to Him (two words) | Daniel 9:26 / Hebrews 2:9 |
| E9 | He would be this by His father | Psalms 22:1 / Matthew 27:46 |

A	2	3	4	5	6	7		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		19	20		22	23		A
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Answer key on page 26.

- E18 In time His mouth would not be _____
 G14 He'd be descended from this patriarch
 H24 He'd be like Melchizedek as this
 K2 He would be this even to Gentiles
 K5 Even these did not accept Him
 L8 He would heal blind _____
 L11 He would come through this son's line
 M19 Many of these would be killed
 N13 He would preach in this area
 O16 This message would come before Him
 O24 He would be descended from this king
 Q2 He would be buried with these

- Isaiah 53:7 / Mark 15:4, 5
 Genesis 22:15–18 / Matthew 1:1
 Psalms 110:4 / Hebrews 5:5, 6
 Isaiah 42:6 / Ephesians 3:6
 Psalm 69:8 / John 7:5
 Isaiah 35:5 / Mark 10:46–52
 Genesis 17:19 / Luke 3:34
 Jeremiah 31:15 / Matthew 2:16–18
 Isaiah 9:1, 2 / Matthew 4:12–15
 Malachi 4:5, 6 / Matthew 11:13, 14
 Jeremiah 23:5 / Luke 3:31
 Isaiah 53:9 / Matthew 27:57–60

Abraham's Calling

Key Text

"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Genesis 12:2).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 125–131.

Introduction

"Abraham had grown up in the midst of superstition and heathenism. ... But the true faith was not to become extinct. God has ever preserved a remnant to serve Him." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 125.

Sunday

1 GOD CALLS ABRAHAM

- a. What did God call Abraham to do, and who went with him? Genesis 12:1–4; Acts 7:4.

Note: "After the dispersion from Babel idolatry again became well-nigh universal, and the Lord finally left the hardened transgressors to follow their evil ways, while He chose Abraham, of the line of Shem, and made him the keeper of His law for future generations." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 125.

- b. Why didn't God immediately tell Abraham the place where He was calling him to go? Hebrews 11:8. What decision did Abraham have to make in obeying God's call? Genesis 12:1; Matthew 10:34–38.

Note: "Abraham's unquestioning obedience is one of the most striking evidences of faith to be found in all the Bible. ...

"It was no light test that was thus brought upon Abraham, no small sacrifice that was required of him. There were strong ties to bind him to his country, his kindred, and his home. But he did not hesitate to obey the call. He had no question to ask concerning the land of promise. ... God has spoken, and His servant must obey; the happiest place on earth for him was the place where God would have him to be." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 126.

Monday

2 THE PROMISES

- a. What initial promises did God make to Abraham? Genesis 12:2, 3.

Note: "It was for the purpose of bringing the best gifts of Heaven to all the peoples of earth that God called Abraham out from his idolatrous kindred and bade him dwell in the land of Canaan. 'I will make of thee a great nation,' He said, 'and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing' (Genesis 12:2). It was a high honor to which Abraham was called—that of being the father of the people who for centuries were to be the guardians and preservers of the truth of God to the world, the people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah.

"Men had well-nigh lost the knowledge of the true God. Their minds were darkened by idolatry. For the divine statutes, which are 'holy, and just, and good' (Romans 7:12), men were endeavoring to substitute laws in harmony with the purposes of their own cruel, selfish hearts. Yet God in His mercy did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man." *Prophets and Kings*, 15, 16.

- b. Which land did God promise to Abraham and his seed? Genesis 12:5–7; 13:14–18.

- c. What is significant about Abraham and his children living in tents? Hebrews 11:9, 10, 13–16. What similar attitude are we called to adopt? 2 Peter 3:11–14.

Note: “Let us strive to be Christians (Christ-like) in every sense of the word, and let our dress, conversation and actions preach that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, and that we are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus. Let us show to those around us, that this world is not our home, that we are pilgrims and strangers here.” *The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1852.

Tuesday

3 LOT'S GREAT MISTAKE

- a. What temptation did Lot fall into as he journeyed to the Promised Land with Abraham? Genesis 13:5–11; 1 John 2:16, 17.

Note: “The most fertile region in all Palestine was the Jordan Valley, reminding the beholders of the lost Paradise and equaling the beauty and productiveness of the Nile-enriched plains they had so lately left. ... Dazzled with visions of worldly gain, Lot overlooked the moral and spiritual evils that would be encountered [in the crowded marts of the wealthy and beautiful cities]. The inhabitants of the plain were ‘sinners before the Lord exceedingly’ (Genesis 13:13); but of this he was ignorant, or, knowing, gave it but little weight. He ‘chose him all the plain of Jordan,’ and ‘pitched his tent toward Sodom’ (verses 11, 12). How little did he foresee the terrible results of that selfish choice!” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 133.

- b. What is the devil seeking to achieve through the lust of the eyes? Mark 4:18, 19; Matthew 4:8–10.

Note: “If the claims and cares of the world are allowed to engross all our time and attention, our spiritual powers weaken and die because they are not exercised.” *This Day With God*, 87.

- c. How can the place where we choose to pitch our tent potentially destroy our spiritual life and that of our families? Genesis 13:12, 13; 19:1, 12–16.

Note: “Many ... in selecting a home ... look more to the temporal advantages they may gain than to the moral and social influences that will surround themselves and their families. They choose a beautiful and fertile country, or remove to some flourishing city, in the hope of securing greater prosperity; but their children are surrounded by temptation, and too often they form associations that are unfavorable to the development of piety and the formation of a right character. The atmosphere of lax morality, of unbelief, of indifference to religious things, has a tendency to counteract the influence of the parents. ... Many form attachments for infidels and unbelievers, and cast in their lot with the enemies of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 168, 169.

Wednesday

4 SINFUL SURROUNDINGS

- a. What should we learn from the experience of Lot's wife? Genesis 19:26; Luke 17:28–33.

Note: “She [Lot's wife] rebelled against God because His judgments involved her possessions and her children in the ruin. ...

“The invitations of mercy are addressed to all; and because our friends reject the Saviour's pleading love, shall we also turn away? The redemption of the soul is precious. Christ has paid an infinite price for our salvation, and no one who appreciates the value of this great sacrifice or the worth of the soul will despise God's offered mercy because others choose to do so.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 161, 162.

- b. Even though the daughters of Lot escaped Sodom, how had their morals become corrupted? Genesis 19:30–38; Leviticus 18:6, 7.

Note: “Lot made his way to the mountains and abode in a cave, stripped of all for which he had dared to subject his family to the influences of a wicked city. But the curse of Sodom followed him even here. The sinful conduct of his daughters was the result of the evil associations of that vile place. Its moral corruption had become so interwoven with their character that they could not distinguish between good and evil. Lot’s only posterity, the Moabites and Ammonites, were vile, idolatrous tribes, rebels against God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 167, 168.

- c. In these last days, where is the safest place to pitch our tents as we journey to the Promised Land, and why? Genesis 2:7, 8; Jude 5–7.

Note: “So long as God gives me power to speak to our people, I shall continue to call upon parents to leave the cities and get homes in the country, where they can cultivate the soil and learn from the book of nature the lessons of purity and simplicity. The things of nature are the Lord’s silent ministers, given to us to teach us spiritual truths. They speak to us of the love of God and declare the wisdom of the great Master Artist.” *The Adventist Home*, 146, 147.

Thursday

5 MAKING OUR CALLING SURE

- a. As we have been called to the Promised Land as Abraham was called, of what should we be mindful? 2 Peter 1:10, 11; Matthew 22:14.

Note: “None need lose eternal life. Everyone who chooses daily to learn of the heavenly Teacher will make his calling and election sure. Let us humble our hearts before God and follow on to know Him whom to know aright is life eternal. ...

“We cannot afford to allow anything to separate us from God and heaven. In this life we must be partakers of the divine nature. Brethren and sisters, you have only one life to live. O let it be a life of virtue, a life hid with Christ in God!” *In Heavenly Places*, 29.

- b. Who only will make it to the Promised Land? Revelation 17:14; Hebrews 3:12–14.

Note: “The work of conquering evil is to be done through faith. Those who go into the battlefield will find that they must put on the whole armor of God. The shield of faith will be their defense and will enable them to be more than conquerors. Nothing else will avail but this—faith in the Lord of hosts, and obedience to His orders. Vast armies furnished with every other facility will avail nothing in the last great conflict. Without faith, an angel host could not help. Living faith alone will make them invincible and enable them to stand in the evil day, steadfast, unmovable, holding the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 182, 183.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What does it mean to love our families more than we love Christ?
- 2 How can we tell if we are pilgrims and strangers today?
- 3 Explain how the place where we choose to live can affect our destiny.
- 4 What are the dangers of living in close quarters to sinful cities?
- 5 Why is not everyone called also chosen?

April 8 – 14

The Faith of Abraham

Key Text

“He [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 91–99.

Introduction

“Our souls may be trained to believe, taught to rely upon the word of God.” *Our High Calling*, 119.

Sunday

1 ABRAHAM'S GREATEST CONCERN

- a. What was Abraham's greatest concern regarding the promises of God? Genesis 12:7; 15:1–3.

Note: “As Abraham had no son, he at first thought that his trusty servant, Eliezer, should become his son by adoption, and his heir. But God informed Abraham that his servant should not be his son and heir, but that he should really have a son.” *The Story of Redemption*, 77.

- b. How did God reassure Abraham that He had not forgotten His promise? Genesis 15:4, 5; Isaiah 55:10, 11.

Note: “God desires us to receive great blessings. His promises are so clearly stated that there is no cause for uncertainty. He desires us to take Him at His word. At times we shall be in great perplexity, and not know just what to do. But at such times it is our privilege to take our Bibles and read the messages He has given us; and then get down on our knees and ask Him to help us. Over and over again He has given evidence that He is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. He fulfills His promises in far greater measure than we expect to receive help. ...

“Wherever we are, we are under obligation as disciples of our Lord and Master, to anchor our faith in the promises of God.” *The Watchman*, May 1, 1914.

Monday

2 FULLY PERSUADED

- a. Why did Abraham decide to believe in God's promise of a child? Genesis 15:6, *first part*; Romans 4:20, 21.

Note: “That faith which works by love and purifies the soul is not a matter of impulse. It ventures out upon the promises of God, firmly believing that what He has said, He is able also to perform.” *Our High Calling*, 119.

“[Philippians 4:4–7 quoted.] The promise itself is of no value unless I fully believe that He that has made the promise is abundantly able to fulfill, and infinite in power to do all that He has said.” *This Day With God*, 156.

- b. What was his reward for believing in God's promise? Genesis 15:6, *last part*; Romans 4:22.

Note: “The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his: Christ's perfect obedience is imputed to him. But he must cooperate with divine power, and put forth his human effort to subdue sin, and stand complete in Christ.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 429, 430.

“We may rest upon God, not because of our own merit, but because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us. We must look away from self to the spotless Lamb of God, who did no sin; and by looking to Him in faith we shall become like Him.” *Gospel Workers* (1892), 427.

- c. When is faith truly exercised? Hebrews 11:1; Habakkuk 2:3.

Note: “To abide in faith is to put aside feeling and selfish desires, to walk humbly with the Lord, to appropriate His promises, and apply them to all occasions, believing that God will work out His own plans and purposes in your heart and life by the sanctification of your character; it is to rely entirely, to trust implicitly, upon the faithfulness of God. If this course is followed, others will see the special fruits of the Spirit manifested in the life and character.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 341, 342.

Tuesday

3 GOD JUSTIFIES THE UNGODLY

- a. What shows us that Abraham was a sinner in need of justification? Romans 3:9–12, 23; Genesis 12:11–20.

Note: “During his stay in Egypt, Abraham gave evidence that he was not free from human weakness and imperfection. In concealing the fact that Sarah was his wife, he betrayed a distrust of the divine care, a lack of that lofty faith and courage so often and nobly exemplified in his life.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 130.

- b. What does the Bible say about the justification of Abraham before God? Romans 4:1–8; 3:28.

Note: “Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God’s free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ’s sake alone. The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.” “Ellen G. Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1122.

“Remember that Christ came into the world to save sinners. We have nothing to recommend us to God; the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition,

which makes His redeeming power a necessity. Renouncing all self-dependence, we may look to the cross of Calvary.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 65.

- c. What happens to an ungodly human when he or she chooses to believe whole heartedly in God? Romans 6:17, 18; 10:9, 10; 1:17.

Note: “The moment we surrender ourselves to God, believing in Jesus we have the righteousness of Christ. We realize that we have been redeemed from sin and appreciate His sacrifice to purchase our freedom.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, 346.

Wednesday

4 A SIGN OF CONVERSION

- a. What outward act did Abraham perform to demonstrate his internal change? Genesis 17:10, 11; Romans 4:11.

Note: “The rite of circumcision ... was to be observed by the patriarch [Abraham] and his descendants as a token that they were devoted to the service of God and thus separated from idolaters, and that God accepted them as His peculiar treasure. By this rite they were pledged to fulfill, on their part, the conditions of the covenant made with Abraham. They were not to contract marriages with the heathen; for by so doing they would lose their reverence for God and His holy law; they would be tempted to engage in the sinful practices of other nations and would be seduced into idolatry.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 138.

- b. Why is it essential to understand that Abraham was accounted righteous before he became circumcised? Romans 4:8–12; 2:28, 29.

Note: “Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. ...

“Many are losing the right way, in consequence of thinking that they must climb to heaven, that they must do something to merit the favor of God. They seek to make themselves better by their own unaided efforts. This they can never accomplish. Christ has made the way by dying our Sacrifice, by living our Example, by becoming our great High Priest. He declares, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6). If by any effort of our own we could advance one step toward the ladder, the words of Christ would not be true. But when we accept Christ, good works will appear as fruitful evidence that we are in the way of life, that Christ is our way, and that we are treading the true path that leads to heaven.” *Faith and Works*, 101, 102.

Thursday

5 CIRCUMCISED WITHIN

- a. Before we are baptized with water (the New Covenant act that replaces circumcision), what must first take place within? John 3:5–8; Colossians 2:10–13.

Note: “All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections. ... The bearing of fruit testifies to the character of the tree. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. ... There is need of a thorough conversion to the truth.” *Evangelism*, 308.

“Every soul united to Christ will be a living missionary to all around him.” *Ibid.*, 319.

- b. What happens to Christians who rely solely on the outward act of baptism in order to be saved, as the Jews relied on circumcision? Romans 10:1–3; Matthew 23:25–28.



God informed Abraham that his servant should not be his son and heir, but that he should really have a son.

Note: “Your connection with the church, the manner in which your brethren regard you, will be of no avail unless you believe in Christ. It is not enough to believe about Him; you must believe in Him. You must rely wholly upon His saving grace.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 49.

“The Lord has a work for us all to do. And if the truth is not rooted in the heart, if the natural traits of character are not transformed by the Holy Spirit, we can never be co-laborers with Jesus Christ. Self will constantly appear, and the character of Christ will not be manifested in our lives.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 969.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we have confidence in God’s promises?
- 2 What does it mean to be persuaded in God’s word?
- 3 What gracious blessing is ours when we surrender to God?
- 4 What does circumcision symbolize?
- 5 What is more important, baptism within or without?

April 15 – 21

The Promised Seed

Key Text

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ” (Galatians 3:16).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 145–155.

Introduction

“The gift to Abraham and his seed included not merely the land of Canaan, but the whole earth.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 170.

Sunday

1 THE SEED OF PROMISE

- a. Even though Abraham asked God for one seed to be his heir, how many children did God promise to bless him with? Genesis 13:15, 16; 15:2–5.

- b. How does the apostle Paul reveal that God’s promises made to Abraham were to be realized through one very special seed, Jesus Christ? Genesis 17:1–8; Galatians 3:16; Hebrews 2:14–16.

Note: “Plain and specific prophecies had been given regarding the appearance of the Promised One. To Adam was given an assurance of the coming of the Redeemer. The sentence pronounced on Satan, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel’ (Genesis 3:15), was to our first parents a promise of the redemption to be wrought out through Christ.

“To Abraham was given the promise that of his line the Saviour of the world should come: ‘In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.’ ‘He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ’ (Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16).” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 222.

Monday

2 THE BIRTH OF THE PROMISED SEED

- a. How do we know that Abraham was aware that the promises were to come through a very special seed, Jesus Christ? John 8:56.

Note: “He [Abraham] was given a view of the divine sacrifice for sin. Of this sacrifice he had an illustration in his own experience. ... Upon the altar of sacrifice he laid the son of promise, the son in whom his hopes were centered. ...

“Abraham learned of God the greatest lesson ever given to mortal. His prayer that he might see Christ before he should die was answered. He saw Christ; he saw all that mortal can see, and live. By making an entire surrender, he was able to understand the vision of Christ, which had been given him. He was shown that in giving His only-begotten Son to save sinners from eternal ruin, God was making a greater and more wonderful sacrifice than ever man could make.” *The Desire of Ages*, 468, 469.

- b. Seeing that Sarah was past the age of child-bearing, what did Abraham and Sarah need before they could have a child? Genesis 17:15–19; 18:9–14; Mark 10:27.

Note: “I would that all could realize what possibilities and probabilities there are for all who make Christ their sufficiency and their trust. The life hid with Christ in God ever has a refuge; he can say, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me’ (Philippians 4:13).” *Country Living*, 28.

- c. In what ways did the miracle birth of Isaac symbolize the miracle birth of the promised seed, Jesus Christ? Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–23.



God's dear Son, the world's Redeemer, was insulted, mocked at, derided, and tortured, until He bowed His head in death. What greater proof can the Infinite One give us of His divine love?

Note: “The birth of a son to Zacharias, like the birth of the child of Abraham, and that of Mary, was to teach a great spiritual truth, a truth that we are slow to learn and ready to forget. In ourselves we are incapable of doing any good thing; but that which we cannot do will be wrought by the power of God in every submissive and believing soul. It was through faith that the child of promise was given. It is through faith that spiritual life is begotten, and we are enabled to do the works of righteousness.” *The Desire of Ages*, 98.

Tuesday

3 DEATH OF THE PROMISED SEED

- a. Describe how God predicted the death of the promised seed, Jesus Christ, through the sacrifice of Isaac. Genesis 22:1–3, 9–13; Romans 8:31, 32; Isaiah 53:4–7.

- b. What was significant about the expression “thine only son” as God spoke to Abraham? Genesis 22:2; Mark 1:11; 1 John 4:9.

Note: “The ram offered in the place of Isaac represented the Son of God, who was to be sacrificed in our stead. When man was doomed to death by transgression of the law of God, the Father, looking upon His Son, said to the sinner, ‘Live: I have found a ransom.’”

“It was to impress Abraham’s mind with the reality of the gospel, as well as to test his faith, that God commanded him to slay his son. The agony which he endured during the dark days of that fearful trial was permitted that he might understand from his own experience something of the greatness of the sacrifice made by the infinite God for man’s redemption. No other test could have caused Abraham such torture of soul as did the offering of his son. God gave His Son to a death of agony and shame. The angels who witnessed the humiliation and soul anguish of the Son of God were not permitted to interpose, as in the case of Isaac. There was no voice to cry, ‘It is enough.’ To save the fallen race, the King of glory yielded up His life. What stronger proof can be given of the infinite compassion and love of God?” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 154.

Note: “Our heavenly Father surrendered His beloved Son to the agonies of the crucifixion ... God’s dear Son, the world’s Redeemer, was insulted, mocked at, derided, and tortured, until He bowed His head in death. What greater proof can the Infinite One give us of His divine love and pity? [Romans 8:32 quoted].” *That I May Know Him*, 20.

“Let us, then, cheerfully suffer something for Jesus’ sake, crucify self daily, and be partakers of Christ’s sufferings here, that we may be made partakers with Him of His glory, and be crowned with glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life.” *Early Writings*, 114.

Wednesday

4 RESURRECTION OF THE PROMISED SEED

- a. How did God show to Abraham that the promised seed, Jesus Christ, was to be the Saviour of the world? Genesis 22:7, 8, 11–13; Hebrews 11:17–19.

Note: “When the command was given to Abraham to offer up his son, the interest of all heavenly beings was enlisted. With intense earnestness they watched each step in the fulfillment of this command. When to Isaac’s question, ‘Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’ Abraham made answer, ‘God will provide Himself a lamb’ (Genesis 22:7, 8); and when the father’s hand was stayed as he was about to slay his son, and the ram which God had provided was offered in the place of Isaac—then light was shed upon the mystery of redemption, and even the angels understood more clearly the wonderful provision that God had made for man’s salvation.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 155.

b. What wonderful truth was Abraham assured of as he laid hold of the promise, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called” (Genesis 21:12)? Genesis 22:5; Hebrews 11:18, 19.

Note: “He [Abraham] strengthened his soul by dwelling upon the evidences of the Lord’s goodness and faithfulness. This son had been unexpectedly given; and had not He who bestowed the precious gift a right to recall His own? Then faith repeated the promise, ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called’ (Genesis 21:12)—a seed numberless as the grains of sand upon the shore. Isaac was the child of a miracle, and could not the power that gave him life restore it? Looking beyond that which was seen, Abraham grasped the divine word, ‘accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead’ (Hebrews 11:19).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 151, 152.

c. How did this truth typify the true promised seed, Jesus Christ? Acts 3:25, 26; 1 Peter 1:18–21.

Note: “He [the Son of God] rose from the grave and proclaimed over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ (John 11:25). One equal with God passed through death in our behalf. He tasted death for every man, that through Him every man might be a partaker of eternal life.” *In Heavenly Places*, 13.

Thursday

5 INHERITANCE OF THE PROMISED SEED

a. What inheritance did God promise to Abraham and his seed? Genesis 17:7, 8; Psalm 105:6–11. How does this symbolize the inheritance of Christ? Daniel 7:13, 14, 18; Matthew 25:31–34.

Note: “Language fails to express the value of the immortal inheritance. The glory, riches, and honor offered by the Son of God are of such infinite value that it is beyond the power of men or even angels to give any just idea of their worth, their excellence, their magnificence.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 40.

b. How can we have the assurance that God will honor His promises and give His children the Promised Land? Hebrews 6:13–18; John 14:1–3.

Note: “Long have we waited for our Saviour’s return. But nonetheless sure is the promise. Soon we shall be in our promised home. There Jesus will lead us beside the living stream flowing from the throne of God and will explain to us the dark providences through which on this earth He brought us in order to perfect our characters. There we shall behold with undimmed vision the beauties of Eden restored. Casting at the feet of the Redeemer the crowns that He has placed on our heads, and touching our golden harps, we shall fill all heaven with praise to Him that sitteth on the throne.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 254.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How did God reveal to Abraham the Gospel?
- 2 What miracle declares Christ to be of divine origin?
- 3 How does the experience of Abraham and Isaac reveal the depths of the sacrifice God made for humankind?
- 4 Why is the resurrection so important to the believer?
- 5 What should we never forget as we await the land of inheritance?

April 22 – 28

Abraham's Two Sons

Key Text

“For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman” (Galatians 4:22).

Study Help: *Our High Calling*, 119–122, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 370–373.

Introduction

“Faith is not a happy flight of feeling; it is simply taking God at His word—believing that He will fulfill His promises because He said He would.” *Our High Calling*, 119.

Sunday

I THE SON OF PROMISE

- a. Why is Isaac called the son of promise? Genesis 15:2, 3; 17:15, 16; 18:9–14 (compare with Galatians 4:22, 23, 27, 28).

- b. How did Abraham and Sarah try to help the Lord fulfill His promise of a son? Genesis 16:1–4.

Note: “Abraham had accepted without question the promise of a son, but he did not wait for God to fulfill His word in His own time and way. A delay was permitted, to test his faith in the power of God; but he failed to endure the trial. Thinking it impossible that a child should be given her in her old age, Sarah suggested, as a plan by which the divine purpose might be fulfilled, that one of her handmaidens should be taken by Abraham as a secondary wife. Polygamy had become so widespread that it had ceased to be regarded as a sin, but it was no less a violation of the law of God, and was fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation. Abraham’s marriage with Hagar resulted in evil, not only to his own household, but to future generations.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 145.

Monday

2 A SON OF BONDAGE

- a. How did God react as Abraham presented Ishmael as the son of promise? Genesis 17:15–21.

Note: “When Abraham was nearly one hundred years old, the promise of a son was repeated to him, with the assurance that the future heir should be the child of Sarah. But Abraham did not yet understand the promise. His mind at once turned to Ishmael, clinging to the belief that through him God’s gracious purposes were to be accomplished. In his affection for his son he exclaimed, ‘O that Ishmael might live before Thee!’ Again the promise was given, in words that could not be mistaken: ‘Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him’ (Genesis 17:18, 19).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 146.

- b. Why did God refuse to accept Ishmael as the promised seed? Galatians 4:22, 23, 30; Romans 14:23, *last part*.

Note: “The lack of faith on the part of Abraham and Sarah had resulted in the birth of Ishmael, the mingling of the righteous seed with the ungodly. The father’s influence upon his son was counteracted by that of the mother’s idolatrous kindred and by Ishmael’s connection with heathen wives.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 174.

- c. What essential truth would Abraham have missed if God had accepted Ishmael as the promised seed? Romans 4:1–5, 21, 22.

Note: “The reward is not of works, lest any man should boast; but it is all of grace.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 401.

“When we individually rest upon Christ, with full assurance of faith, trusting alone to the efficacy of His blood to cleanse from all sin, we shall have peace in believing that what God has promised He is able to perform.” *Selected Messages*, Book 3, 181.

“[Philippians 4:4–7 quoted.] ... The promise itself is of no value unless I fully believe that He that has made the promise is abundantly able to fulfill, and infinite in power to do all that He has said.” *This Day With God*, 156.

Tuesday

3 CHILDREN OF BONDAGE

- a. Explain which class of people Ishmael and his mother Hagar spiritually represent, and why. Genesis 16:4–6; Galatians 4:22, 23.

- b. Why does the apostle Paul describe the Jews living in Jerusalem in his day as bond servants, like Hagar and Ishmael? John 8:31–36; Romans 9:6–8.

Note: “Every soul that refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another power. He is not his own. He may talk of freedom, but he is in the most abject slavery. He is not allowed to see the beauty of truth, for his mind is under the control of Satan. While he flatters himself that he is following the dictates of his own judgment, he obeys the will of the prince of darkness. Christ came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul.” *The Desire of Ages*, 466.

“God has done so much to make it possible for us to be free in Christ, free from the slavery of wrong habits and evil inclinations. Dear young friends, will you not strive to be free in Christ?” *Our High Calling*, 29.

- c. In whom and in what did the Jews of the flesh (the literal descendants of Abraham) place their confidence in receiving the blessing of God? John 8:37–40; Philippians 3:3–9; Galatians 6:12, 13.

Note: “The Jews claimed to have descended from Abraham; but by failing to do the works of Abraham, they proved that they were not his true children. Only those who prove themselves to be spiritually in harmony with Abraham by obeying the voice of God, are reckoned as of true descent.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 268.

“Paul says that as ‘touching the righteousness which is in the law’—as far as outward acts were concerned—he was ‘blameless’ (Philippians 3:6); but when the spiritual character of the law was discerned, he saw himself a sinner. Judged by the letter of the law as men apply it to the outward life, he had abstained from sin; but when he looked into the depths of its holy precepts, and saw himself as God saw him, he bowed in humiliation and confessed his guilt.” *Steps to Christ*, 29, 30.

Wednesday

4 AN ALLEGORY

- a. When we trust in our own works for acceptance with God, rather than in Christ, what covenant are we falling under? Galatians 4:21–25; 3:10; 2 Corinthians 3:14, 15.

Note: “The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient’ (Exodus 24:7); ... yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God

as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant. ...

“The ‘new covenant’ was established upon ‘better promises’—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God’s law. ...

“The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth ‘the fruits of the Spirit’ (Galatians 5:22). Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371, 372.

- b. Why is it evident that a person cannot make himself or herself righteous before God by keeping the law? Galatians 2:21; 3:11, 12.

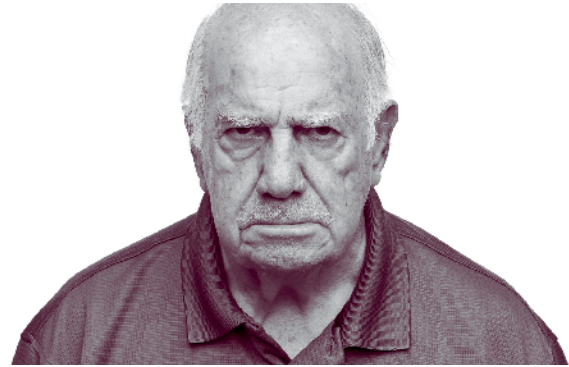
Note: “Were it not for Christ’s atoning sacrifice, there would be nothing in us in which God could delight. All the natural goodness of man is worthless in God’s sight. He does not take pleasure in any man who retains his old nature, and is not so renewed in knowledge and grace that he is a new man in Christ.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 66.

Thursday

5 BROTHERLY PERSECUTION

- a. What event does the apostle Paul use to illustrate the Jewish persecution of the Christian church? Galatians 4:28, 29; Genesis 21:6–10.

- b. Why will the children of the spirit always be persecuted by the children of the flesh? John 15:17–22; John 3:19, 20; Galatians 5:17, *first part*.



The brighter the heavenly light that is reflected from the character of God’s faithful servants, the more clearly the sins of the ungodly are revealed, and the more determined will be their efforts to destroy those who disturb their peace.

Note: “Cain hated and killed his brother, not for any wrong that Abel had done, but ‘because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous’ (1 John 3:12). ... Abel’s life of obedience and unswerving faith was to Cain a perpetual reproof. ... The brighter the heavenly light that is reflected from the character of God’s faithful servants, the more clearly the sins of the ungodly are revealed, and the more determined will be their efforts to destroy those who disturb their peace.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 74.

“The early Christians were indeed a peculiar people. Their blameless deportment and unswerving faith were a continual reproof that disturbed the sinner’s peace. Though few in numbers, without wealth, position, or honorary titles, they were a terror to evildoers wherever their character and doctrines were known. ... It was for the same reason that the Jews rejected and crucified the Saviour—because the purity and holiness of His character was a constant rebuke to their selfishness and corruption. From the days of Christ until now His faithful disciples have excited the hatred and opposition of those who love and follow the ways of sin.” *The Great Controversy*, 46.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How only can God’s promises be fulfilled?
- 2 Why will God never accept the works of the flesh as righteousness?
- 3 Why can we never place trust in our heritage, our flesh, or our works?
- 4 Why is it impossible to be justified by the works of the law?
- 5 Describe the type of warfare Christians must expect because of their faith.

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Tasty Yellow Turmeric



By Judy Hallingstad

I have never been to India but I have been to Indian restaurants here in this country. The food is really tasty. In India, as well as the restaurants here, they use that yellow seasoning which gives Indian food its distinctive flavor. Turmeric is a member of the ginger family and contains many compounds, but the family of compounds thought to be most responsible for turmeric's medicinal effects are the *curcuminoids*, which are also responsible for giving turmeric its bright yellow color. The most important—and the most studied of the curcuminoids—is curcumin.

Turmeric Known for Alleviating Arthritis and Joint Inflammation

"Turmeric is part of the healing systems of India, China, and the Polynesian Islands, and occupies a place of distinction in both Ayurvedic and Chinese medicine. One reason is its phenomenal anti-inflammatory properties, which are believed to be due to the presence of curcuminoids. One of turmeric's many traditional uses has been for the treatment of arthritis, because of its ability to lower inflammation. In one study, curcumin was found to be virtually as effective as the anti-inflammatory medication phenylbutazone. It is used in India to relieve arthritis, and can be useful for muscle pains as well as joint inflammation and even carpal tunnel syndrome. ...

"There are at least thirty published studies indicating that curcumin has an antitumor effect (either reducing the number or size of tumors or the percentage of animals who developed them). Of course these are mostly animal studies, but still that's pretty promising. ... One study, published in 2006 in the medical journal *Oncogene*, showed that curcumin inhibited the growth of human colon cancer cells. While no one is claiming that turmeric cures cancer, there is plenty of reason to believe that it is a really useful adjunct to the diet of everyone concerned with staying healthy.

"Curcumin also has a positive effect on cholesterol, both in rats and in humans, making it a great adjunct to a heart-healthy diet. And it has powerful antioxidant properties as well. ...

Why Your Liver Loves Turmeric

"This ability to fight inflammation and also to serve as an antioxidant makes curcumin, a very liver-friendly food. I like to recommend it for people with various liver ailments, including hepatitis. Though it is not the only thing I would use for serious liver problems, it's definitely part of the arsenal. ... Dr. Mark Stengler, author of *The Natural Physician's Healing Therapies*, also recommends it for hepatitis and says that it is frequently used to lower elevated liver enzymes." *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, by Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., pages 292, 293.

Turmeric is also very easy to use and it has a really pleasing taste and a beautiful color—it tastes good on almost any food you put it on.

Recipe

Delicious Sunflower Seed Mustard

<i>¾ cup raw sunflower seeds</i>	<i>1 tsp. garlic powder</i>
<i>2 tsp. turmeric</i>	<i>1 tsp. salt</i>
<i>2 tsp. onion powder</i>	<i>7/8 cup of water</i>
<i>½ cup fresh squeezed lemon juice</i>	

Blend until smooth. It will thicken as it sets.

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