

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

*Liberty For
All In Jesus*

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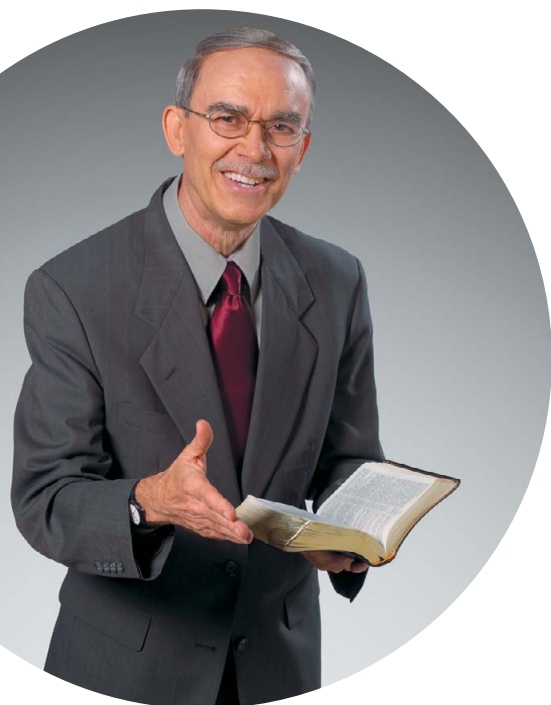
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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Ignorance Can Spell Your Doom

Probation was about to close for the Jewish nation. BUT THEY DID NOT KNOW IT. Even Jesus' disciples did not know it. But, on His triumphant entry into Jerusalem just days before the crucifixion, Jesus wept (see Luke 19:41) and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" Then came a pause, for the Saviour was reluctant to pronounce the irrevocable sentence—"but now they are hid from thine eyes" (verse 42). It was with a burst of agony that Christ spoke these words." *The Signs of the Times*, July 26, 1899.

"For a few moments the Son of God stands upon Mount Olivet, expressing the intense yearning of His soul that Jerusalem might repent in the last few moments before the westering sun shall sink behind the hill. That day the Jews as a nation would end their probation. ... But now the irrevocable sentence is spoken, because 'she knew not the time of her visitation.'" Ibid., February 27, 1896.

"The course taken by the hardhearted and impenitent inhabitants of the

doomed city is similar to the attitude of churches and individuals toward Christ at the present time. They neglect His requirements and despise His forbearance. There is a form of godliness, there is ceremonial worship, there are complimentary prayers, but the real power is wanting. The heart is not softened by grace, but is cold and unimpressible. Many, like the Jews, are blinded by unbelief and know not the time of their visitation." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 258.

"When the Saviour saw in the Jewish people a nation divorced from God, He saw also a professed Christian Church united to the world and the papacy. ... He is weeping over and pleading with sinners in these last moments of time. ... Will He be obliged to say to those who have had great light and knowledge, as He said to the Jews, 'If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes?'" *The Review and Herald*, October 8, 1901.

Because you "do not know ..." (Revelation 3:17 NKJV).

HISTORIC

LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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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 (2 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. This magazine is designed to help believers 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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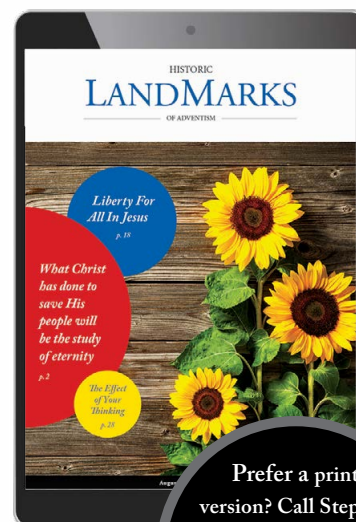
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The Atonement

By John J. Grosboll

For many years the Protestant churches accused the Seventh-day Adventist Church of being a cult because they did not believe, as did the Protestants, that the atonement was completed at the cross. Adventists believe that the Day of Atonement began on October 22, 1844.

There were leading Adventist ministers in the 1950s who wanted to remove the cult status. These ministers talked to the evangelicals of the Martin-Barnhouse conferences in the middle '50s saying that Adventists did believe that the atonement was finished at the cross and it is just the benefits of that sacrifice that are now being administered. The book, *Questions on Doctrine*, was written to prove this. I have personally heard Elder R. A. Anderson, one of the principle persons involved, explain explicitly and publicly the reason for this book—to lose the cult status.

The word *atonement* in inspired writings means more than one thing. It is used in at least two or three different ways, which is part of the reason for the

controversy and has at least two meanings. The first is the sacrifice that was necessary, not only to forgive the sinner, but to take away or remove his sins.

Ellen White uses the word *atonement* in that way in *The Review and Herald*, September 24, 1901. She wrote, "... when the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son, He bowed before it in recognition of its perfection. 'It is enough,' He said. 'The atonement is complete.'"

Atonement in that sentence is used in regard to the atonement sacrifice which was complete. The book of Hebrews is very clear that that sacrifice will never have to be made again. Under the old covenant many sacrifices were offered, but under the new covenant there was one atonement sacrifice for all.

In *The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899, it states: "When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people." It was perfect, complete and never need be repeated, throughout all eternal ages.

The second meaning of the word *atonement* is to cleanse or remove from

a person, or a group of people, both the guilt and the power of sin. We call it the blotting out of sin that began when Jesus moved from the Holy Place to the Most Holy on October 22, 1844.

Using the word *atonement* in that sense, Ellen White wrote in “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol.

7, 481: “Today He [Christ] is making an atonement for us before the Father.”

“We are now living in the great day of atonement.” *The Great Controversy*, 489. We have been living in the antitypical Day of Atonement since October 22, 1844, when the investigative judgment began. The investigative judgment and the atonement, or blotting out of sins, are two separate things. The atonement occurs at the end of the Day of Atonement when the sins will be blotted out. In the typical service, the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place, dipped his finger in the blood and sprinkled it seven times on the mercy seat which represented the blotting out of sin from God’s people. Then the high priest took those sins upon himself, went out, and confessed them over the head of the scapegoat, which was then separated from the children of God forever. (See Leviticus 16.)

Ellen White states in *The Signs of the Times*, March 14, 1878: “Those only who acknowledge the binding claim of the moral law can explain the nature of the atonement.”

We are told: “The whole world needs to be instructed in the oracles of God, to understand the object

of the atonement, the at-one-ment, with God. The object of this atonement

was that the divine law and government might be maintained.”

The Signs of the Times, March 20, 1901.

Since the fall,

Satan has attacked

the law of God and His

government. The atonement was to maintain the authority of the divine law and God’s government.

Let us review some descriptive words used throughout the Spirit of Prophecy concerning God’s law so we can better understand the atonement.

The law of God is eternal – it has no beginning and no ending. It did not begin at Mount Sinai as some of our Christian friends teach. It was in existence before the creation of the world and before the uprising in heaven that caused the expulsion of Satan and his angels. Nothing that has been created, neither angels nor man, can be eternal because all have had a beginning.

The law of God is immutable – *Immutable* means *something that you cannot change*. It is no longer a commonly used word.

“The law of God stands immutable, eternal as His throne.

“There is no such thing as weakening or strengthening the law of Jehovah. As it has always been, so it is. It cannot be repealed or changed in one principle. It is eternal, immutable as God Himself.” *The Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1901.

The law of God is imperishable –

It can never pass away. “All the opposition cannot, for one moment, drag down that holy law. It is eternal, imperishable as the throne of God.” *The Review and Herald*, May 25, 1876. Any attempt to destroy the law is an attempt to destroy the throne of God.

God’s law is irrevocable – When a person makes out a revocable trust, he can change it anytime before he dies. An irrevocable trust means it cannot be changed and there are strict state laws governing it.

It is indestructible – No matter what you do, you can’t destroy it. “The law of God maintains its binding claims, notwithstanding the fact that men claim to have refuted every argument in its favor. The truth still lives; the light still shines; it cannot be put out. In the Dark Ages the Bible was set aside; it was burned. Men tried to banish it from the earth; but how signally they failed! The law of God may be ignored, despised, rejected, trampled upon, but it is still the great standard of righteousness, immutable and indestructible. It is eternal.” *The Review and Herald*, May 28, 1901.

“... these rejecters of truth cannot always remain deaf to the claims of God’s law, for it is eternal and irrevocable.” *The Review and Herald*, May 18, 1897. It is the standard of righteousness.

The law of God is complete – “The law of Jehovah was always holy, just, and good, and complete in itself.” *The Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1901.

The law of God is perfect – See Psalm 19. “The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether” (verse 9 KJV).

God’s law is the foundation of His government – “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face” (Psalm 89:14).

God’s law is the standard of righteousness – David said, “All Your commandments are righteousness” (Psalm 119:172).

When a person understands the principles and holiness of the law, he will be prepared intellectually to begin to understand something about the atonement sacrifice that was required to save people who had broken that law.

We have previously covered the purpose of the atonement. The object of the atonement was to preserve the divine law and the divine government. Here we will see the only way that an atonement could be provided.

Remember this law is eternal and is as sacred as God Himself. There has never been a time when it didn't exist. The only one able to make an atonement for such a law that had been broken would be somebody who was sinless and perfectly spotless.

"Christ could not have done this work had He not been personally spotless. Only One who was Himself perfection could be at once the sin bearer and the sin pardoner. ... from the time that He was born an infant in Bethlehem till He hung on the cross of Calvary, and cried in a voice that shook the universe, 'It is finished,' the Saviour was pure and spotless." "Ellen G. White

Comments," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 461.

When Jesus went to the cross, He did not have one murmuring thought.

The people conducting the trial, the torture and the crucifixion of Jesus were all stirred up by the devil.

Throughout His life, Jesus had never lost patience once while the devil kept trying to defeat the plan of

salvation, right up until the time He died. While hanging on the cross some called out to Him, "If you are the Son of God, come down now." It was within His

power that He could, but had He done that, it would have broken up the plan of salvation. It was the same in the wilderness of temptation when Jesus had fasted for 40 days. If the devil had succeeded to get Him to throw Himself down from the temple, the plan of salvation would have been over and we would be eternally lost.

From the time Jesus was born in Bethlehem until He died on the cross, He was perfectly sinless and spotless, otherwise His sacrifice would not have atoned for our sins. You see, the law of God is perfect. To atone for a law like that takes a perfect person.

Only One who was of superior value to Adam as he existed in paradise could make an atonement for a broken law like this.

Only One who was divine could make an atonement for this broken law. "God himself became man, and bore all the wrath that sin had provoked. This problem, How could God be just and yet the justifier of sinners? baffled all finite intelligence." *The Youth's Instructor*, August 31, 1887.

Nobody in the universe other than the Godhead could answer that question. How could God be just and also justify the sinner? "A divine person alone could mediate between God and man." Ibid. The arch-angel of heaven could not do it. Only a divine person, One who possessed the before-mentioned qualifications could do it. Jesus volunteered to be that One.

Let's just think that through for a moment. It would not be just for an innocent person to pay the price of the guilty if he was *forced* to do it. That wouldn't be just and there would be no atonement in that. The only way there could be any atonement was if Jesus Christ volunteered to do it. He was not pushed into doing it. He was not pressed into doing it. He willingly offered Himself.

Ellen White talks about the red heifer, which symbolized Christ and was to be an animal upon whom had never been a yoke. Ellen White explains it this way: "It must be without spot or blemish, and one that had never borne a yoke. Here, again, Christ was typified. The Son of God came voluntarily to accomplish the work of atonement. There was no obligatory yoke upon Him, for He

“

When a person understands the principles and holiness of the law, he can start to understand the atonement sacrifice.



If we understood how great Jesus really is, we would be so astonished at the plan of salvation that we would walk in awe the rest of our lives.

was independent and above all law.”

Testimonies, vol. 4, 120.

Only One who was equal with God could do this. “The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but One who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression.”

The Signs of the Times, November 4, 1908.

Only Jesus Christ is equal with God. He is the only Person who could make an atonement. Just before He was crucified Jesus said to His disciples, “No man comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6, literal translation).

Jesus said, “nor does anyone know the Father except the Son” (Matthew 11:27, *last part*). He told the Jews that if they knew the Father they would know Him whom the Father had sent. All who claim to worship God that do not know His Son are worshiping another God.

Only the One who had created man could make atonement for him. Only the One who was independent and above all law could make atonement for man. Only One who had divine

perfection of character could make atonement for man.

To come to the realization that a Being like that would stoop to such a depth to save a wretch such as I makes one feel like a worm. But that is how much God loves us. He withheld nothing, even His only beloved Son, so man could be saved out of his wretchedness.

We often talk of looking forward to heaven to be reunited with our loved ones who have passed, but the main reason to be in heaven is to be with Jesus, the One who made all of this possible by His sacrificial love and concern over His lost creation and tell Him how we appreciate what He has done for us.

Throughout eternity the saints will marvel at the love and sacrifice of our Saviour. The love of Christ, the apostle Paul said, is beyond knowledge. There is nobody who can explain it, for it is beyond anything that can be explained. But once you have experience it, you will want nothing else.

After the apostle Paul experienced it, he didn’t want anything else. He said that he had lost everything else because

of it and counted that rubbish in comparison to the love of Christ. If he could just know Jesus, that was enough.

When I started studying about the atonement, I was so aghast. I said, Lord, I cannot comprehend this. We do not understand how great Jesus is. If we did, we would be so astonished at the plan of salvation that we would walk in awe the rest of our lives.

The Christian religion is true. The evidence is overwhelming. It is historical. It is a fact. One day soon we are going to face our Creator. The goal of my life is just to be ready for that day. I pray that the Lord will help us to understand the plan of salvation, in a practical way, and to realize that it was done for each one of us individually.

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

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Sons and Daughters of Men

By John R. Pearson

8

is the number of people who were saved from the millions to start a new civilization.

As we read the 31st Psalm, many varied thoughts come to mind—everything from the persecution and crucifixion of Jesus to the persecution of God’s faithful that will occur in the last days, to the salvation and safety that God promises to His faithful children.

Clearly, it would be too voluminous to cover each of those topics in a single article. Instead, this article will concentrate on only three words in this Psalm: “sons of men” in verse 19.

“Oh, how great is Your goodness,
Which You have laid up for those
who fear You,
Which You have prepared for those
who trust in You
In the presence of the sons of men”
(Psalm 31:19)!

The word that is translated “sons” occurs almost 5000 times in the OT, as *son* or *sons* approximately 3500 times; as *children* about 1500 times. It is also translated in several other ways, depending on the context of its use.

In this analysis, we will look at its broader use as either sons, daughters, or children.

A variant of the phrase *sons of men* occurs first in Scripture in Genesis 6.

“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the **sons of God** saw the **daughters of men**, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’ There were giants (*bullies or tyrants*) on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the **sons of God** came in to the **daughters of men** and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown” (Genesis 6:1–4).

The word for *sons* in this text is the same word that is used in Psalm 31:19. The word for *daughters* is derived from the feminine form of that same Hebrew word. In the plural, either could be translated *children*.

It is worth noting that even before the flood, two character types had developed and were identified either as sons of God or sons of men. Other terms were applied later to denote the same two groups: sons of righteousness or sons of unrighteousness and similar terms.

The word translated *renown* in Genesis 6:4 is the same word that is used in Genesis 11:4 referring to those who determined to build themselves a city and a tower on the plain of Shinar whose top was in the heavens to “make a name” for themselves—to become men of renown.

“And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth’” (Genesis 11:4).

It is also the same word used for those who chose to stand with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram when they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. In Numbers 16:2, they are called “men of renown,” men who were well known, men who had made a name for themselves.

“Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown” (Numbers 16:1, 2).

What were these “men of renown,” these sons of men, like? Let’s refer back to Genesis 6:5–7:

“Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.’”

We know the story of Noah and his family—how only eight persons were



To repopulate the desolate earth, which the Flood had so lately swept from its moral corruption, God had preserved but one family, the household of Noah.

saved from the millions, perhaps even a billion, who inhabited the earth at that time.

We can see that these men of renown, these sons—and daughters—of men, were very unrighteous—so much so that God saw that it was necessary to destroy all but eight. Unfortunately, there remained in at least one of those eight a vestige, a trace, of unrighteousness.

“To repopulate the desolate earth, which the Flood had so lately swept from its moral corruption, God had preserved but one family, the household of Noah, to whom He had declared, ‘Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation’ (Genesis 7:1). Yet in the three sons of Noah was speedily developed the same great distinction seen in the world before the Flood. In Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who were to be the founders of the human race, was foreshadowed the character of their posterity.

“Noah, speaking by divine inspiration, foretold the history of the three great races to spring from these fathers of mankind. Tracing the descendants of Ham, through the son rather than the

father, he declared, ‘Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.’ The unnatural crime of Ham [see Genesis 9:21–29] declared that filial reverence [*respect that a son has toward his father*] had long before been cast from his soul, and it revealed the impiety and vileness of his character. These evil characteristics were perpetuated in Canaan and his posterity, whose continued guilt called upon them the judgments of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 117.

What was the result of the unrighteousness of the “founders of the human race”—Ham specifically?

“For a time the descendants of Noah continued to dwell among the mountains where the ark had rested. As their numbers increased, apostasy soon led to division. Those who desired to forget their Creator and to cast off the restraint of His law felt a constant annoyance from the teaching and example of their God-fearing associates, and after a time they decided to separate from the worshipers of God. Accordingly they journeyed to the plain of Shinar, on the banks of the river Euphrates.” *Ibid.*, 118.

The scriptural description of this situation is given in Genesis 11:1–5:

“Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’ But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which **the sons of men** had built.”

This effort was undertaken by Nimrod, the son of Canaan and the grandson of Ham. Their reasoning to separate from the descendants of Shem and Japheth reveals much about their character and is an indication

of the ultimate fate of mankind as the meeting of time and eternity draws closer and closer. There will be those who leave the path of truth and righteousness (if they were ever even on it) and separate from those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

It was here on the plain of Shinar that the many and varied nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples got their start. This story continues in Genesis 11, beginning with verse 6.

“And the LORD said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.’ So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the

language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11:6–9).

We can see from this that those who were scattered abroad over the face of all the earth were descendants of Ham through Canaan. Thus we might conclude that much of the earth was populated by those who did not fear and reverence the God of creation.

“On the other hand, how richly rewarded was Shem’s respect for his father; and what an illustrious line of holy men appears in his posterity! ‘The Lord knoweth the days of the upright,’ and his seed is blessed’ (Psalm 37:18, 26). ‘Know therefore that the Lord thy God He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations’ (Deuteronomy 7:9).” Op. cit., 118.

Out of this illustrious line of holy men came David. By this time, the children of God and the children of men were dispersed throughout what we call the Middle East. Conflicts arose between these two groups which continue to this very day.

Even though those who abandoned worship of the true God of heaven turned to lives of sin, wickedness, and idolatry, God still used them—but in a rather unusual way. A warning of such an instance is given in 2 Samuel 7, where God is instructing Nathan to tell David to settle down and build Him a tabernacle. Included in the instructions that God tells Nathan to pass on to David are both uplifting encouragement for the obedient and a straightforward warning against apostasy.

“Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. ‘When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever’” (2 Samuel 7:10–13).

“

A wonderful future lies ahead for those who are determined to become sons of God.



For a time the descendants of Noah continued to dwell among the mountains where the ark had rested. The area of mount Ararat is located in today's Turkey.

Now notice what God says in verse 14: “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. **If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.** But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.’ According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”

It is interesting to note in these verses the different terms Scripture uses for sons of God and sons of men: “My people Israel” and “sons of wickedness,” respectively.

There are many other instances in Scripture where God used the sons of men to chastise the children of God because of their apostasy. The initial captivity of the Israelites by the Assyrians is probably the best known example. Their continued harassment by the Philistines is another.

An interesting and telling bit of the character of the sons of men is given in Psalm 4:2: “How long, O you sons of men, Will you turn My glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood?”

Two distinct characteristics are given here of the sons of men. They “love worthlessness” and “seek falsehood.”

The sons of men, according to Psalm 4:2, not only love vane, empty, worthless pursuits, but they seek out lies. In a broad sense, is this not a description of the broad-road churches of today? They would be offended if you openly accused them of loving worthlessness and seeking falsehood, but isn’t that what they are doing with their Sunday worship and what Inspiration calls “the senseless mummary” of the mass?

“The Scriptural ordinance of the Lord’s Supper had been supplanted by the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass. Papal priests pretended, by their senseless mummary, to convert the simple bread and wine into the actual ‘body and blood of Christ’ (1 Corinthians 10:16). ... With blasphemous presumption, they openly claimed the power of creating God, the Creator of all things. Christians were required, on pain of death, to avow their faith in this horrible, Heaven-insulting heresy,” this love of worthlessness and seeking of falsehood. *The Great Controversy*, 59.

Solomon had a great deal to say about the vanity—the worthlessness, the emptiness—of the pursuits of the

sons of men. Although those he wrote about were by birth sons of God, they, too—like the ones his father had written about earlier, had in character become sons of men.

“I said in my heart, ‘Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure’; but surely, this also was vanity. I said of laughter—‘Madness!’; and of mirth, ‘What does it accomplish?’ I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for **the sons of men** to do under heaven all the days of their lives. I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove. I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of **the sons of men**, and musical instruments of all kinds” (Ecclesiastes 2:1–8).

As we read these thoughts of Solomon, it becomes clear why he ended his words of wisdom as he did. First let's look at a couple of other bits of his wisdom.

"Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, iniquity was there. I said in my heart, 'God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.' I said in my heart, 'Concerning the condition of **the sons of men**, God tests them, that they may see that they themselves are like animals.' For what happens to **the sons of men** also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 3:16–19).

The word that is translated in verse 18 as *tests* in the New King James is translated *manifests* in the King James. Strong's definition indicates that the original Hebrew word implies that God reveals them to themselves. He puts men in situations to reveal to themselves their true character.

The wise man continues to lament the condition of the sons of men in Ecclesiastes 8:11:

"Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of **the sons of men** is fully set in them to do evil."

If sentence against an evil work were speedily executed, if we were made to realize immediately the consequences of evil actions by the swift execution of pun-

ishment, perhaps the evil actions that have become so widespread among the sons of men today would diminish significantly.

It would be tempting as we read through the book of Ecclesiastes to conclude that Solomon had become a bitter old man. However, in closing his polemic on the vanity of life and the condition of the sons of men, Solomon reaches this grand conclusion:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all [or, as the KJV says, "this is the whole duty of man"]. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14).

As we approach the meeting of time and eternity, it becomes clear when we engage in a serious study of God's word and His will for us

that we must understand the differentiating aspects of the character of the two classes of people who will exist when that time comes. We can only gain that understanding by digging deeply into God's word to determine whether our

behavior identifies us as a child of God or a child of man.

The outcome of those who fail to abandon the habits of the sons of men and acquire the character of the sons of God is clearly outlined in Psalm 21:8–10:

"Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger;

the LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

Their offspring You shall destroy from the earth, and their descendants from among the sons of men."

However, a wonderful future lies ahead for those who are determined to become sons of God. Paul clearly understood that when he stated in Galatians 4:4–7, "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

John the revelator also understood the significance of being children of God.

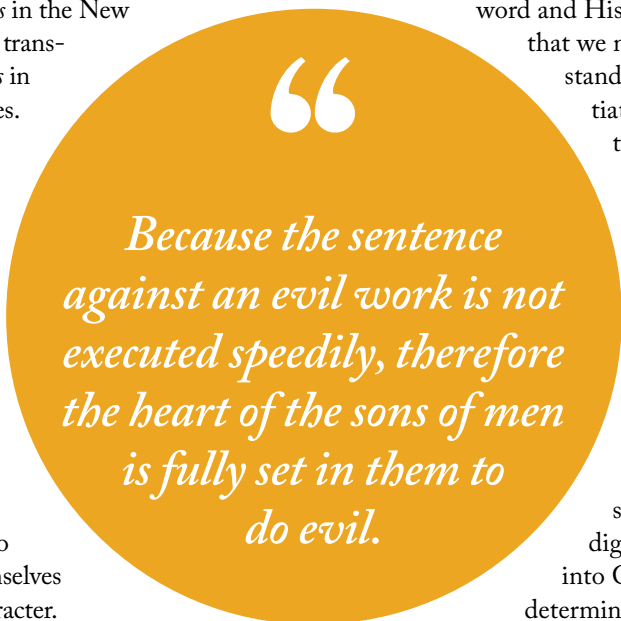
"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God, [and we are, (margin)]! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:1, 2).

Then in verse 3, we are told what He is and what we are to become as we overcome those character traits that identify us as sons of men and transition by His grace into sons of God: "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

May the Lord guide us as we seek to become His true children. [All emphasis added.]

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

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I Was Hungry

By Brenda Douay

Spiritual Lessons from Matthew 25:31-33, 41-46, NASB

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. ...

“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

“

Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.

Matthew 25:40





“

Those who had neglected Him in the person of the poor and the suffering, were unconscious of their guilt. Satan had blinded them.

Two parables immediately precede this proclamation: the parable of the ten virgins, and the parable of the three servants who were given different numbers of talents or gifts. It is no accident that these immediately precede Jesus' instruction on the sheep and the goats.

Concerning this passage of Scripture, Ellen White wrote:

“Those on the left hand of Christ, those who had neglected Him in the person of the poor and the suffering, were unconscious of their guilt. Satan had blinded them; they had not perceived what they owed to their brethren. They had been self-absorbed, and cared not for others' needs.” *The Desire of Ages*, 639.

We have an obligation to our brethren.

“To the rich, God has given wealth that they may relieve and comfort His suffering children; but too often they are indifferent to the wants of others. They feel themselves superior to their poor brethren. They do not put themselves in the poor man's place. They do not understand the temptations and struggles of the poor, and mercy dies out of their hearts. In costly dwellings and splendid churches, the rich shut themselves away from the poor; the means that God has given to bless the needy is spent in pampering pride and selfish-

ness. The poor are robbed daily of the education they should have concerning the tender mercies of God; for He has made ample provision that they should be comforted with the necessities of life. They are compelled to feel the poverty that narrows life, and are often tempted to become envious, jealous, and full of evil surmisings. Those who themselves have not endured the pressure of want too often treat the poor in a contemptuous way, and make them feel that they are looked upon as paupers.

“But Christ beholds it all, and He says, It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison. While you were feasting at your bountifully spread table, I was famishing in the hovel or the empty street. While you were at ease in your luxurious home, I had not where to lay My head. While you crowded your wardrobe with rich apparel, I was destitute. While you pursued your pleasures, I languished in prison.” *Ibid.*, 639, 640.

Many are probably saying, “I know all that, AND I give to the poor. I am involved with this or that charity. Or, I give handouts to the homeless.” But if this is our thinking, we may still be among the goats.

Understanding this text in its correct interpretation was one of my struggles in coming to grips with the true understanding of Christianity and what it really meant. We are taught, even within Adventism, that this Scripture

is about the physically poor, sick, blind and naked. We have A.D.R.A. We have Dorcas societies, soup kitchens and clothing banks. All of these serve a good purpose. However, let me paraphrase these paragraphs from *The Desire of Ages* with a spiritual perception and you will see that we get a vastly different view of this passage, and of our duty.

“To the rich in the knowledge of salvation, God has given spiritual wealth that they may relieve and comfort His children, suffering under the curse of sin; but too often they are indifferent to the wants of others. They feel themselves superior in the knowledge of the Scriptures, to their poor brethren who know not the way of salvation. They do not put themselves in the poor man’s place. They do not understand the temptations and struggles of the poor, without the armor of God for protection against the wiles of Satan, and mercy dies out of their hearts as they see these poor ones in their sin. In costly dwellings and splendid churches, with grand theological truths, the rich in their theories of God shut themselves away from the poor in spirit; the means that God has given to bless the needy is spent in pampering their pride of opinion and selfishness with the words of eternal life. The poor are robbed daily of the education they should have concerning the tender mercies of God, His forgiveness of sin, and His power to give victory over sin; for He has made ample provision that they should be comforted with the necessities of life—eternal life. They are compelled to feel the poverty that narrows life, restricting it to the poor and limited substitute for eternal life—the life of this world, and these poor are often tempted to become envious, jealous, and full of evil surmisings towards those whom God has set to be light bearers for His kingdom. Those who themselves have not endured the pressure of want for Bibles, for the



To the rich, God has given wealth that they may relieve and comfort His suffering children; but too often they are indifferent to the wants of others.

riches of salvation, too often treat the poor in a contemptuous way, and make them feel that they are looked upon as paupers in eternal goods.

“But Christ beholds it all, and He says, It was I who was hungry for the bread of life eternal. I was thirsty for the living water. It was I who was a stranger to the Plan of Salvation. It was I who was sick with the leprosy of sin. It was I who was in the prison house, the bondage of Satan. While you were feasting at your bountifully spread table of the eternal truths of the Bible, I was famishing in the hovel or the empty street, without a Bible, without the knowledge of the way to the heavenly mansions. While you were at ease in your luxurious home, contemplating your eternal mansion, I had not where to lay My head, no comfort or peace. While you crowded your wardrobe with rich apparel, knowing of the robe of Christ’s righteousness, I was destitute, spiritually naked and cold. While you pursued your pleasures, I languished in the prison of sin.” *The Desire of Ages*, 639, 640.

And how is it that Christ could say this? Because, He says, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me” (Matthew 25:45 NIV).

Let’s turn again to Inspiration to see just what is our obligation, our duty to

our brethren. “The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time *or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.*” *The Great Controversy*, 488. [Emphasis supplied.]

“The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God’s hand had directed the great advent movement *and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people.*” *Ibid.*, 423. [Emphasis supplied.]

“The work to be carried on by the people of God is declared in the words of Inspiration: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight’ (Mark 1:2, 3). ‘Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. ... He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till

The poor are robbed daily of the education they should have concerning the tender mercies of God; for He has made ample provision that they should be comforted with the necessities of life.



He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law' (Isaiah 42:1-4)." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 64.

Jesus is coming again—SOON! He tells us, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." Can we do it if we do not have a clear understanding of the sanctuary message, of the investigative judgment taking place right now—a judgment before which every individual, whether they know about it or not, has to stand? According to the passages we have just read, we cannot.

"God invites all men to the fullest investigation of the claims of His law. His word is sacred and infinite. The cause of truth is to go forth as a lamp that burneth. Earnest study of the word of God will reveal the truth. Sin and wrong will not be sustained, but the law of God will be vindicated. 'Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house' (verses 5-7). Christians are to seek their light from the word of God and then in faith go forth to give that light to those who sit in darkness." Ibid.

"When Christ came to the world, he found that Satan had almost everything under his own control. Christ announced His mission at Nazareth. He said, 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to teach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord' (Isaiah 61:1, 2). This was His work. He went about doing good, and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. He had come to represent His Father to the world; and love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of His life. His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. This was His work in our world, to elevate humanity by combining divinity with humanity. He took man's nature that He might reach man's wants. With His human arm He encircled the race, and with His divine arm He grasped the throne of the Infinite, and united finite man with the infinite God, and earth with Heaven. Here was man, plunged in degradation, sin, and ruin, and Christ was willing to resign all His glory in order to offer

to man the cup of salvation. Astonishment filled Heaven to see man's indifference, to see man so lacking in appreciation of the things that would make for his peace." *The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1889.

The present truth message for Jesus and His disciples, the message of the angel at the first advent, was a message of peace and good will toward men. But now we see three angels flying in the midst of heaven proclaiming the present truth messages for our time. They are urgent messages of judgment, of consequences, and of protection from the consequences for being found guilty in the judgment.

These messages for our time are food for the hungry, water for the thirsty, freedom to those in bondage, healing for the sin-sick soul, the spiritually blind and naked. It is not some ecumenical, undefined, nebulous gospel of peace. Inspiration gives us ample, explicit and clear instruction.

"I saw the necessity of the messengers, especially, watching and checking all fanaticism wherever they might see it rise. Satan is pressing in on every side, and unless we watch for him, and have our eyes open to his devices and snares, and have on the whole armor of God, the fiery darts of the wicked will hit us. There are many precious truths contained in the word of God, *but it is present truth* that the flock needs now. I have seen the danger of

the messengers running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause.

“But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell.” *Early Writings*, 63. [Emphasis supplied.]

As a church, are we fulfilling the true gospel commission, preaching “this gospel of the kingdom” whose “present truth” message is the Most Holy Place message of the sanctuary

in heaven? Or is our

Lord saying to

us that it was

He who was

hungry and
thirsty.

While
we were
feasting
at our
boun-
tifully
spread
table,

He was
famishing
in a hovel
or empty street.

While we were at
ease in our luxurious
homes, He had not where to lay His

head. While we crowded our wardrobes with rich apparel, He was destitute and while we pursued our own pleasure, He languished in prison in the person of one of His children.

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful

and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot’ (Revelation 3:14, 15 NASB).”

God sends His message of love to us. He sees that unless we repent, He will have to say to us that we sat spiritually rich (in our own eyes), feeling that we have all the truth (we have need of nothing) and yet in our spiritual arrogance, pride and self-satisfaction, left those destitute of the knowledge of His grace—His great, eternal, life-giving present truth messages on the outside, cold, hungry for the truths of salvation, naked without the robe of Christ’s righteousness, in bondage to the yoke of sin, in the prison house of suffering, and eventually eternal death. He sees us, by our actions, saying “peace on earth, and good will to men.”

He will have to say to us “‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me’” (Matthew

25:41 NASB). Oh, “Saddest of

all words that ever fell on mortal ear are those words of doom, ‘I know you not’ (Matthew 25:12).” *Christ’s Object Lessons*. 413.

This is how these words we read earlier of Inspiration can be true. “Those on the left hand of Christ, those who had neglected Him in the person of the poor



and the suffering, were unconscious of their guilt.” We do not recognize that it is our gift, our privilege, and our duty to know, to understand, to live, and to give the “present truth” message of Christ’s work in the Most Holy Place to those languishing in the bondage of sin. We do not really take in the fact that as we sit, complacent, self-satisfied, foolish virgins, having vast opportunity for and knowledge of the truth, but not the burning zeal of the Holy Spirit to share it, that we are Laodicea—we are to face the consequences—“I will spew [vomit forcefully] you out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:16 RSV) and His words, “depart from Me” “I know you not.”

Let us heed the voice of the “True Witness.” He knows our true condition. We may fool ourselves but we cannot fool God. In fact, according to our study of Inspiration, most people will be self-deceived. But the “True Witness” who KNOWS, has told us ahead of time that we may escape those “saddest of all words — ‘I know you not.’” **LM**

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“
*Those who themselves
have not endured the
pressure of want too
often treat the poor in a
contemptuous way.*”

Gideon

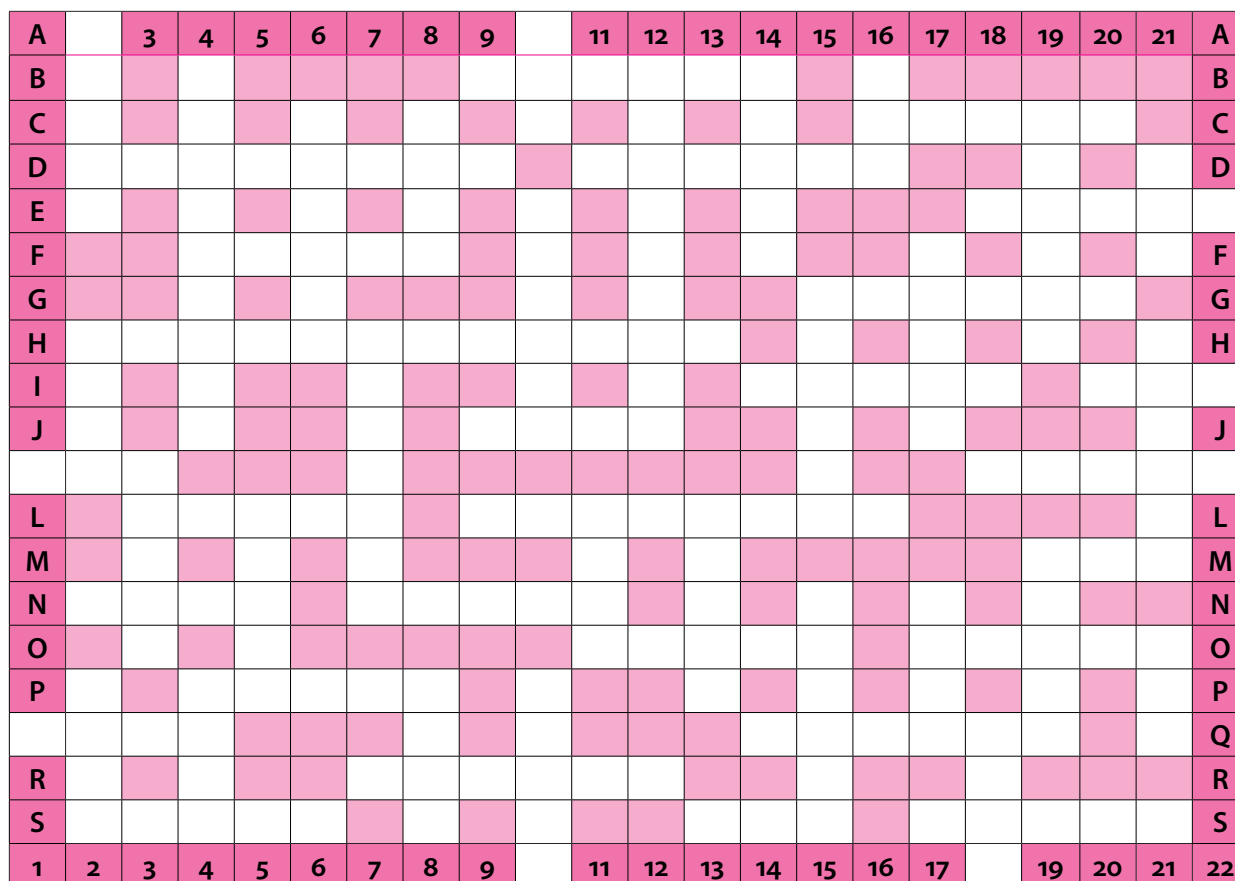
Clues – Judges 6, 7 KJV

Across:

B9 Angel reassured Gideon that he would _____ (two words)	6:23
C16 Gideon and his men cut this down	6:25, 27
D2 Gideon asked why God had done this to them	6:13
D11 Gideon's two signs required this to be wet or dry	6:37-40
E18 Gideon's sign was put on this	6:37
F4 Gideon promised to do this to a tower in Penuel	8:8, 9
G15 God said to separate those who drank with this	7:5
H2 The number of enemies were compared to _____	6:5
I14 Most of Gideon's men did this on their knees	7:6
I20 An angel sat under this	6:11
J9 Israelites returned to idols as soon as Gideon was _____	8:33
K1 First sign: this on fleece only	6:37
K18 To check on his sign Gideon rose up _____	6:38
L3 He built this where he had seen an angel	6:24
L9 The Israelites' enemies destroyed all this	6:3, 4
M19 Angel to Gideon: thou shalt hear what they _____	7:11
N2 God to Gideon: have no _____ of Amorite gods	6:10
N7 Gideon worshipped when he heard this told	7:15
O11 Gideon's second sign was to do this	6:39
O17 At night God told Gideon to do this	7:9
P4 Gideon's men yelled out "The _____ of the Lord ..."	7:20
Q1 Gideon destroyed the altar to this god	6:25
Q14 Gideon took _____ raiment from the Midianite kings	8:26
R7 Gideon's oldest son	8:20
S2 God: I brought you up from _____	6:8
S13 How many servants helped Gideon at night	6:27
S17 What Gideon's men did with their pitchers	7:19

Down:

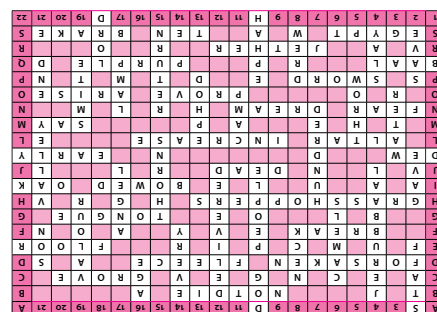
A2 Fire came from rock when this touched the food	6:21
A10 God's test: some will lap like a _____	7:5
B4 Gideon's "nick name"	6:32; 7:1
B12 For their evil the Israelites were _____ to the Midianites	6:1
B14 _____ one of Gideon's men had a trumpet	7:16
B16 Gideon died in a good old _____	8:32
C6 These were numbered as sand by the sea shore	7:12
C8 Ornaments and chains were on these (singular)	8:21, 26
C19 The angel said Gideon was a man of this	6:12
D21 They wanted this _____ of Joash to kill him	6:30
E10 God to Gideon: the _____ with you are too many	7:2
F17 He told Gideon to pour out the broth he'd made	6:20
G15 These were used to teach a lesson	8:7, 16
H2 God: I _____ you the land of your oppressors	6:9
H7 God needed only three _____ men	7:7



H21 All the enemies pitched their tents in a _____
 K3 God to Gideon: take the men to the _____ for a test
 L5 God to Gideon: _____ down your father's altar
 L11 Gideon and his men were all around this
 L13 This became a snare to Gideon
 M19 God assured Gideon he would _____ the Midianites
 N15 God to Gideon: let anyone afraid do this
 N17 Gideon's men held these in their left hand (singular)
 O21 This part of the angel's staff touched the food
 P2 God assured Gideon he would do this to Israel
 P4 Gideon to two kings: if.....I would not _____ you
 P8 Gideon's young son _____ not his sword
 P10 How much flour did Gideon use for the angel?
 Q18 Gideon after his success: _____ will rule over you

Answer Key:

6:33
 7:4, 5
 6:25
 7:21
 8:27
 6:16
 7:3
 7:20
 6:21
 6:14
 8:19
 8:20
 6:19
 8:23



Liberty for All in Jesus

By John J. Grosboll

“

*The first time
animal food
was allowed
by divine
permission
to the human
race was
after the
flood.*

In the writings of the Decalogue by Moses you will find much instruction as to the expected behavior and diet of God’s chosen people—the children of Israel. The question remains, Is a Christian today under moral obligation concerning how he uses his body, or did the Christian religion do away with all the health laws written by Moses?

In the first Christian council held by the Christian church recorded in Acts 15, we find a record of the problems that the apostles were facing. Many people from all over the world were accepting the doctrines of Christianity, both Jews and Gentiles, but between them there were what seemed to be insurmountable barriers. Among the Gentiles it was the custom to eat the flesh of animals that had been strangled. However, the Jews had been divinely instructed in regard to the food that they used, and they had been told not to eat blood. In fact, throughout the Old Testament there is no place where God ever permitted the use of blood by His people for food.

The first time animal food was allowed by divine permission to the

human race was after the flood. Genesis 9:4 reads, “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”

This instruction was repeated by Moses several times. He said, “This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings; you shall eat neither fat nor blood” (Leviticus 3:17). Emphatically, he said (this time adding a consequence), “You shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, whether of bird or beast. Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people” (Leviticus 7:26, 27).

The Jews considered this issue critical and never ate blood. The Gentiles not only ate it in the meat, but they often caught the blood and drank it, which caused great distress to the Jews. Their differing dietary habits made it impossible for the two groups to eat together.

The Gentiles also bought food that had been offered to idols. The apostle Paul makes it very clear that whether the food has been offered to idols really does not matter, because an idol does not know anything. However, by eating these foods it could give the impression

of condoning idolatry, which is strictly prohibited in both the Old and New Testaments. Where the Jews were very strict in this, the Gentiles who had come out of idolatry didn't think that much about eating this food.

Many Greeks had also become Christians. The Greek nation was an extremely licentious nation. The Greek converts understood that it was a crime to steal another man's wife but there were some who continued to practice fornication, which the Jews knew was forbidden. This difference of understanding caused another barrier between the Jewish and Gentile Christians.

There were many Jews who believed that if the Gentiles were really sincere about accepting Christianity, they should be circumcised and keep all of the ceremonies commanded by Moses. So the apostles came together to discuss this question. The Bible says, "Peter rose up and said to them: 'Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith'" (Acts 15:7-9).

The blood of Jesus is able to cleanse from all uncleanness. Whatever race, whether you are Jew or Gentile, whatever skin color or nationality you are, if you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, your heart can be purified by faith. Peter continues, "Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they" (verses 10, 11).

Peter recounted the vision he had been given in Acts 10 and how he had been sent to preach the gospel to Cornelius and his house. He explained that God was no respecter of persons



“

You shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, whether of bird or beast. Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.

Leviticus 7:26, 27

and He accepted every person who feared Him and worked righteousness from any nationality. That is still true today, "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 11:34 KJV). He does not practice partiality. If you surrender your life to Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you will be accepted and you will receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will purify your heart and give you the power to live a new life. No one is to be regarded inferior to someone else because the blood of Jesus is capable of cleansing from all uncleanness.

Paul wrote, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Whether male or female, slave or free, Jew or Gentile, there is no difference with God who does not practice partiality; He is no respecter of persons.

In Galatians 5:1, 2 the apostle Paul says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing."

This yoke of bondage that both Peter and Paul spoke of was not the law of

ten commandments which is spoken of in the Bible as a law of liberty. The apostle James says, "If you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:9-12).

The principles of God's law are eternal and were laid down long before they were written on tables of stone. Adam and Eve broke the very 1st commandment, "You shall not have any other god before Me" (Exodus 20:3, literal translation), in the Garden of Eden. They broke the 10th commandment by coveting fruit which God told them not to eat (verse 17). The 8th commandment was broken when they stole the fruit which God said did not belong to them (verse 15). And in dishonoring their heavenly Father they broke the 5th commandment (verse 12).

Continued on page 30



How Shall We Keep the Sabbath

In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we enclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature and from the free, invigorating air of heaven. We should in no case allow burdens and business transactions to divert our minds upon the Sabbath of the Lord, which He has sanctified. We should not allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character even. But the mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord is put to a wrong use if thus celebrated. The object for which it was instituted is not attained. The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest.

The Book of Nature

During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors.

How can children receive a more correct knowledge of God, and their minds be better impressed, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors, not in play, but in company with their parents? Let their young minds be associated with God in the beautiful scenery of nature, let their attention be called to the tokens of His love to man in His created works, and they will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe; but as they view the beautiful things which He has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard Him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that His prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show His power and authority, but that He has the happiness of His children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attention, they are drawn to love Him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, to the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air. All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God.

Parents, why not make use of the precious lessons which God has given us in the book of nature, to give our children a correct idea of His character? Those

who sacrifice simplicity to fashion, and shut themselves away from the beauties of nature, cannot be spiritually minded. They cannot understand the skill and power of God as revealed in His created works; therefore their hearts do not quicken and throb with new love and interest, and they are not filled with awe and reverence as they see God in nature.

All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. Yet they can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interesting our children. A change will have a happy influence on them. We can walk out with them in the open air; we can sit with them in the groves and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and can inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects of nature.

The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy... Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children may look forward to it and have a welcome in their hearts for it.

Testimony Treasures, vol. 1, 279–281. [LM](#)

Sly Change

Satan does not like it when you reflect the character of Jesus. He is out to corrupt your character without you realizing what he is doing—on the sly. Why do you think you have all of those *little temptations*? That is part of the brainwashing of the devil. Those temptations may seem “little” to you, but look at the damage they cause when you fall.

“Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again.” *The Faith I Live By*, 84.

Understand that is just what the devil wants—he wants you to change your Christlike character to reflect his character. Look around and see how many are reflecting the devil by representing his character!

1 Corinthians 2:16 tells us that we have the mind of Christ. The devil does not like that. He did not like it when Jesus walked this earth and he could not turn Him from right. Are you an easy prey? Can he turn our minds, little by little, from doing well and to thinking like he does? He sure can!

Wow, watch out! Satan is sneaky—he has caught me off my guard several times! We are God’s by creation and redemption.

“God would have us realize that He has a right to mind, soul, body, and spirit—to all that we possess. We are His by creation and by redemption. As our Creator, He claims our entire service. As our Redeemer, He has a claim of love as well as of right—of love without a parallel. This claim we should realize every moment of our existence.” *The Review and Herald*, November 24, 1896.

Remember, the devil has done nothing for us but cause heartache and trouble. We want the heavenly universe to rejoice over us. “The inhabitants of unfallen worlds and of the heavenly universe are watching with an intense interest the conflict between good and evil. They rejoice as Satan’s subtleties, one after another, are discerned and met with ‘It is written,’ as Christ met them in His conflict with the wily foe. Every victory gained is a gem in the crown of life. In the day of victory all the universe of heaven triumphs. The harps of the angels send forth the most precious music, accompanying the melody of the voice.” *Ellen G. White Comments, The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1088.

I want evidence of many victories in my crown—how about you? [LM](#)

“
Satan does
not like it
when you
reflect the
character
of Jesus.”

Father: I want the unfallen worlds to rejoice as they see me gain the victory over these little temptations with a “thus saith the Lord.” I want to join them when Jesus returns. I choose to give to You my entire service and not to serve the devil—even in the little things. I do not want that sneaky devil to catch me off guard. Bless me Father that I may be faithful to You. Amen.



"I appreciate *LandMarks*. It is always a blessing and I read it cover to cover. Then I send it to a pen pal of mine in Australia, who also is blessed by it."

—GC, Tennessee

"Hello friends! Enjoyed our lesson study in *LandMarks* this past Sabbath. Thank you, thank you for this wonderful magazine full of truth and light."

—T<, Nevada

"Thanks for your ministry. Love *LandMarks*, always some good food for the soul."

—SC, Texas

August Sermon of the Month

Someone Cares

By Marshall Grosboll

God made humans to be social creatures. There is a longing within every heart for true friendship. Happiness can be found in sacrificing for others. Remember, Jesus cares!

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

August 2018

Dear Friend,

Our mission is to take the three angels' messages to the world. In the apostolic church, "Every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 92. "Every one should understand that every member of the human family sustains an important relationship to every other member of the human family, and forms a link in the great chain which binds man to his fellow-men." *The Review and Herald*, February, 19, 1895.

If you feel that you only have one talent, it is a needed part of God's plan. "Every individual has his place in the filling up of one great plan bearing the stamp of Christ's image. ... One is fitted to do a certain work, another has a different work for which he is adapted, another has a still different line; but each is to be the complement of the others. ... The Spirit of God, working in and through the diverse elements, will produce harmony of action. ... There is to be only one master spirit—the Spirit of Him who is infinite in wisdom, and in whom all the diverse elements meet in beautiful, matchless unity." *Our High Calling*, 169. "God's plan of life has a place for every human being." *Education*, 226.

"But as we are urged to strive for the mastery, let us aim, in the strength of Jesus, for the crown heavy with stars. 'They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that win many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever' (Daniel 12:3)." *The Review and Herald*, October 25, 1881.

"The souls saved through their efforts will be more precious to them than costly and fashionable dress. The white robes and jeweled crown given them by Christ as the reward for their unselfish efforts in the salvation of souls, will be more valuable than needless adornments. The stars in their crowns will shine forever and ever, and will a thousand times repay them for the self-denial and self-sacrifice they have exercised in the cause of God." *The Signs of the Times*, September 16, 1886.

Your brother in Christ,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering



Health and Bible Prophecy Crusade

Bayambang, Pangasinan, Philippines



The construction committee. From left church leader Esmie de Guzman and head deacon Ding de Guzman with brother Michael Carai.

“

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:9

The Bayambang Free Seventh-day Adventist Church held its first ever 15 evening crusade April 22–May 06, 2018, at Ariel & Fe Garden and Resort.

The event was blessed by the Bayambang brethren and sponsors who provided daily food for 15 nights and for the gifts/tokens and certificates that were given to the attendees during the graduation ceremony.

The group gives praise and thanks the Lord for the privilege and opportunity to have a small part in the outreach work already done and which is continuing with regular Bible Studies in Bayambang, Pangasinan. With only a short time to prepare for the event each used his and her God given talents to have a successful crusade. On the final night, 45 participants received certificates and tokens. Out of this number, 15 souls signed up to continue weekly Bible studies.

The head of the Personal Ministries, Sister Esmie de Guzman, has prepared a Bible Study schedule for a more organized church work for the members to work together. The local church congregation, excited with the outcome, has already started chipping in 300 pesos monthly to fund building rentals and accommodation for their next outreach.

Because of lack of funds the building of the church has temporarily come to a standstill. However, they pray that their church building will soon be finished for they are in need of a

larger place to house the church members and be able to garner in participants during outreach and branch Sabbath Schools.

The church is thankful for the help already given them.

The fields are all ripening far and wide. The world now is waiting. As always reapers are few and the work is great. Where are the reapers? Who will help the evangelists, the pastors and the laymen to garner in the sheaves of good from the fields of sin? **LM**

2018 *Camp Meeting*

A Family Reunion of God's Remnant People

By Hilde Nunez



To those who follow the counsel “Come, brethren and sisters, to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus” (*Christian Service*, 198)

it was indeed like a family reunion. It seems incredible that an entire calendar year has once again past since we gathered for this blessed occasion. The exchange of warm greetings of friends, some with embraces, were seen repeatedly at different time arrivals of the attendees. Some came from long distances, some by plane and some by car. Some came for the first time. We are so thankful to our Lord for His blessings on Steps to Life camp meeting 2018. We share a few of the comments received from our guests.

It is at great expense materially as well as spiritually that camp meetings are prepared for and are able to be held each year here at Steps to Life. The entire staff of this ministry participate, working behind the scenes to assure the attendees experience a blessed event. We realize that it is no small matter to stand as representatives of Jesus, upholding God's commandments in this location, to continue to be a testimony

to the surrounding community. But knowing that God has committed to all those who have dedicated their service to this most sacred work, that is the reason we continue to plan and meet together to receive instruction, that we may be fitted to perform this work. We still need to “meet together to receive the divine touch” (Ibid., 194) that we may continue God's work.

The Holy Spirit was manifested through the wonderful messages of each speaker, including the excellent health topics that are always planned for and included at each camp meeting. We had the added blessing of two different representatives from the mission fields supported by Steps to Life. One from Africa and one from the Philippine islands. The whole presentation was recorded and is available in the event you were not able to attend. These messages can be shared with others, used for home church worship, or for your personal study. We encourage you to see or hear for yourself the excellent topics that were shared. If the Lord wills, there will be another camp meeting in 2019. [LM](#)



J. L. Ivory, an independent trucker from Waldo, Arkansas, planned his route to be able to attend this year's camp meeting. He was one of many who came from all parts of the U.S. to attend.



"The Holy Spirit was definitely there. I was extremely moved to put away all things that would displease God. May we all die to self and sin and make preparations to be ready for the soon coming of Jesus." —EP

"I have been to many non-conference camp meetings but this was my first at Steps to Life. It was the most spiritual camp meeting I have ever attended. Maranatha!" —HL

"What a blessing to have met so many people and to listen to such powerful messages. I was filled with such joy and hope and such a purpose that pushed me, through the Holy Spirit, to make a change in my life." —TC



Toco Toucan

The Toco toucan—the best-known toucan species—is at home in South America’s tropical forests but recognized everywhere. The toucan’s oversized, colorful bill has made it one of the world’s most popular birds. The 7.5-inch-long bill is used to catch tasty morsels and pitch them to one another during a mating ritual fruit toss.

As a weapon, the bill is a bit more show than substance. It is a honeycomb of bone that actually contains a lot of air.

While its size may deter predators, it is of little use in combating them. But the toucan’s bill is useful as a feeding tool. The birds use them to reach fruit on branches that are too small to support their weight, and also to skin their pickings. In addition to fruit, Toco toucans eat insects and, sometimes, young birds, eggs, or lizards.

Behavior

Toco toucans live in small flocks of about six birds. Their bright colors actually provide good camouflage in the dappled light of the rain forest canopy.

However, the birds commonly keep up a racket of vocalization, which suggests that they are not trying to remain hidden.

Toucans nest in tree holes. They usually have two to four eggs each year, which both parents care for.

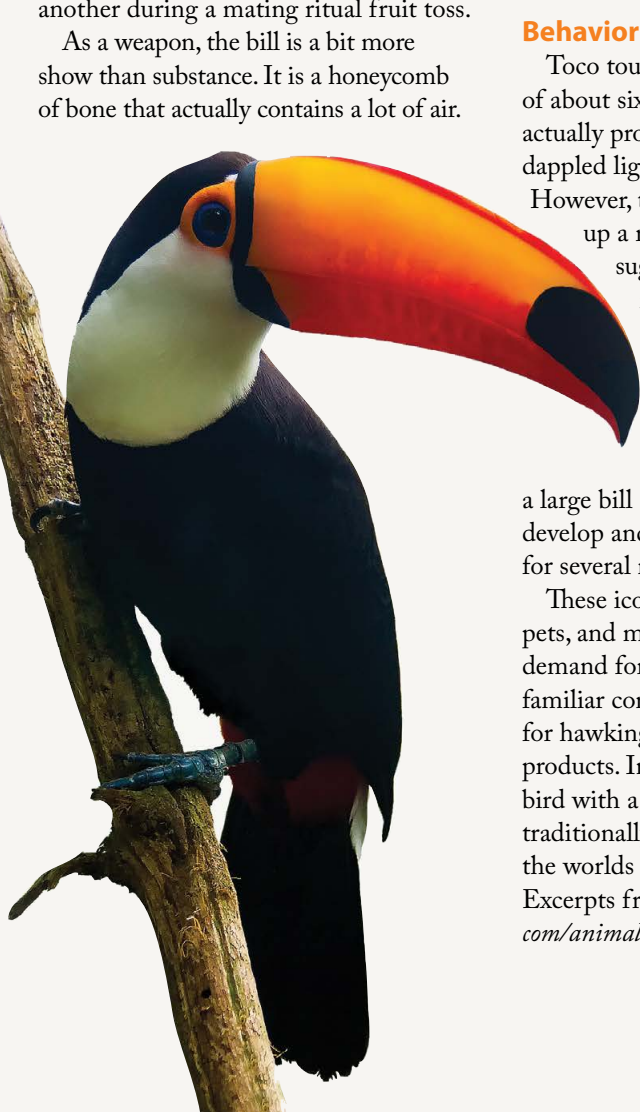
Young toucans do not have a large bill at birth—it grows as they develop and does not become full size for several months.

These iconic birds are very popular pets, and many are captured to supply demand for this trade. They are also familiar commercial mascots known for hawking stout, cereal, and other products. Indigenous peoples regard the bird with a more sacred eye; they are traditionally seen as conduits between the worlds of the living and the spirits. Excerpts from www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/t/toco-toucan/

Although they spend a lot of time in trees, they are not very good at flying. Toucans mainly travel among trees by hopping. When they do take flight, they flap their wings vigorously and glide, traveling only short distances. Excerpts from www.animalfactguide.com/animal-facts/toco-toucan/

As these birds are bright and colorful so should we be: “In the history of Joseph, Daniel, and his fellows . . . They could not be tempted to turn aside from their course of integrity. They valued the favor of God above the favor and praise of princes, and God loved them and spread His shield over them. Because of their faithful integrity, because of their determination to honor God above every human power, the Lord signally honored them before men. . . . These youth *were not ashamed to display their true colors*. Even in the court of the king, in their words, their habits, their practices, they confessed their faith in the Lord God of heaven. They refused to bow to any earthly mandate that detracted from the honor of God. They had strength from heaven to confess their allegiance to God.

“You should be prepared to follow the example of these noble youth. Never be ashamed of your colors; put them on, unfurl them to the gaze of men and angels.” *Messages to Young People*, 27, 28. [Emphasis added.] **LM**



Q:

*Who are the
harlots in
Revelation
17:5?*

“

*And upon her forehead was
a name written, "Mystery,
Babylon, the Great, the Mother
of Harlots and Abominations
of the Earth."*

Revelation 17:5

A:

The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 117.

“Babylon is said to be ‘the mother of harlots.’ By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it

must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God’s people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel. In the words of the prophet to Israel: ‘Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.’ But they fell by the same desire which

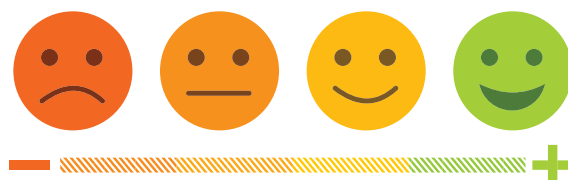
was the curse and ruin of Israel—the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. ‘Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown’ (Ezekiel 16:14, 15).” *The Great Controversy*, 382, 383.

“In the seventeenth of Revelation is foretold the destruction of all the churches who corrupt themselves by idolatrous devotion to the service of the papacy, those who have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. [Revelation 17:1–4 quoted.]” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 983. [LM](#)



*The harlot was
drunken with
the blood of the
saints.*

The Effect of Your Thinking



“

*A merry heart
doeth good like
a medicine.*

Proverbs 17:22

How we think affects our actions and health. There is a spiritual battle raging over your mind. Your mind should always be in control of your body—your body should not be in control of your mind. We constantly have choices to make. God says, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat” (Matthew 7:13). The choice of which gate you enter is always yours. So guard the avenue to your mind in order to make wise decisions.

When you are thinking, you are building thoughts, building your brain. “As he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Good thinking = good choices = healthy thoughts; toxic thinking = toxic choices = toxic thoughts. We are told in

Deuteronomy 30:19: “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life.”

“Eric R. Kandel, a Nobel Prize-winning neuro-psychiatrist for his work on memory, shows how our thoughts, even our imaginations, get ‘under the skin’ of our DNA and can turn certain genes on and certain genes off, changing the structure of the neurons in the brain. (*In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind*, New York: Norton, 2006)

“So as we think and imagine, we change the structure and function of our brains. Even Freud speculated back in the 1800s that thought leads to changes in the brain. (Sigmund Freud, quoted in D. Church, *The Genie in Your Genes*, Fulton, CA: Energy Psychology Press, 2008)

“Our brain is changing moment by moment as we are thinking. By our thinking and choosing, we are redesigning the landscape of our brain.

“Our mind is designed to control the body, of which the brain is part, not the other way around. Matter does not control us; we control matter through our thinking and choosing. We cannot control the events and circumstances of life but we can control our reactions. In fact, we can control our reactions to anything, and in doing so, we change our brains. It’s not easy; it is hard work, but it can be done through our thoughts and choices. ...

“Our thoughts produce words and behaviors, which in turn stimulate more thinking and choices that build more thoughts in an endless cycle. ...

“According to Dr. Herbert Benson, M.D., president of Harvard Medical School’s Mind-Body Institute, negative thinking leads to stress, which affects our body’s natural healing capacities. Toxic thinking wears down the brain. ...

“You cannot control the events or circumstances of your life, but you can control your reactions. And controlling those reactions is the difference between healthy minds and bodies and sick minds and bodies. Here are just a few statistics:

- A study by the American Medical Association found that stress is a factor in 75% of all illnesses and diseases that people suffer from today. (Sheldon Cohen et al., ‘Psychological Stress and Disease,’ JAMA 14 (2007); 1685, ...)
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer and the World Health Organization have concluded that 80 percent of cancers are due to lifestyle and not genetics., and this is a conservative number. (Cancer Statistics and Views of Causes, *Science News* 115, no. 2 (January 13, 1979): 23.

“Negative thinking leads to stress.”
Excerpts from: *Switch on Your Brain*, by



*We cannot control
the events and
circumstances of life
but we can control
our reactions.*

Dr. Caroline Leaf, published by Baker Books, 2013.

God tells us that “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine” (Proverbs 17:22). Do you believe God’s word? “Let praise and thanksgiving be expressed in song. When tempted, instead of giving utterance to our feelings, let us by faith lift up a song of thanksgiving to God.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 254.

“The relation that exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health to a far greater degree than many realize. Many of the diseases from which men suffer are the result of mental depression. Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life forces and to invite decay and death. ...

“Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul.” *Ibid.*, 241.

We are all children of the Lord—make a joyful noise unto the Lord—serve Him with gladness (see Psalm 100) and you will be blessed, physically, mentally and spiritually!

Also remember: “If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 310.

We are given some fabulous counsel which, if followed, would save us from much physical, emotional and spiritual stress. It is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18.

- Rejoice evermore.
- Pray without ceasing.
- In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

If you truly believe “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28), then you will rejoice, pray without ceasing and give thanks in everything. [LM](#)

Continued from page 19

Adam and Eve broke the law of God in the Garden of Eden. As a result of the law being broken, Paul says, in Galatians 3:19, “What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions [of the moral law], till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.”

A moral law was transgressed. “Where there is no law there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15, *last part*).

The law was to point men toward the fact that a Redeemer was coming who would save them from

Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, in order that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:14, 15, literal translation).

For the 4,000 years before Jesus would fulfill this prophecy, it was kept fresh before the minds of men. Ever since the days of Adam and Eve, those who believed and had faith that God was going to send a sacrifice to pay the price for their sins and offer them forgiveness, manifested their faith in a Redeemer to come by offering a lamb, an animal sacrifice, for their sin. The whole purpose of the ceremonial law and the Levitical priesthood was to provide a sacrifice and an intercessory priest to have your sins forgiven.

When Jesus offered His life for our sins on the cross of Calvary He was our sacrifice. However, after He ascended to heaven He also became our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary so that He, by virtue of His own merits, could take away the guilt of the sin of anyone who confessed and repented of their sins to Him (see Hebrews).

But, this law of ceremonies that involved animal sacrifices, a Levitical priesthood, an earthly sanctuary, and various other ceremonial laws that pointed forward to the Christian dispensation, was made null and void by the true sacrifice—the crucifixion of Christ. However, it took time for people to realize the significance of what really happened when Jesus died on the cross. The moment He died, an unseen hand tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51, *first part*). Now that veil was not like just a common household curtain. It was more like

a carpet or a rug, something that no human being, unless you were Sampson, could tear apart.

This act signified that no longer would believers need the services of an earthly priest to approach God. Jesus Christ was now our high priest. There is only one Mediator between God and man, as Peter said, “We are all priests who can come to our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and man” (1 Timothy 2:5, literal translation). We see here that the earthly tabernacle had no more real significance because it was all a type of the reality that was to come. All of the earthly ceremonies connected with the sanctuary had no more significance, once Christ’s sacrifice was complete.

Paul describes these ceremonies both in his letters to both the Ephesians and the Colossians. In Colossians 2:14, he says, “... having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Contrary to what some have thought, the apostle Paul is not here referring to the ten commandments, but rather to the ordinances that were handwritten by Moses.

Handwriting is something that humans do. We take hold of a pen or pencil with our fingers when we write. But when God writes, He does not need a pen or a pencil. Instead, He writes with His finger (John 8:6). God wrote the Ten Commandments with His finger on tables of stone. They were not handwritten.

Paul says, “Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it (that’s in the cross). So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (Colossians 2:15–17).

The substance is of Christ; the body is of Christ. Don’t let anyone pass any

“

The principles of God’s law are eternal and were laid down long before they were written on tables of stone.

the guilt and penalty of their sin. The only way they could be saved from their sin was if a sacrifice that was perfect would die in their place. Hebrews 9:22 says, “According to the law almost all things are purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (literal translation). The Bible says that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but might have everlasting life” (John 3:16, literal translation).

judgment on you in regard to any of these ceremonial requirements, Paul said. That was the same decision that was made at the Jerusalem council—that the Jews were not to enforce these things upon the Gentile Christians.

At this first Christian council, after everyone who wanted to speak had the opportunity, the apostle James arose and said, “Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon [Peter] has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ‘After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set

things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath” (verses 18–21).

Notice, it was James who led out at the council and made the final decision, contrary to the belief that Peter was the head of the church. The rest of the apostles agreed with what he said and the letter was written saying, “We have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom we gave no such commandment—it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well” (verses 24–29).

Notice, the Gentile Christians were not to be forced to keep all the Jewish laws, or any of the ceremonial laws, but they were to keep the moral law of God. They were to live righteous, holy lives, and they were not to eat blood or things that were strangled. It is interesting that out of only four things Christians were not to do we find that many Christians do today. In both the Old and the New Testaments, the use of blood as food is strictly forbidden. This is something we need to study if we want to be living in harmony with every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

At the council, the argument in question was decided by the Holy Spirit,

as they say, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us.” That being the case, since the Holy Spirit is the leader, the guide, the king, the authority in the Christian church, our job as Christians is to know the way the Holy Spirit is leading us. At that first council the whole body of Christians was not called to vote upon the question.

The apostles and elders, men of influence and judgment, framed and issued the decree, and it was thereafter accepted generally by the Christian churches. Everybody, however, was not pleased with this decision. There was a faction of brethren called Judaizers, who assumed to engage in the work on their own responsibility and indulged in murmuring and fault-finding. They continued wherever they went to try to get Christians to keep the ceremonial law. The church has had such types of obstacles to meet ever since the beginning and it will continue until the end of time.

Even some of the apostles were not prepared to accept the decision of the council, remaining zealous for the ceremonial law. They regarded Paul with jealousy, thinking his principles were lax in regard to the obligation of the Jewish law. It took time for them to understand these things and there were times when the apostle Paul had to stand all alone. He was regarded by many of the Jewish Christians as a teacher of dangerous doctrines. However, the doctrine that the Holy Spirit taught them is still in force today. We still need to live by the principles that this first council passed if we want to be approved by the Lord in the Day of Judgment.

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

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In both the Old and the New Testaments, the use of blood as food is strictly forbidden.

it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things” (Acts 15:13–17).

James continued: “Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from



Send Me a Friend

One morning, in a city of Switzerland, a rich man sat in his beautiful home. He was lonely and discouraged. There was no earthly friend to whom he cared to tell his troubles. He knelt down alone and prayed that God would send him a friend.

That same morning in the same city there was a young lad who had learned about the soon coming of Jesus. His heart was filled with joy as he thought of soon seeing his Saviour. He longed to tell others this truth, that they too might be happy.

He had decided to canvass [share with others door to door] a book that told about the second coming of Christ. Before he left his room that morning, he prayed that God would guide him to those who needed help. He prayed that God would send an angel before him to get people ready to buy the book.

Up one city street and down another this lad walked, showing the people his book, telling them about Jesus, and here and there taking orders. So the morning passed until it was nearly noon. On the street where he was working there were still a few houses at which he had not called. He wanted to finish his work on that street before he stopped for lunch.

The next house was large and beautiful. He always dreaded to call at such rich homes, for often the people did not want to let him in. Still he must not pass any by. He stepped to the door. He wiped his feet on the big rug, and then wiped them again. He rang the doorbell. Then he waited.

Soon a servant opened the door, and the lad gave him his card. The servant carried the card to his master. In a few moments he returned.

"The master is at lunch," he said. "He is sure you have nothing that will interest him, and he does not wish to be disturbed."

"Thank you," said the lad as he walked away.

A few moments later he heard someone hurrying after him. He looked around, and there was the servant whom he had just left.

"The master wishes you to return at once, if you will be so kind," he said.

The lad hurried back to the rich home where he met a fine, rather elderly Swiss gentleman. The gentleman took the lad into the dining room, gave him a chair at the table, and told the servant to lay another plate. Soon they were left alone.

"My boy," said the gentleman, "this morning I prayed God to send me a

friend. I was lonely and discouraged, and I knew of no one to whom I cared to turn. Just now when I sent you away, a voice said to me distinctly, 'There I sent you a friend, and you have sent him away!' So I called you back. Now why did God send you to me? What have you brought me?"

The lad's heart went out in love to this man. The man had all that money could buy, but he did not know the hope of Jesus' soon coming. The lad looked at the man with eyes full of the hope and joy that he himself had found in obeying the commandments of God.

"I have brought you a book which contains a message of hope and courage and faith in the Friend of friends, who can give you all that you wish," the lad answered.

The gentleman was deeply interested. Hope began to spring up in his heart. He believed God had sent this lad in answer to his prayer. He invited the lad to come to his home every week and study the Bible with him. It is in just this way that God is seeking out the earnest, praying ones and getting them ready for Jesus' soon coming.

Cockleshells, True Education Series, Pacific Press Publishing Association, © 1976, 5-8. [LM](#)

August 26 – September 1

Getting Ready

Key Text

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

Study Help

Testimonies, vol. 5, 217–228, 743–746.

Introduction

“Do we, by our lives and holy conversation, show to those around us that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?” *Early Writings*, 111.

Sunday

AVOIDING A COMMON SNARE

- a. What dangerous lie is increasingly taught in the professedly religious world today, and how does Scripture refute it? James 2:14, 20–22, 24.

Note: “From the pulpits of today the words are uttered: ‘Believe, only believe. Have faith in Christ; you have nothing to do with the old law, only trust in Christ.’ How different is this from the words of the apostle who declares that faith without works is dead.” *Faith and Works*, 89.

“The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the word of God? ... [James 2:14, 20–22, 24 quoted.]

“The testimony of the word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted; it is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.

“Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while willfully violating one of God’s requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit and separates the soul from God. ‘Sin is the transgression of the law.’ And ‘whosoever sinneth [transgress-

eth the law] hath not seen Him, neither known Him’ (1 John 3:4, 6).” *The Great Controversy*, 472.

Monday

TRULY ACCEPTING THE PLAN OF SALVATION

- a. What are the first steps toward real salvation? Acts 2:37, 38; Romans 5:1.

Note: “As we behold the Lamb of God upon the cross of Calvary, the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance. In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition in the soul.” *Steps to Christ*, 26, 27.

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.” *Ibid.*, 23.

- b. For Christ’s followers, what important truth is of supreme importance? Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:13–16.

Note: “Holiness is agreement with God.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 743.

“When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to ‘go unto perfection;’ to grow up ‘unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’ (Hebrews 6:1; Ephesians 4:13).” *The Great Controversy*, 470.

“Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. Our daily and hourly work is set forth in the words of the apostle: ‘Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith’ (Hebrews 12:2). ...

“The manifestation of God’s love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. ...



From the pulpits of today the words are uttered: "Believe, only believe. Have faith in Christ; you have nothing to do with the old law, only trust in Christ."

"Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 744.

Tuesday

AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL

- a. What is God's plan for us in our preparation to meet our Lord in peace? Matthew 5:48; Psalm 101:2.

Note: "While Christ is cleansing the sanctuary, the worshipers on earth should carefully review their life, and compare their character with the standard of righteousness. As they see their defects, they should seek the aid of the Spirit of God to enable them to have moral strength to resist the temptations of Satan, and to reach the perfection of the standard. They may be victors over the very temptations which seemed too strong for humanity to bear; for the divine power will be combined with their human effort." *Reflecting Christ*, 296.

"Besetting sins must be battled with, and overcome. Objectionable traits of character, whether hereditary or cultivated, should be taken up separately, and compared with the great rule of righteousness; and in the light reflected from the word of God, they should be firmly resisted and overcome, through the strength of Christ." *Christian Education*, 113.

- b. Why should we strive for perfection by walking in the light of God's revealed will? 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25; Philippians 3:12-14.

Note: "To walk in the light means to resolve, to exercise thought, to exert will-power, in an earnest endeavor to represent Christ in sweetness of character. It means to put away all gloom. You are not to rest satisfied simply in saying, 'I am a child of God.' Are you beholding Jesus, and, by beholding, becoming changed into His likeness? To walk in the light means advancement and progress in spiritual attainments." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 200. "Whatever the mistakes or failures of the past, we may, with the help of God, rise above them." *The Ministry of Healing*, 516.

- c. What is promised to those who yearn for genuine moral righteousness? Ephesians 3:16; Matthew 5:6.

Wednesday

SERIOUS STRENGTH FOR OUR URGENT NEED

- a. How only can we be equipped to stand in the final conflict? Jeremiah 15:16.

Note: “None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.” *The Great Controversy*, 593, 594.

- b. **How can we benefit by increased dedication in our devotional habits to better know God’s will? 1 John 5:14; Psalm 119:129–131.**

Note: “The testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His word and from the testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us.

“Let each put the question to his own heart: ‘How have we fallen into this state of spiritual feebleness and dissension? Have we not brought upon ourselves the frown of God because our actions do not correspond with our faith?’” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 217.

“Beware how you neglect secret prayer and a study of God’s word. These are your weapons against him who is striving to hinder your progress heavenward. The first neglect of prayer and Bible study makes easier the second neglect.” *Messages to Young People*, 96.

- c. **Why is it crucial to render wholehearted, 100 percent obedience to God’s will as plainly revealed in written form by Inspiration? James 1:21–25.**

Note: “Satan leads many to believe that God will overlook their unfaithfulness in the minor affairs of life; but the Lord shows in His dealings ... that He will in no wise sanction or tolerate evil. All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan.” *The Great Controversy*, 620.

“God works mightily for a faithful people who obey His word without questioning or doubt.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 164.

Thursday

SUBMITTING TO PURIFICATION

- a. **Explain the sanctification process. 1 John 3:1–3; Hebrews 5:12–14; 6:1.**

Note: “Obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ’s righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. ...

“Day by day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. ... Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 532.

- b. **Why is it crucial that we do not stubbornly resist this process? Ephesians 4:30.**

Note: “The first resistance to the Spirit’s pleading prepares the way for the second resistance. Thus the heart is hardened, and the conscience seared.

“On the other hand, every resistance of temptation makes resistance more easy. Every denial of self makes self-denial easier. Every victory gained prepares the way for a fresh victory. Each resistance of temptation, each self-denial, each triumph over sin, is a seed sown unto eternal life.” *Messages to Young People*, 96, 97.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What false idea leads many professed Christians into presumption?
- 2 How can I discern whether my level of repentance has been too shallow?
- 3 How can I be sure that God is really willing to help me overcome my faults?
- 4 How much time do I spend with the *Testimonies* compared to other books?
- 5 Explain the method by which God motivates us to sow seeds for eternal life.

September 2 – 8

Key Text

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

Study Help

Testimonies, vol. 2, 189–199; *Ibid.*, vol. 6, 404–410.

Introduction

“Those who are watching for the Lord are purifying their souls by obedience to the truth. With vigilant watching they combine earnest working. Because they know that the Lord is at the door, their zeal is quickened to co-operate with the divine intelligences in working for the salvation of souls.” *The Desire of Ages*, 634.

Sunday

COWORKERS WITH THE LORD OF LORDS

- On what basis is every Christian believer—whether male, female, married, single, rich, poor, and of any age or ethnic background whatsoever—officially authorized and commanded to witness for their Lord and Master Jesus Christ? John 15:16; Galatians 3:27, 28.

Note: “‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature’ (Mark 16:15), is Christ’s command to His followers. Not that all are called to be ministers or missionaries in the ordinary sense of the term; but all may be workers with Him in giving the ‘glad tidings’ to their fellow men. To all, great or small, learned or ignorant, old or young, the command is given.” *Education*, 264.

“When I think of the cities in which so little work has been done, in which there are so many thousands to be warned of the soon coming of the Saviour, I feel an intensity of desire to see men and women going forth to the work in the power of the Spirit filled with Christ’s love for perishing souls.” *Evangelism*, 69.

- What group is definitely included also in having a special part in the closing work of the gospel? 1 John 2:14, *second half*.

Monday

DEDICATION TO THE MESSAGE FOR TODAY

- What special significance does the “everlasting gospel” have in our time? Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Revelation 14:6, 7.

Note: “The proclamation of the judgment is an announcement of Christ’s second coming as at hand. And this proclamation is called the everlasting gospel. Thus the preaching of Christ’s second coming, the announcement of its nearness, is shown to be an essential part of the gospel message.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 227, 228.

- Name one factor that is closely connected with the Advent message—and actually helps us to understand it better. Romans 12:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Note: “The health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel’s message as the hand is with the body.” *Counsels on Health*, 20, 21.

“The gospel and the medical missionary work are to advance together. The gospel is to be bound up with the principles of true health reform. ... We are to present the principles of health reform before the people, doing all in our power to lead men and women to see the necessity of these principles and to practice them.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 442.

- What impels believers to spread the wonderful message of salvation? 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.



There are large cities around the world today, where the majority of the population knows nothing about the gospel.

Note: “Love to Jesus will be manifested in a desire to work as He worked for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. It will lead to love, tenderness, and sympathy toward all the creatures of our heavenly Father’s care. ...

“No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart.” *Steps to Christ*, 77, 78.

Tuesday

EMPTIED TO BE FILLED

- a. What admonition carries a distinctive force for us who are living in the last days? 1 Thessalonians 5:1, 2, 6–8.

Note: “Let us not be found sleeping on guard. Let no one say in his heart or by his works, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming.’ Let the message of Christ’s soon return sound forth in earnest words of warning. Let us persuade men and women everywhere to repent, and flee from the wrath to come. Let us arouse them to immediate preparation; for we little know what is before us. Let ministers and lay members go forth into the ripening fields.” *Maranatha*, 106.

“Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by *trying* to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 384. [Emphasis author’s.]

- b. What should you do if you honestly don’t feel as enthusiastic about this message as you know you should? 1 John 4:20, 21; Revelation 2:2–5; 3:18, 19.

Note: “We need the message to the Laodicean church. You have left your first love, and there is hardness and coldness and want of sympathy—except for the favorite few. That will never answer in the world. We are to seek and save that which is lost.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 61.

“Return to your first experience, when your soul was filled with love for Christ. Gather to your heart the obedience of a faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Obedience to the law of the Lord makes men pure, holy, undefiled. ...

“O that there might be seen among our people a deep and thorough work of repentance and reformation! O that they would fall on the Rock, and be broken!” *The Review and Herald*, February 24, 1903.

“There is hope for all who will hear the truth and repent of their evil works.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 216.

Wednesday

GOD'S GLORY MANIFESTED

- a. What is the call of the hour, and how shall we respond to it? Isaiah 56:1–8.

Note: “He [the Lord] is now calling upon His church on the earth to awake from the lethargy that Satan has sought to bring upon them, and fulfill their heaven-appointed work of enlightening the world. ...

“The world today is in crying need of a revelation of Christ Jesus in the person of His saints. God desires that His people shall stand before the world a holy people. Why?—because there is a world to be saved by the light of gospel truth; and as the message of truth that is to call men out of darkness into God’s marvelous light, is given by the church, the lives of its members, sanctified by the Spirit of truth, are to bear witness to the verity of the messages proclaimed.” *The Review and Herald*, March 31, 1910.

- b. Describe Christ’s methods in working to save souls. Luke 14:23; John 4:27.

Note: “The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul.

“To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ’s method. His work was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one-soul audience. Through that one soul the message was often extended to thousands.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 229.

- c. What spirit is needed in laboring for God? Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 12:15.

Note: “Study Christ’s definition of a true missionary: ‘Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me’ (Mark 8:34). Following Christ, as spoken of in these words, is not a pretense, a farce. Jesus expects His disciples to follow closely in His footsteps, enduring what He endured, suffering what He suffered, overcoming as He over-

came. He is anxiously waiting to see His professed followers revealing the spirit of self-sacrifice.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 209.

Thursday

A TREMENDOUS PRIVILEGE

- a. How can each one of us cooperate in soul-saving, and what should be our most fervent desire and prayer? Romans 10:13–17; Luke 11:13.

Note: “We need greater earnestness in the cause of Christ. The solemn message of truth should be given with an intensity that would impress unbelievers that God is working with our efforts, that the Most High is our living source of strength.” *Evangelism*, 697.

“Some minds are led away from present truth and a love of the Holy Bible by reading other exciting books; others are filled with perplexity and care for what they shall eat, drink, and wear. Some are looking too far off for the coming of the Lord. Time has continued a few years longer than they expected; therefore they think it may continue a few years more, and in this way their minds are being led from present truth, out after the world. In these things I saw great danger; for if the mind is filled with other things, present truth is shut out, and there is no place in our foreheads for the seal of the living God. I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most holy place was nearly finished and that time can last but a very little longer. What leisure time we have should be spent in searching the Bible, which is to judge us in the last day.

“My dear brethren and sisters, let the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ be in your minds continually and let them crowd out worldly thoughts and cares. When you lie down and when you rise up, let them be your meditation. Live and act wholly in reference to the coming of the Son of man. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over.” *Early Writings*, 58.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is no one excused from sharing the present truth with others?
- 2 What are we to understand by “everlasting gospel”?
- 3 Why is the Laodicean message needed when proselytizing is out of fashion?
- 4 What has been causing the world to doubt the truthfulness of our message?
- 5 What thoughts can I cut out of my mind to make more space for the truth?

September 9 – 15

The Wisdom of God's Timing

Key Text

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

Study Help

Selected Messages, Book 1, 185–192; *Early Writings*, 56–58, 69–73, III–III4.

Introduction

“It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the Word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional.” *Evangelism*, 695.

Sunday

GOD’S COMPASSION

- a. Explain God’s goal for every human He has created. 1 Timothy 2:3–6.

Note: “God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish; but His forbearance has a limit, and when the boundary is passed, there is no second probation. His wrath will go forth and He will destroy without remedy.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, March 28, 1905.

- b. Why couldn’t the Lord permit the people of Israel to take direct possession of the promised land? Hebrews 3:7–11.

Note: “God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in ‘because of unbelief’ (Hebrews 3:19).” *Evangelism*, 696.

Monday

REASONS FOR THE APPARENT DELAY

- a. As believers, what danger do we face today? Hebrews 3:12, 13.

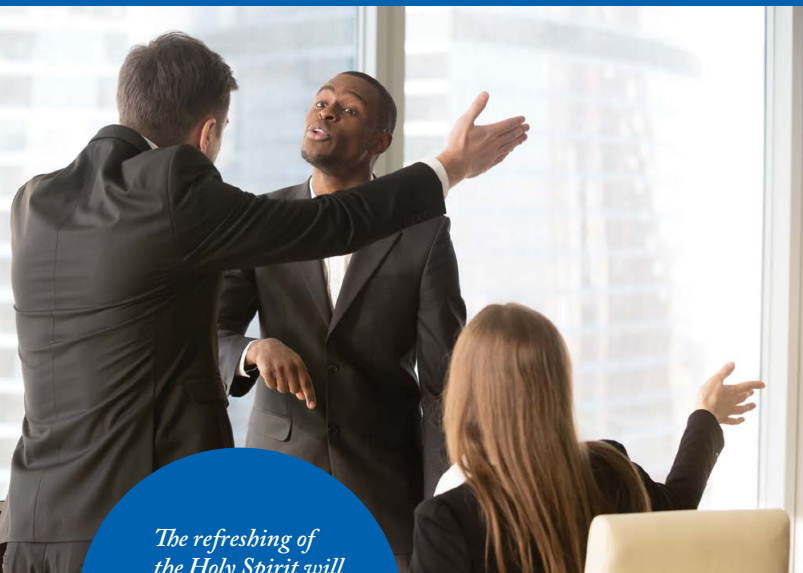
Note: “For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.” *Evangelism*, 696.

- b. Why does it seem that the Lord is delaying His coming? 2 Peter 3:9.

Note: “The long night of gloom is trying, but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God’s unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay.” *Evangelism*, 694.

“In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out.” *The Great Controversy*, 458.

- c. Who is in a position to relieve much of the spiritual gloom that envelops our planet? 2 Peter 3:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 15:34.



The refreshing of the Holy Spirit will receive those who obtain victory over every wrong word and action.

Note: “The Lord in compassion is seeking to enlighten the understanding of those who are now groping in the darkness of error. He is delaying His judgments upon an impenitent world, in order that His light-bearers may seek and save that which is lost.” *The Review and Herald*, March 31, 1910.

d. How can we hasten Jesus’ coming? 2 Corinthians 5:20; Matthew 24:14.

Note: “By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord’s return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God.” *The Desire of Ages*, 633.

Tuesday

EXTRA POWER TO SPEED THINGS ALONG

- a. How will the sharing of the gospel reach its climax in the last days? Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23.

Note: “The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close.” *The Great Controversy*, 611, 612.

- b. What is needed to be entrusted with the latter rain—the outpouring of God’s Spirit without measure? Joel 2:17, 18; Acts 3:19, 20.

Note: “I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” *Early Writings*, 71.

“The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 507.

“For the baptism of the Spirit every worker should be pleading with God. Companies should be gathered together to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should men pray that God will baptize His missionaries with the Holy Spirit.

“The presence of the Spirit with God’s workers will give the presentation of the truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the unfriendliness of relatives, the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own imperfections and mistakes.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 22.

Wednesday

THE OMNISCIENT KNOWS BEST

- a. Even as we advance in the knowledge of God, what information does He still reserve the right to withhold from us, and why? Acts 1:6, 7.

Note: “God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close, or when probation will have an end. ... Let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the councils of the Almighty.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 191.

“There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ. ...

“The Lord showed me that the message must go, and that it must not be hung on time; for time will never be a test again. I saw that some were getting a false excitement, arising from preaching time, that the third angel’s message can stand on its own foundation, and that it needs not time to strengthen it, and that it will go with mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.” *Ibid.*, 188.

b. Why should we be satisfied with God’s wisdom in this matter? Deuteronomy 29:29.

Note: “The preaching of a definite time for the judgment, in the giving of the first message, was ordered by God. The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment. The repeated efforts to find new dates for the beginning and close of the prophetic periods, and the unsound reasoning necessary to sustain these positions, not only lead minds away from the present truth, but throw contempt upon all efforts to explain the prophecies. The more frequently a definite time is set for the second advent, and the more widely it is taught, the better it suits the purposes of Satan. After the time has passed, he excites ridicule and contempt of its advocates, and thus casts reproach upon the great advent movement of 1843 and 1844. Those who persist in this error will at last fix upon a date too far in the future for the coming of Christ. Thus they will be led to rest in a false security, and many will not be undeceived until it is too late.” *The Great Controversy*, 457.

Thursday

THE IMPENDING PROCLAMATION

- a. What declaration is soon to be pronounced from Heaven, and why is this of such solemn importance to every mortal? Revelation 22:11.

Note: “Many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. ... [Revelation 22:11 quoted.]” *Early Writings*, 71.

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent efforts, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.” *The Review and Herald*, January 17, 1907.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What should we learn from the delay in Israel’s entrance into Canaan?
- 2 Who is the chief culprit in delaying today’s entrance into heavenly Canaan?
- 3 How is the latter rain related to this event, and what enables it to come?
- 4 Explain the main purpose of the latter rain and the timing of it.
- 5 What do I need for God to be able to trust me with this refreshing?

September 16 – 22

Swelling to a Loud Cry

Key Text

“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring” (Isaiah 44:3).

Study Help

Testimonies, vol. 1, 179–184; vol. 8, 14–23.

Introduction

“Why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit, since this is the means by which we are to receive power? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, preach concerning it?” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 22.

Sunday

RESTORATION TAUGHT WITH POWER

- What prophecy carries special significance in the preparation to meet the Lord? Malachi 4:5.

Note: “In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1184.

- How did Jesus explain to His disciples the first application of this prophecy, and how does this relate to our work now? Matthew 17:11–13.

Note: “Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 62.

Monday

REPAIRERS OF THE LORD’S WAY

- What powerful message did John the Baptist proclaim, and why is it appropriate that we be doing likewise? Luke 1:16, 17; Matthew 3:2, 8.

Note: “He [John the Baptist] saw his people deceived, self-satisfied, and asleep in their sins. He longed to rouse them to a holier life. The message that God had given him to bear was designed to startle them from the lethargy, and cause them to tremble because of their great wickedness. Before the seed of the gospel could find lodgement, the soil of the heart must be broken up. Before they would seek healing from Jesus, they must be awakened to their danger from the wounds of sin.

“God does not send messengers to flatter the sinner. He delivers no message of peace to lull the unsanctified into fatal security. He lays heavy burdens upon the conscience of the wrongdoer, and pierces the soul with arrows of conviction.” *The Desire of Ages*, 103, 104.

- Give examples of how the Elijah message is to restore family life—including how it was prefigured in John the Baptist’s work. Malachi 2:13–17; 4:6.

Note: “John was acquainted with the fact that he [Herod] was about to marry his brother’s wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that this was not lawful.” *Early Writings*, 154.

- c. What characterizes “the spirit and power of Elias,” and who is proclaiming this message today? 1 Kings 18:17, 18, 21; Revelation 12:17.
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Note: “Many dare not condemn iniquity, lest they shall thereby sacrifice position or popularity. And by some it is considered uncharitable to rebuke sin. The servant of God should never allow his own spirit to be mingled with the reproof which he is required to give; but he is under the most solemn obligation to present the word of God, without fear or favor. He must call sin by its right name. Those who by their carelessness or indifference permit God’s name to be dishonored by His professed people, are numbered with the transgressor—registered in the record of heaven as partakers in their evil deeds.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 21, 1881.

Tuesday

THE FINAL WORK

- a. What summarizes the urgent call of the hour? Revelation 14:6–13; 18:1–4.
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Note: “In the closing work of God in the earth, the standard of His law will be again exalted. False religion may prevail, iniquity may abound, the love of many may wax cold, the cross of Calvary may be lost sight of, and darkness, like the pall of death, may spread over the world; the whole force of the popular current may be turned against the truth; plot after plot may be formed to overthrow the people of God; but in the hour of greatest peril the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced. In the populous cities of the land, and in the places where men have gone to the greatest lengths in speaking against the Most High, the voice of stern rebuke will be heard. Boldly will men of God’s appointment denounce the union of the church with the world. Earnestly will they call upon men and women to turn from the observance of a man-made institution to the observance of the true Sabbath.” *Prophets and Kings*, 186, 187.

- b. What must always be evident in our speech and life? John 1:29; 14:12; 2 Corinthians 4:5–7.
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God does not send messengers to flatter the sinner. He lays heavy burdens upon the conscience of the wrongdoer, and pierces the soul with arrows of conviction.

Note: “The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.

“The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works—in words of truth and deeds of holiness.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 415, 416.

- c. How will God’s work ultimately be finished? Zechariah 4:6; Isaiah 28:21.
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Note: “The Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning.” *Evangelism*, 118.

Wednesday

HOW TO RECEIVE THE REFRESHING

- a. What must we continually realize about a key quality essential to experiencing the Holy Spirit in the fullness of latter-rain power? Isaiah 57:15.
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Note: “There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands.” *Evangelism*, 118.

“Men with one talent may reach a class that those with two or five talents cannot approach. Great and small alike are chosen vessels to bear the water of life to thirsting souls. Let not those who preach the word lay their hands upon the humblest worker and say: ‘You must labor in this channel or not work at all.’ Hands off, brethren. Let everyone work in his own sphere, with his own armor on, doing whatever he can do in his humble way. Strengthen his hands in the work. This is no time for pharisaism to control. Let God work through whom He will. The message must go.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 462.

- b. Why is the latter rain given, and why should we be inspired by the motivation of the early disciples?**
Acts 1:8; 4:33; Jeremiah 30:5–7.

Note: “Notice that it was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out. They were of one accord. All differences had been put away. ...

“The disciples did not ask for a blessing for themselves. They were weighted with the burden of souls. ...

“Let Christians put away all dissension and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 20, 21.

“As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.” *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 353.

Thursday

TREMENDOUSLY GRATIFYING!

- a. What opportunity is before us right now? Titus 2:13; 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2.**

Note: “My brethren and sisters, study your plans; grasp every opportunity of speaking to your neighbors and associates or of reading something to them from books that contain present truth. Show that you regard as of first importance the salvation of the souls for whom Christ has made so great a sacrifice.

“In working for perishing souls, you have the companionship of angels. Thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand angels are waiting to cooperate with members of our churches in communicating the light that God has generously given, that a people may be prepared for the coming of Christ.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 129.

- b. Describe the amazing results to occur when the Holy Spirit is poured out without measure. Zechariah 8:23; Isaiah 44:3, 4; 61:11.**

Note: “The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides.” *The Great Controversy*, 612.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What parallels exist between our work and that of Elijah and John the Baptist?
- 2 How does the restoration needed today relate to the Ten Commandments?
- 3 Summarize the character qualities of those who will receive the latter rain.
- 4 On what basis might I be in danger of missing this amazing privilege?
- 5 Why are the results of the latter rain so incredibly gratifying to see?

September 23 – 29

From Midnight Into Dawn

Key Text

“Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him” (Psalm 50:3).

Study Help

The Great Controversy, 618–622, 638–652.

Introduction

“Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a ‘Man of Sorrows’ (Isaiah 53:3), to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth. ... No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor.” *The Great Controversy*, 641.

Sunday

WHILE THE LAST MOMENTS LINGER ...

- a. Explain Christ’s plan for us in contrast to Satan’s. Luke 22:31; John 9:4.

Note: “Satan ... knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.

“Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour’s mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God.” *The Great Controversy*, 488.

“Zeal for God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Should not this zeal fire our hearts with a determination to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? Is not the Spirit of God to come to-day, in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, and fill men with power for service?” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 22.

“Every power lent us of heaven is to be used in doing the work assigned us by the Lord for those who are perishing in ignorance. The warning message is to be sounded in all parts of the world. There must be no delay. The truth must be proclaimed in the dark places of the earth. Obstacles must be met

and surmounted. A great work is to be done, and this work has been entrusted to those who know the truth for this time.” *The Review and Herald*, November 23, 1905.

Monday

THE INTENSITY ESCALATES ...

- a. What must we realize about the threefold confederacy aiming to tear down God’s law on a global level? Revelation 16:13, 14; 1 Thessalonians 5:3, 4.

Note: “As the controversy extends into new fields and the minds of the people are called to God’s downtrodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite.” *Maranatha*, 172.

“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience. ...

“Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium.” *Ibid.*, 190.

- b. What sentiment of the psalmist can surely be echoed today? Psalm 119:126.

Note: “The time in which we live is one of marked depravity. Religious restraint is thrown off, and men reject the law of God as unworthy of their attention. A more than common contempt is placed upon this holy law. ...

The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.

“Men are now passing the boundary line, and the Lord is permitting the enemy to do his will. ... The tread of the Lord will be heard upon the land and upon the water. For His own honor’s sake, God is now about to repress iniquity. He will soon, very soon, vindicate the claims of His law.” *The Review and Herald*, November 23, 1905.

Tuesday

THE FINAL EXIT

- a. Name one warning Christ gave that has a distinct application in our day—as a final sign that the mission is accomplished. Matthew 24:15–19. What factors should we consider at this late hour? Revelation 3:11.

Note: “It is no time now for God’s people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in

secluded places among the mountains. And now, instead of seeking expensive dwellings here, we should be preparing to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Instead of spending our means in self-gratification, we should be studying to economize. Every talent lent of God should be used to His glory in giving the warning to the world. God has a work for His collaborators to do in the cities. Our missions must be sustained; new missions must be opened. To carry forward this work successfully will require no small outlay. Houses of worship are needed, where the people may be invited to hear the truths for this time. For this very purpose, God has entrusted a capital to His stewards. Let not your property be tied up in worldly enterprises, so that this work shall be hindered. Get your means where you can handle it for the benefit of the cause of God. Send your treasures before you into heaven.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 464, 465.

- b. Amid the impending woe, where does God want us to focus? Isaiah 26:3, 4.

Note: “Think of Jesus. He is in His holy place, not in a state of solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand of heavenly angels who wait to do His bidding. And He bids them go and work for the weakest saint who puts his trust in God. High and low, rich and poor, have the same help provided.” *The Faith I Live By*, 205.

Wednesday

KEEPING OUR FOCUS

- a. Explain the real issue at stake in the final test—and how, according to the apostle Peter, we are to be daily preparing to meet it. Revelation 13:11, 15–17; Acts 5:29.

Note: “The time will come when men will not only forbid Sunday work, but they will try to force men to labor on the Sabbath, and to subscribe to Sunday observance or forfeit their freedom and their lives.” *The Review and Herald*, April 6, 1911.

- b. What gracious promises reveal the tender watchcare of our heavenly Father in that trying hour? Psalms 31:19, 20; 91:5–7; Isaiah 26:20, 21.

Note: “[Isaiah 26:20 quoted.] What are the chambers in which they [God’s people] are to hide? They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth.

“I saw the saints leaving the cities and villages, and associating together in companies, and living in the most solitary places. Angels provided them food and water, while the wicked were suffering from hunger and thirst.

“During the night a very impressive scene passed before me. There seemed to be great confusion and the conflict of armies. A messenger from the Lord stood before me, and said, ‘Call your household. I will lead you; follow me.’ He led me down a dark passage, through a forest, then through the clefts of mountains, and said, ‘Here you are safe.’ There were others who had been led to this retreat. The heavenly messenger said, ‘The time of trouble has come as a thief in the night, as the Lord warned you it would come.’

“In the time of trouble just before the coming of Christ, the righteous will be preserved through the ministration of heavenly angels; but there will be no security for the transgressor of God’s law. Angels cannot then protect those who are disregarding one of the divine precepts.

“In the closing period of earth’s history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right.” *Maranatha*, 270.

Thursday

A GLORIOUS DELIVERANCE!

- a. With what sober thoughts should we be fortifying the mind right now? Mark 8:38; Revelation 22:7, 12.

Note: “We are anxiously awaiting His [the Lord’s] coming. We need to keep the armor on. We need to be all that the name Christian signifies. We need to live in habitual communion with God our Savior, abiding in Him.

“Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. ... Shall we then be timid and cowardly because of the trials we meet as we advance? Shall we not meet them without repining and complaints?” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, 167.

- b. What happens when Jesus returns? Psalm 50:3–6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18.

Note: “Soon appeared the great white cloud. On it sat the Son of man. ...

“No language can describe the glory of the scene. The living cloud of majesty and unsurpassed glory came still nearer, and we could clearly behold the lovely person of Jesus. He did not wear a crown of thorns but a crown of glory. ...

“On either side of the cloudy chariot were wings, and beneath it were living wheels; and as the cloudy chariot rolled upward, the wheels cried, Holy, and the wings, as they moved, cried, Holy, and the retinue of holy angels around the cloud cried, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. And the saints in the cloud cried, Glory, Alleluia. And the chariot rolled upward to the holy city.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, 206–208.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Today, as everyone is so busy, what plot does the enemy of souls have?
- 2 Explain the threefold union of Revelation 16 and its global deceptive power.
- 3 The serious message of country living has been taught since the 1880s, but at what point does it become irreversibly necessary for the believers’ safety?
- 4 Is the test looming on the horizon simply about resting on Sunday? Explain.
- 5 What should be foremost in our mind as we prepare for Jesus’ return?

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with
Pastor John Grosboll

SEPTEMBER 7 & 8, 2018

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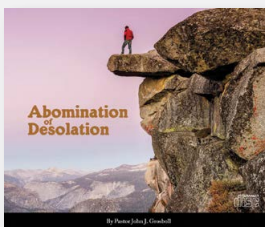
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1 cantaloupe

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