

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

2019

Happy New Year!

*Remember
the Sabbath day
to keep it holy.*

p. 2

*Tour of
Waldensian
Valleys*

p. 14



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

How the Holy Spirit Works

The Saviour's eye penetrates the future; He beholds the broader fields in which, after His death, the disciples are to be witnesses for Him. His prophetic glance takes in the experience of His servants through all the ages till He shall come the second time. He shows His followers the conflicts they must meet; He reveals the character and plan of the battle. He lays open before them the perils they must encounter, the self-denial that will be required. . . . They are to contend with supernatural forces, but they are assured of supernatural help. All the intelligences of heaven are in this army. And more than angels are in the ranks. The Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord's host, comes down to direct the battle." *The Desire of Ages*, 352.

"Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal. Ibid., 388.

"At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer." Ibid., 669.

"In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. . . . It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church. Ibid., 671. **LM**

Cover photo:

Aurora borealis in Lofoten Islands, Norway.

HISTORIC
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OF ADVENTISM

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Subscriptions

United States: 1 year, \$35.00
Other countries: Cost of postage only

If you are unable to purchase a subscription, please request a gift subscription.

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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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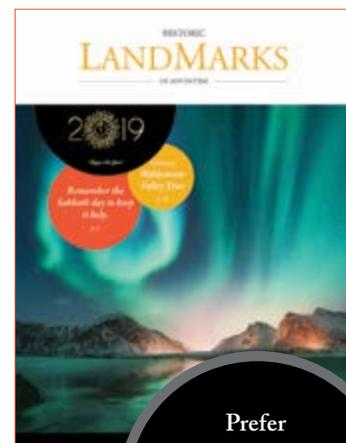
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Sabbath

in the Time of Jesus

By John J. Grosboll

The Sabbath, along with marriage, was first introduced in the Garden of Eden to our first parents. Since then there has been a controversy over the day that the Creator set aside to be a blessing to His people. When on earth, Jesus had many controversies with the Jews over the Sabbath. Who better to understand the meaning of Sabbath than the Creator Himself, but the Jews had conjured up a lot of manmade rules they thought would make them holy. They used these manmade rules to judge others, even Jesus, accusing Him of breaking the Sabbath.

By distorting the actual words of Jesus, Christians today believe that He invalidated the Sabbath. It is claimed that the Sabbath was blotted out by Jesus' death on the cross. The texts commonly used to try to prove this are Colossians 2:14–17.

Paul 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. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Therefore, let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon, or sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" (literal translation).

We know that Jesus' death did not blot out the Sabbath, and that Colossians 2:14–17 is not talking about the blotting out of the Sabbath, for the following reasons:

1. In verse 14, Paul uses the phrase, "blotting out the handwriting." The Ten Commandments were not handwritten. We all write by hand but God does not, He uses His finger. "And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18).
- Deuteronomy 9:10 says, "Then the LORD delivered to me (Moses) two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly."
2. The Sabbath of the Lord was made before sin entered the world. It is not, therefore, one of those things "which are a shadow of things to come" that foreshadow redemption from sin. It was given as a memorial of creation.

3. The Sabbath was made for man before the fall. It is not one of those things that are against him, and contrary to him, as Paul said of the ordinances in Colossians 2:14. The Sabbath was given to be a blessing to man.
4. When the ceremonial sabbaths were ordained, they were carefully distinguished from the seventh-day Sabbath, which is called the Sabbath of the Lord.

Leviticus 23 describes all of the ceremonial sabbaths:

- the Passover, "the fourteenth day of the first month" (verse 5);
- the Feast of Unleavened Bread on "the fifteenth day" (verse 6);
- "the seventh day" of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (verse 8);
- the Feast of the Firstfruits, the wave sheaf (verses 9–11).

Remember, there was a Passover, then a first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the fifteenth day. Then the next day (the sixteenth day), stated in verse 11, was "the day after the sabbath [when] the priest shall wave" the wave sheaf.

Let's look at the order of events from the crucifixion of Christ until He returns:

- Christ was crucified on Friday, or Good Friday. That was Passover, the fourteenth day of the first month.
- The fifteenth day, which was the seventh-day Sabbath, was also a ceremonial Sabbath. That is why it was called in the gospel of John, "a

high day" (John 19:31). It was the first Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first ceremonial Sabbath.

- The sixteenth day was a Sunday, the day they were to wave the wave sheaf. The wave sheaf represented the firstfruits. Jesus Christ and those who were raised with Him were the firstfruits. 1 Corinthians 15:23 says, "... each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming." Christ rose on the exact day so that type (the foreshadow) would meet antitype (the real).
- The Feast of Weeks followed: "And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD" (Leviticus 23:15, 16). Fifty days later was Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out.
- Then came the Feast of Trumpets (verse 23), which was the first day of the seventh month to warn the people that the Day of Judgment was coming.
- The Day of Atonement was next (verses 26–33), which was the tenth day of the seventh month.
- Then the Feast of Tabernacles (verse 34) began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month.

After these ceremonial sabbaths are listed, Moses says in verses 37 and 38, "These are the feasts of the LORD which

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The Sabbath of the Lord
was made before sin entered
the world. It was given as a
memorial of creation.”

you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—**besides** the Sabbaths of the LORD.”

[Emphasis supplied.] Notice that these are ceremonial sabbaths, yearly feast days, that are **in addition** to the Sabbaths of the Lord, **in addition** to your vows and your freewill offerings. When the ceremonial sabbaths were ordained, they were carefully distinguished from the Sabbaths of the Lord.

5. The Sabbath of the Lord does not owe its existence to any handwriting of any ordinances, but is contained in the heart of the Ten Commandments, which Jesus said He did not come to destroy (Luke 16:17) or blot out by His death.

6. The effort of Jesus throughout His entire ministry was to redeem the Sabbath from the thralldom of the Jewish doctors and to vindicate it as a merciful institution. Jesus claimed that it was lawful to do what He did on the Sabbath. He said, “If you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (Matthew 12:7, 8).

Jesus claimed to be keeping the Sabbath, not according to Jewish traditions, but according to the law of God. “So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, ‘Arise and stand

here.’ And he arose and stood. Then Jesus said to them, ‘I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?’ And looking around at them all, He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other” (Luke 6:7–10, literal translation).

Jesus continually pointed out the hypocrisy of the Jews, especially in regard to the Sabbath. While criticizing Him for healing on Sabbath, they circumcised babies if the eighth day fell on Sabbath (John 7:21–24).

While Jesus redeemed the Sabbath from the thralldom of Jewish customs, He did not invalidate or depreciate it.

7. The Lord’s instruction to His disciples concerning their flight from Jerusalem, which was to occur many years after the crucifixion, recognized the sacredness of the Sabbath, as found in Matthew 24:20: “Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.”

Opponents of the Sabbath came up with the argument against this verse saying they could not flee on the Sabbath because the gates of Jerusalem would be shut and they could not get out. This is pure speculation and not only can it not be proven, there is pretty good evidence that it just wasn’t so.

Nehemiah 13:15–19 says, “In those days I saw people in Judea treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, ‘What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.’ So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began



“

Jesus claimed to be keeping the Sabbath, not according to Jewish traditions, but according to the law of God.

to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day.”

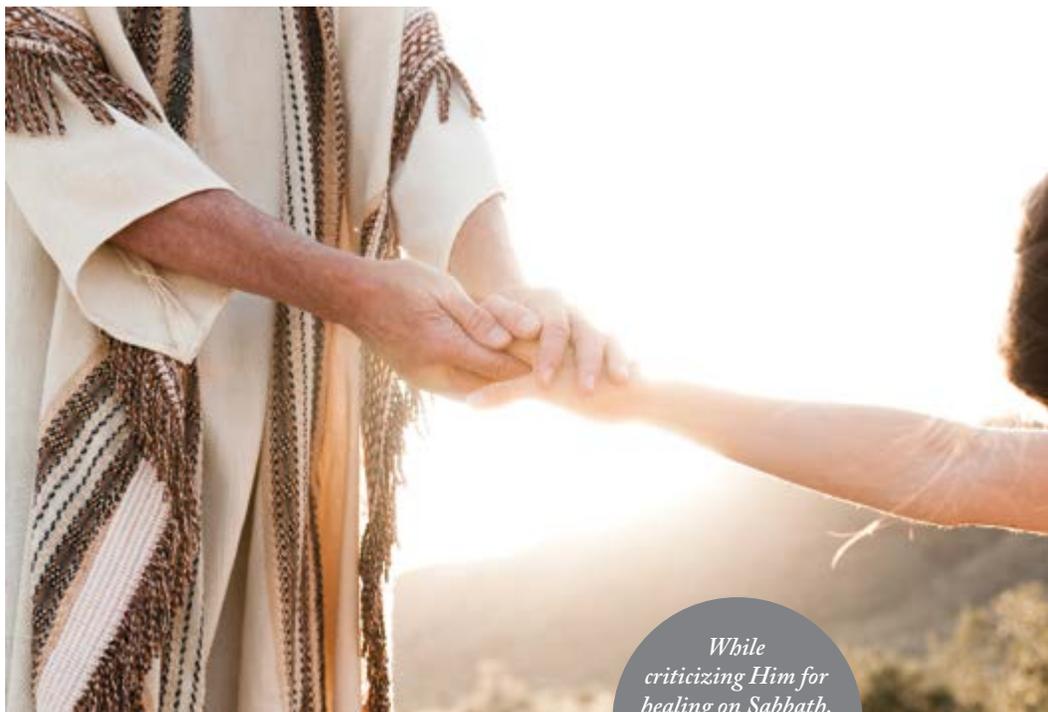
Verse 22 says, “And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should go and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day.”

The gates were guarded to prevent people from hauling their carts back and forth on the Sabbath with all their merchandise for selling. A person was not prohibited from going in or out of the city on the Sabbath. Jesus often came from the Mount of Olives and into the temple to teach the people on the Sabbath.

Jeremiah said, “Say to them, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. Thus says the LORD: “Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; nor carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers” ’” (Jeremiah 17:20–22).

These instructions were given to prevent trading and carrying on business on the Sabbath. It was not wrong to carry something on the Sabbath. Jesus was accused when He healed the man by the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath day when He told him to take his bed and go. The man rolled up his mat, his bed, and put it on his shoulder. When he started to walk away, he was accused of breaking the Sabbath. It was not wrong to carry his mat with him on the Sabbath. He would need it when it was time to sleep again.

Our Lord’s instruction to His disciples concerning their flight from Jerusalem, many years after His crucifixion, recognized the sacredness of the Sabbath (Matthew 24:20).



While criticizing Him for healing on Sabbath, they circumcised babies if the eighth day fell on Sabbath.

8. The Sabbath in the new earth will be a perpetual reminder of the Creation. “For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD” (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

It would make no sense that in the new earth throughout eternity that every Sabbath all flesh is to come and worship before the Lord if the Sabbath was obliterated at the cross.

9. Many years after the crucifixion of Christ, the authority of the fourth commandment was recognized. We read in Luke 23:54–56, written many years after the cross: “That day (when

Jesus died on the cross) was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.”

10. The royal law, which was not abolished, includes the ten commandments and consequently embraces and enforces the Sabbath of the Lord. James 2:10–12 says, “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.” There is

no doubt that the “law of liberty” is the Ten Commandments.

- ii. The Ten Commandments are not ten separate laws, but one law. By breaking any part of the ten, the whole law is broken. “The LORD said to Moses, ‘Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them’” (Exodus 24:12).

Notice, it is the law that God has written. That is singular—one law. If you break one, you are a law-breaker. Psalm 89:34 says, “My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.”

Some argue that time may have been lost. Therefore, how do we really know which day the Biblical Sabbath was? The death of Jesus confirms time. Luke 23:54 says, “That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.” The Christian world today calls the day that Jesus died on the cross Good Friday. So Good Friday is the day before the Sabbath. “They returned, prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment” (verse 56).

“Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared” (Luke 24:1). This passage of Scripture raises several points:

- It contains an express recognition of the fourth commandment. It was written many years after the crucifixion of Jesus.
- It is the most remarkable case of Sabbath observance in the whole

Bible. The Lord of the Sabbath was dead, and preparation was being made to embalm Him. But, when the Sabbath drew on, the preparations were suspended while they rested according to the Sabbath.

- It shows that the Sabbath is the day before the first day of the week that we call Sunday, thus identifying the seventh day in the commandment as our Saturday.
- It is a direct testimony that the knowledge of the true seventh-day was preserved as late as the crucifixion, for it says, “They observed the Sabbath according to the commandment.”

Many think that when Jesus rose from the dead, the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. To determine the truth of those assertions, look at all the records in the New Testament of these events:

Matthew 28:1: “Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.”

He had already risen.

Mark 16:1, 2: “Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.”

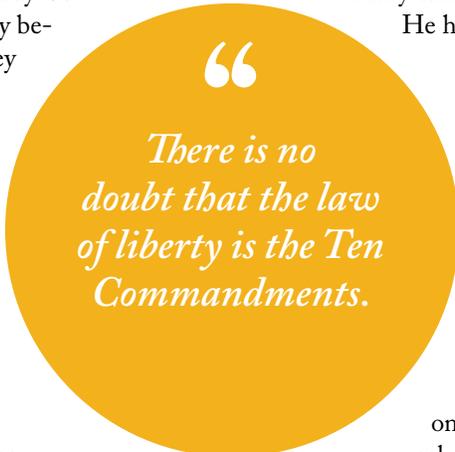
Mark 16:9: “Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.”

Luke 24:1: “On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.”

John 20:1; 19: “Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.” “Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be to you.’”

Some conclusions can be drawn from these verses:

1. There is no mention of any change of the Sabbath.
 2. They carefully distinguish between the Sabbath and the first day of the week.
 3. They apply no sacred title to the first day of the week, and they do not refer to it as a Sabbath.
 4. They make no mention of Christ resting on the first day of the week, which would be absolutely essential if the first day of the week was a rest day. The word *Sabbath* means *rest*. Throughout the Old Testament the word *Sabbath* from Genesis and on can be translated *rest* or *rest day*.
- In order for the rest day to be transferred to Sunday, Jesus would had to have rested on this first Sunday. The trouble is, these verses make no mention of Christ resting on the first day of the week.
5. They make no mention of God removing His blessing from the seventh day. Remember, after God had completed His creation He rested on the seventh day, He blessed it and sanctified it and made it holy (Genesis 2:2, 3).
 6. They give no precept in support of first day observance, nor do they contain a hint of the manner in which the first day of the week can be enforced by authority of the fourth commandment.



“There is no doubt that the law of liberty is the Ten Commandments.”



While Jesus redeemed the Sabbath from the thrall of Jewish customs, He did not invalidate or depreciate it.

When people read these verses, it is claimed that Jesus met with His disciples on the first day of the week after His resurrection. Let's examine this claim.

In Luke 24:29 Jesus is walking with two disciples on the way to Emmaus. It says, "But they constrained Him, saying, 'Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.' And He went in to stay with them."

It was the first day of the week and the sun was just about to go down. They prepared a meal, sat down and as Jesus blessed the food they noticed the nail prints in His hand. They recognized Him, and instantly He vanished, and they said, "Did not our hearts burn within us" (verse 32)? They were so excited about the most wonderful news that they didn't even eat their meal and left the food right there on the table. "So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together" (verse 33). Emmaus was about seven miles from Jerusalem along a hilly and rocky road that they travelled after dark.

In Jewish time the evening and the morning were one day, meaning the next day began at sunset.

- The first meeting that Jesus had with His disciples was not on Sunday but after sunset on what we would now call Sunday evening, the beginning of Monday.
- The second meeting would be either Monday or Tuesday, however you would reckon it. The first meeting was on Sunday night, or the beginning of Monday. In John 20:26 it says, "And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!'"
- The third meeting, we are not told what day of the week it was, but that the disciples had been out fishing all night.
- The fourth meeting when He met with them all as a group was forty days after the resurrection on the day He ascended to heaven. Forty days after the resurrection (Sunday), was actually a Friday.

There is no evidence to show that there was any change or transfer of holiness or any blessing given to Sunday as the first day of the week, a day to go to church, or anything else—Sunday sacredness is a manmade institution. The memorial for Christ's death and resurrection is baptism and the communion service—the ordinances of the New Covenant.

We are told that the Sabbath/Sunday issue will be the conflict that divides the whole world into two camps at the end of the world. "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21).

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

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The Assurance of Salvation

From the Lives of Two Patriarchs

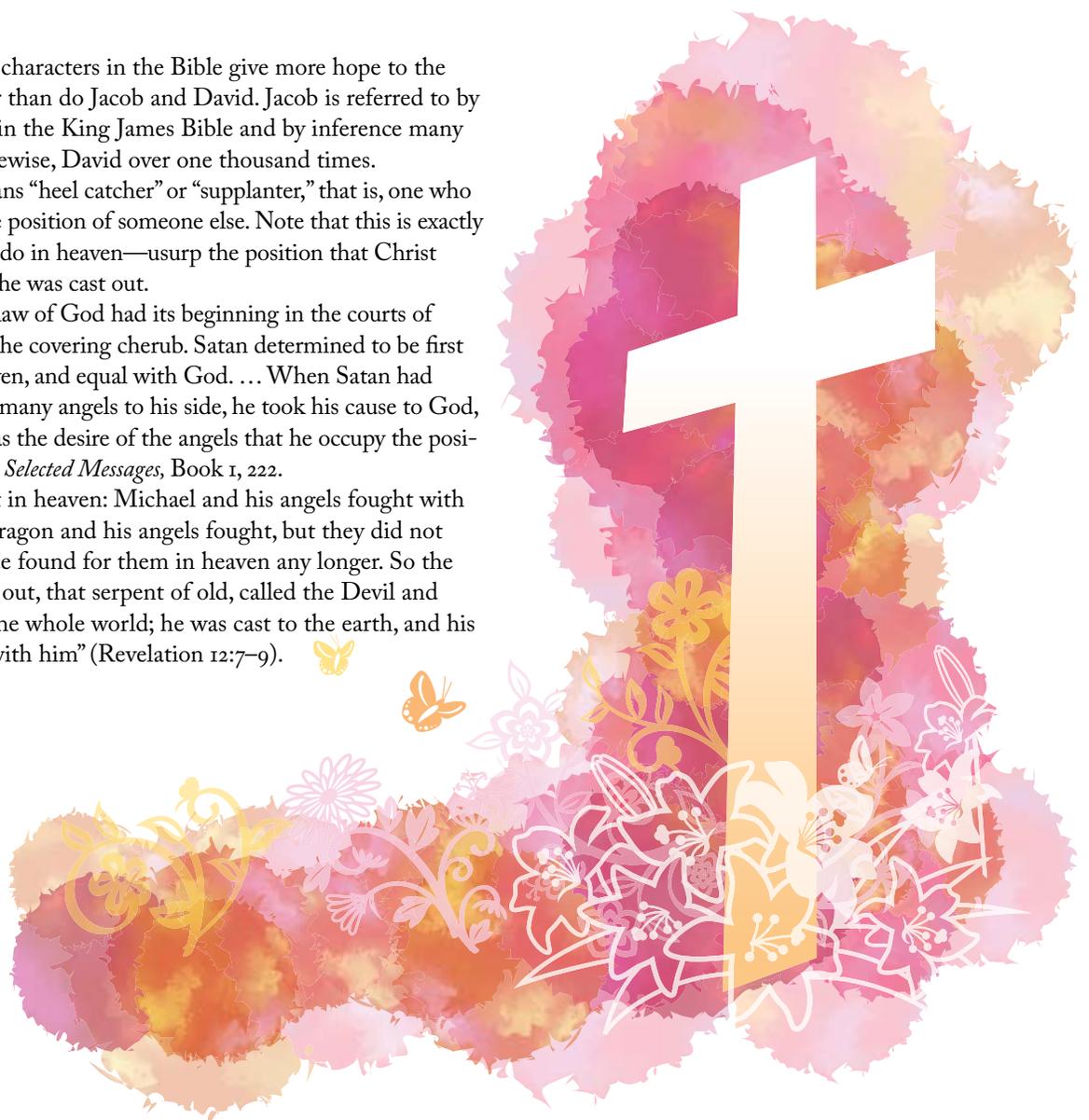
By John R. Pearson

Perhaps no other characters in the Bible give more hope to the repentant sinner than do Jacob and David. Jacob is referred to by name 377 times in the King James Bible and by inference many more times. Likewise, David over one thousand times.

The name *Jacob* means “heel catcher” or “supplanter,” that is, one who displaces or usurps the position of someone else. Note that this is exactly what Satan desired to do in heaven—usurp the position that Christ held—and as a result, he was cast out.

“Opposition to the law of God had its beginning in the courts of heaven, with Lucifer, the covering cherub. Satan determined to be first in the councils of heaven, and equal with God. ... When Satan had succeeded in winning many angels to his side, he took his cause to God, representing that it was the desire of the angels that he occupy the position that Christ held.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 222.

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:7–9).



The similarities between Satan's act of deception and that of Jacob are interesting to study.

"Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. . . . So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them" (Genesis 25:21, 24-26).

The story of Jacob's usurpation of Esau's birthright is told in Genesis 25 and 27. He colluded with his mother to deceive his father and obtain the birthright that, according to custom, belonged to Esau.

This is the point at which the similarities between Jacob's and Satan's stories diverge. Satan has continued his relentless assault on Christ and His followers for millennia, while Jacob made a full surrender of heart and soul to Jesus and is regarded as a patriarch of the Christian faith.

In fact, when David was uttering his last words, Scripture refers to him as "The anointed of the God of Jacob": "Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1).

Although the text is specifically a reference to David's position with God, note that the verse also acknowledges that Jacob was considered a subject of high esteem who was under the domain of the God of the universe.

Considering that David was guilty of the death of Uriah, a violation of the sixth commandment, and Jacob was guilty of theft by deception, a violation of the eighth and ninth commandments, this one text shows that when one confesses and repents, acceptance into the kingdom of glory is assured.

This is not the only text that provides the assurance of salvation to David as a result of his confession and repentance. In 1 Kings 14:8, God's amazing grace is clearly revealed when He refers to David as, "My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only what was right in My eyes." This commendation occurs long after David's devising of the death of Uriah and shows how forgiving and forgetting God is when the sinner pleads for and complies with the conditions necessary for forgiveness.

Jacob, too, is reckoned in Scripture as being highly favored of God. On his initial flight from home, he had the well-known dream of the Ladder that extended from earth to heaven and received this wonderful promise: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you



David humbled himself and confessed his sin, while Saul despised reproof and hardened his heart in impenitence.

and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you" (Genesis 28:13-15).

After his decades of perhaps unwilling albeit faithful service to Laban, Jacob's faith in this promise was severely tested as he returned to the land that God had promised to him. Jacob received word that Esau was on his way to meet him with 400 men, with the apparent intent of fulfilling the vow he had made when he learned of Jacob's theft of his birthright: "So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, 'The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob'" (Genesis 27:41).

Familiar is the story of Jacob's wrestle with the Lord the night before his reunion with Esau, recorded in Genesis 32: "Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, 'Let Me go, for the day breaks.' But he said, 'I will not let You go unless You bless me!' So He said to him, 'What is your name?' He said, 'Jacob.' And He said, 'Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed'" (Genesis 32:24-28).

What wonderful and amazing reassurance the story of these two patriarchs provides the striving pilgrim today. Both Jacob and David are mentioned in Hebrews 11, the faith chapter, as being of the household of faith, in spite of their unrighteous acts. Their lives exemplify the fulfillment of God's promise, written by David in Psalm 103:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul;
 And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 And forget not all His benefits:
 Who forgives all your iniquities,
 Who heals all your diseases,
 Who redeems your life from destruction,
 Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
 Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
 So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
 The LORD executes righteousness
 And justice for all who are oppressed.
 He made known His ways to Moses,
 His acts to the children of Israel.
 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
 Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
 He will not always strive with us,
 Nor will He keep His anger forever.
 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
 Nor punished us according to our iniquities.
 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
 So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
 As far as the east is from the west,
 So far has He removed our transgressions from us”
 (Psalm 103:1–12).

David wrote this uplifting psalm after his prayer that God create in him a clean heart and renew a right spirit within him, having been made to realize his sin by Nathan (see Psalm 51:10). It is undeniable evidence of the assurance that the repentant sinner has of God’s forgiveness.

Inspiration also acknowledges the assurance of salvation the lives of these patriarchs offer the repentant soul.

“Jacob’s history is also an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been deceived and tempted and betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance. While Satan seeks to destroy this class, God will send His angels to comfort and protect them in the time of peril. The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his

delusions are terrible; but the Lord’s eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God’s love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.” *The Great Controversy*, 621.

“Though David had fallen, the Lord lifted him up. He was now more fully in harmony with God and in sympathy with his fellow men than before he fell. In the joy of his release he sang:

‘I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid.
 I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord;
 And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. ...
 Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble;
 Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance’
 (Psalm 32:5–7 KJV).

“Many have murmured at what they called God’s injustice in sparing David, whose guilt was so great, after having rejected Saul for what appear to them to be far less flagrant sins. But David humbled himself and confessed his sin, while Saul despised reproof and hardened his heart in impenitence.

“This passage in David’s history is full of significance to the repenting sinner. It is one of the most forcible illustrations given us of the struggles and temptations of humanity, and of genuine repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Through all the ages it has proved a source of encouragement to souls that, having fallen into sin, were struggling under the burden of their guilt. Thousands of the children of God, who have been betrayed into sin, when ready to give up to despair have remembered how David’s sincere repentance and confession were accepted by God, notwithstanding he suffered for his transgression; and they also have taken courage to repent and try again to walk in the way of God’s commandments.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 726.
 How blessed we are as modern Israelites to have such an indisputable record of our loving Father’s forgiveness!



All Bible quotes NKJV unless otherwise noted. [LM](#)

John R. Pearson is the office manager and a board member of Steps to Life. He may be contacted by email at: johnpearson@stepstolife.org.



Let Us Be Kind

Let us be kind:
The way is long and lonely
And human hearts are seeking for this blessing only—
That we be kind.
We cannot know the grief that men may borrow,
We cannot see the souls storm-swept by sorrow,
But love can shine upon the way today, tomorrow;
Let us be kind.

Let us be kind:
Around the world the tears of time are falling,
And for the loved and lost these human hearts are calling—
Let us be kind.
To age and youth let gracious words be spoken,
Upon the wheel of pain so many lives are broken,
We live in vain who give no tender token:
Let us be kind.

Let us be kind:
And when the angel guides have sought and found us,
Their hands shall link the broken ties of earth that bound us,
And heaven and home shall brighten all around us:
Let us be kind.

W. Lomax Childers, *The Christian's Experience*, Julius Gilbert White, 238.

A Concept of God

By Julius Gilbert White

Various Concepts of God

The world is full of a variety of ideas about God; certain ideas cause men to hate God; others to serve Him from fear; and others inspire men to adore Him so ardently that they delight to do His will and wish they could spend an eternity with Him. Our attitude toward Him depends quite fully on our ideas about Him—on our concept of the kind of God He is. Whether or not we will serve Him depends largely, then, upon what we think about Him. Therefore it is of first importance that we *know* Him.

The True God Should be Truly Understood - The Origin of Mis-concepts

Go back in time about 6,000 years to an Eden home of perfect bliss which a kind, loving God gave to the holy pair of innocents; they possessed perfect bodies and minds; their minds were full of joy; and their bliss was to be everlasting.

But an enemy came, saying,

- 1 God did not tell you the truth when He said you would die if you eat of this tree; you cannot depend on what He says. You will not die.
- 2 You will enter a higher state—become like God—if you eat the fruit; He is keeping from you that which is for your good; He is hindering your advancement; therefore He is unkind and does not love you as He claims to do.
- 3 He has placed a very strict regulation around you forbidding you to do the things which are for your good; such regulations are unjust; He is not fair with you.
- 4 In thus treating you He is curtailing your liberty—your rights; He is a tyrant!
- 5 If He were infinite in wisdom, as He says He is, He would know better than to manage His affairs of state like this; He would change His methods. Such a course is bound to fail; He cannot succeed; He claims infinite power, but no amount of power can perpetuate a government based upon injustice; and so on.



Thus he gave to Eve a false description of God to change her concept of Him so as to change her attitude toward Him so she would cease to serve Him and turn against Him.

Had Eve continued to believe in God as He really was, she would not have turned from Him; she believed the misrepresentation of Him and so took her stand against Him.

That experience was the beginning of all false concepts of God in this world. From that day until this, Satan has sought to make the service of God seem *undesirable* by putting Him and His ideas in a *false light*. Among the heathen will be found idols to represent their concepts of God, and some of these are more horrid than any human mind could conceive, apparently trying to make idols as bad in looks as they believe their gods to be in fact.

Satan works in every conceivable way to impart distorted concepts of every kind about God.

On the other hand, God has been working to help men to see Him as He really is; but error always has the advantage over truth because error can use methods to propagate itself which truth cannot use. This is one reason why truth sometimes waits a long time for vindication.

God Must Be Revealed

Thus the conflict—the greatest conflict that has ever raged in the minds of men—is about God!

One author has said, “No science is equal to the science that reveals the character of God.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 393.

Therefore a gospel, if it is to cause men to return from their departure from Him, must begin its work for sinners by *restoring a true knowledge of God*, and this must ever be its true drawing power; His characteristics must be revealed to the people so they will see that He is “the chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely” (Song of Solo-



The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government.

mon 5:10, 16); that He is the embodiment of all that is desirable, and that all *good* comes from Him.

One day Moses asked God to reveal Himself to him, and in response to the request God presented the words, “mercy,” “graciousness,” and “goodness,” meaning that it is by such attributes that the Great I AM wishes to be known among men (Exodus 33:18, 19). This concept of God must become the drawing power of the redemption plan.

Christ's First Objective

When the Son of God came to this earth to expound redemption and win sinners back to God, His first objective must be to reveal the true character of God; they must be won by being *captivated by His loveliness*, He can offer to die for them—He may die for them ten thousand times—but if they are *not interested in God* they cannot become interested in returning to His service, and the atonement would not be accepted, and He would *die in vain*. The first step in offering the gospel must be to help them to *understand* God. A dark cloud hung over the minds of men shutting out the true conception of God and hiding His true attitude toward them. If men only knew Him and how He really feels toward them, their hearts would be

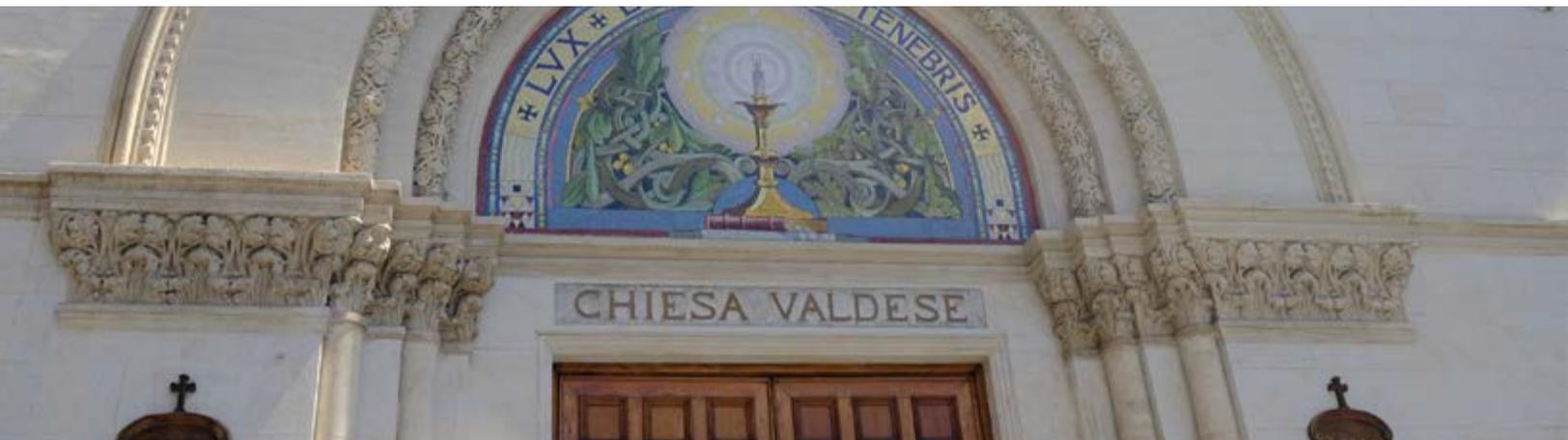
won and they would adore and love and serve Him forever.

Not by Force

“The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, ‘with healing in His wings’ (Malachi 4:2).” *The Desire of Ages*, 22.

For these reasons the conflict rages—Satan ever striving to conceal God, to misconstrue His motives and character and to confuse the minds of men concerning Him, and God ever at work to impart a true knowledge of Himself.

The Christian's Experience, 221–223. [All emphasis author's.] **LM**



Tour of Waldensian Valleys

By John R. Pearson

In February, I received an invitation to join a tour of the Waldensian Valleys in northern Italy. Having read about the Waldensians in *The Great Controversy*, I had always been impressed by their steadfast adherence to the word of God as given in the Bible and intrigued by their determination to remain true to that word in spite of the efforts of the papacy to force them to yield to the authority of the “church.”

I eagerly signed up and looked forward with great anticipation to the trip, never having been to Europe before.

Prior to the trip, tour participants received detailed instructions regarding a rendezvous point at the airport in Milan. Each member was to have a brightly colored sign, inscribed “WALDENSIAN TOUR,” which enabled us to gather at the airport in Milan without too much difficulty.

We climbed into three nine-passenger vans and left Milan for La Gianavella, the youth hostel where we were to make our headquarters for the next week. La Gianavella is a historical structure dating

back to the 17th century, built by Josué Janavel (1617-1690), a prominent hero who fought against the Savoy Duke, persecutor of the Waldensian people and representative of papal authority. The hostel overlooks the Rorà valley, hidden in a chestnut woodland. It is reached by a tortuous and winding one lane dirt road, high up in the Italian Alps.

From my previous reading about the Waldensians in *The Great Controversy* and in J. A. Wylie’s *History of the Waldenses*, I had assumed that this sect faithfully adhered to the commandments of God. I learned during this trip that the primary point of contention between the Waldensians and the papacy was where authority lay – the church versus the Bible, and was not specifically a Sabbath vs. Sunday issue. I knew that historically the Waldensians were Sabbath keepers and assumed that they continued to remain faithful to the fourth commandment to this day.

I was startled and dismayed to learn that in 1975, they entered into an “integration covenant” with the Italian

Methodist churches, having ultimately capitulated to the rules of the church as opposed to the law of God.

In spite of this disappointing discovery, it was inspiring to visit several of the Waldensian churches scattered throughout the valleys of the Italian Alps and learn the history of their valiant fight against papal authority, which dates back to the 12th century. It then took less than a hundred years for the Waldensians to be declared heretical and subjected to intense persecution.

In the 16th century, Waldensian leaders embraced the Protestant Reformation and joined various local Protestant regional entities. As early as 1631, Protestant scholars and Waldensian theologians themselves began to regard the Waldensians as early forerunners of the Reformation, who had maintained the apostolic faith in the face of Catholic oppression. The group was nearly annihilated in the 17th century and was confronted with organized and general discrimination in the centuries that followed.

When the Waldensians were chased from the Pellice Valley by the Duke of Savoy, they retreated into several deep valleys in the Italian Alps, eventually establishing churches, where their presence is still very prominent. The world headquarters of the Waldensian Church, its synod, is located in Torre Pellice, a now thriving town in northern Italy. The Waldensian Museum is located across a pedestrian thoroughfare from the synod building. Unfortunately, it was closed for renovation when we were there.

Our visit included stops at one of the caves where several hundred Waldensians hid from their persecutors, similar to the one where many were suffocated when the entrance was blocked, barricaded with flammable materials, and set afire—simply because they would not capitulate to papal authority.

Another inspiring site we visited was the precipice where those faithful to God’s word were thrown to their deaths unless they acknowledged the authority of the “church” as superior to the Bible.

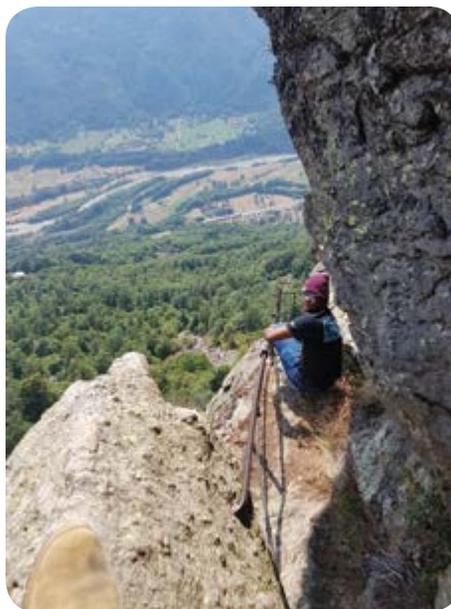
Being a father and a grandfather, I had quite an emotional experience as I envisioned whole families making the steep trek up the mountain to their deaths, the fathers attempting to reassure their children of the love of God in spite of their ultimate fate.

We also visited the “infirmary,” where the Waldensians attempted to hide their elderly and infirm, a narrow, almost inaccessible ledge, invisible from above, that could be reached only by an extremely difficult descent through a narrow gap between huge boulders.

The determination and strong will of these faithful souls became more and more apparent as we toured the various places where they clung so tenaciously to their beliefs, beliefs which were based solely and completely on the Bible.

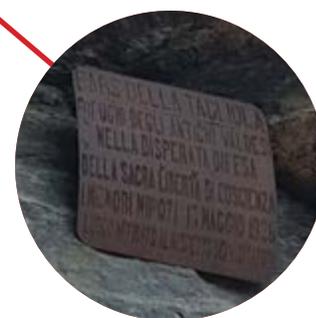
Perhaps, then, you can imagine my shock when I learned that today, the majority of those adhering to the Waldensian faith are Sunday keepers. It took centuries for the papacy to gain the victory, which testifies to the relentless efforts the enemy of souls exerts to lead souls astray.

What a lesson this is for us today. Will we, individually or as a sect, eventually yield to Satan’s subtle but relentless efforts to dissuade God’s people from the path of truth and righteousness? Or will we remain faithful to God’s word, even when threatened with death?



Top Left: One of the hiding places. Needless to say, the iron guardrail was not there when the Waldensians were attempting to hide their aged and infirm from the papal forces.

Top Right: The view from the “infirmary.”



The sign says in part “Refuge of the ancient Waldensians in desperate defense of the sacred freedom of conscience.”

NOTE: For further information on the current beliefs of the Waldensian Methodist church, visit their website at www.chiesavaldese.org/aria_video_category.php?video_category=2. Although the original is in Italian, Google will translate it into English. It is a sad revelation of the current state of a once-faithful people. **LM**

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Moses Sends Out Spies

Clues – Numbers 13 & 14 KJV

Across:

B1	Moses wanted the spies to determine if this was in the land	13:20
B8	When did Caleb want to go up to conquer the land? (two words)	13:30
C17	The people wanted to _____ Joshua and Caleb after their encouraging speech	14:10
D5	The ten untrusting spies thought they'd be like _____ to the inhabitants	13:33
E2	God to Moses: "How long will it be _____ they believe Me?"	14:11
F17	The ten untrusting spies feared the _____, sons of Anak	13:33
G2	In pleading for the people Moses reminded God that He was this	14:18
H16	Joshua and Caleb reasoned that the inhabitants did not have this	14:9
I1	How many men from each tribe were to go as spies?	13:2
J14	God spared Caleb because he had what spirit compared to the others?	14:24
K1	Joshua and Caleb said the land was this good	14:7
K11	The spy representing the tribe of Benjamin	13:9
L15	The untrusting spies feared the men of this stature	13:32
M1	The untrusting spies feared the walled _____	13:28
N6	The spies brought these back for the people to see	13:23
N19	Moses wanted the spies to see if this was fat or lean	13:20
P6	Because of their rebellion God wanted to _____ the people with pestilence	14:12
P13	The consequences of sin sometimes extend to this generation	14:18
Q18	The untrusting spies gave this kind of report	13:32
R1	For their rebellion everyone twenty and _____ would die in the wilderness	14:29
S7	God condemned the untrusting spies for bringing this upon the land	14:36
S18	The murmuring people wished they had _____ in Egypt	14:2

Down:

A8	The spies searched the land for forty _____	13:25
B3	Caleb insisted they were well able to _____ the land	13:30
B6	God: for your rebellion your _____ shall fall in this wilderness	14:29
B12	The rebellious people wanted to make a _____ to lead them back to Egypt	14:4
B19	In sending out the spies Moses told them to be of good _____	13:20
B21	In sending out the spies Moses wanted to see if the people were _____ or many	13:18
C14	The untrusting spies saw the cities as this (two words)	13:28
D9	Two men carried produce on this	13:23
F17	To spare the people Moses appealed to God and the _____ of His mercy	14:19
I8	At the people's rebellion Joshua and Caleb did this to their clothes	14:6
J4	Joshua and Caleb told the people the Lord could do this in them	14:8
J12	God to Moses: send men to _____	13:2
J15	When did the people weep at the ten spies' report?	14:1
K6	Because the people _____ the promised land God would give it to their children	14:31
K21	God was amazed that the people would not believe Him after all these	14:11
L10	The spies brought these back for the people to see (singular)	13:23

A	2	3	4	5	6	7		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	A	
																						B
C																						C
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1		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		17		19	20	21	22	

- L19 Moses to God: Egyptians will _____ other nations if You destroy Your people 14:13, 14
- O2 The spies brought a huge cluster of these back to the people 13:23
- P8 The spy representing the tribe of Issachar 13:7
- P13 Joshua and Caleb urged the people to not have this of the people of the land 14:9
- P16 Joshua and Caleb urged the people to not do this to God 14:9
- P18 All the spies were this of the children of Israel 13:3
- P20 The spies entered the land at the _____ of first ripe grapes 13:20
- Q11 Moses instructed the spies to determine if the land was good or this 13:19

Answer Key:

22	12	10	02	19	17	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
S	D	E	I	R	E	R	S	L	A	N	D	E	S								S
R	W	V	B		V		V	A	R	D		V	A	P	W	A	U				U
O	L	I	V	E	E	E	B	G													O
P	T	H	T	F	O	U	R	T	E	S	M	I	T	S		T	P	R			P
S	L						N														O
D	N	V	L	A	T	E	S														N
W	G	E	S	H		V	I	S													C
L	I	L	G	R	E	A	T														L
K	S	K	N	T	I	P	A	L	P	A	L	G	E	D	I	N	G	E	C	X	E
J																					J
I																					I
C	E	N	F	E	N	D	E	R													H
G	G	R	G																		G
S	N	V	N	G																	F
E	R																				E
D	W	U	R	S																	D
C	O	N	E	S	T																C
B	F	C																			W
A	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21								A



Go Forward

The history of the children of Israel is written for the instruction and admonition of all Christians. When the Israelites were overtaken by dangers and difficulties, and their way seemed hedged up, their faith forsook them, and they murmured against the leader whom God had appointed for them. They blamed him [Moses] for bringing them into peril, when he had only obeyed the voice of God.



The divine command was: “Go forward.” They were not to wait until the way was made plain, and they could comprehend the entire plan of their deliverance. God’s cause is onward, and He will open a path before His people. To hesitate and murmur is to manifest distrust in the Holy One of Israel. God in His providence brought the Hebrews into the mountain fastnesses, with the Red Sea before them, that He might work out their deliverance and forever rid them of their enemies. He might have saved them in any other way, but He chose this method in order to test their faith and strengthen their trust in Him.

We cannot charge Moses with being at fault because the people murmured against his course. It was their own rebellious, unsubdued hearts that led them to censure the man whom God had delegated to lead His people. While Moses moved in the fear of the Lord, and according to His direction, having full faith in His promises, those who should have upheld him became discouraged, and could see nothing before them but disaster, defeat, and death.

The Lord is now dealing with His people who believe present truth. He designs to bring about momentous results, and while in His providence He is working toward this end, He says to His people: “Go forward.” True, the path is not yet opened; but when they move on in the strength of faith and courage, God will make the way plain before their eyes. There are ever those who will complain, as did ancient Israel, and charge the difficulties of their position upon those whom God has raised up for the special purpose of advancing His cause. They fail to see that God is testing them by bringing them into strait places, from which there is no deliverance except by His hand.

There are times when the Christian life seems beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice

of God speaks clearly above all discouragements: “Go forward.” We should obey this command, let the result be what it may, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness and though we feel the cold waves about our feet.

Advance By Faith

The Hebrews were weary and terrified; yet if they had held back when Moses bade them advance, if they had refused to move nearer to the Red Sea, God would never have opened the path for them. In marching down to the very water, they showed that they had faith in the word of God as spoken by Moses. They did all that it was in their power to do, and then the Mighty One of Israel performed His part, and divided the waters to make a path for their feet.

The clouds that gather about our way will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Unbelief says: “We can never surmount these obstructions; let us wait until they are removed, and we can see our way clearly.” But faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things. Obedience to God is sure to bring the victory. It is only through faith that we can reach heaven.

There is great similarity between our history and that of the children of Israel. God led His people from Egypt into the wilderness, where they could keep His law and obey His voice. The Egyptians, who had no regard for the Lord, were encamped close by them; yet what was to the Israelites a great flood of light, illuminating the whole camp, and shed-

ding brightness upon the path before them, was to the hosts of Pharaoh a wall of clouds, making blacker the darkness of night.

So, at this time, there is a people whom God has made the depositories of His law. To those who obey them, the

commandments of God are as a pillar of fire, lighting and leading the way to eternal salvation.

But unto those who disregard them, they are as the clouds of night. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm

111:10). Better than all other knowledge is an understanding of the word of God. In keeping

His commandments there is great reward, and no earthly inducement should cause the Christian to waver for a moment in his allegiance. Riches, honor, and worldly pomp are but dross that shall perish before the fire of God’s wrath.

The voice of the Lord bidding His faithful ones “go forward” frequently tries their faith to the uttermost. But if they should defer obedience till every shadow of uncertainty was removed from their understanding, and there remained no risk of failure or defeat, they would never move on at all. Those who think it impossible for them to yield to the will of God and have faith in His promises until all is made clear and plain before them, will never yield at all. Faith is not certainty of knowledge; it “is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). To obey the commandments of God is the only way to obtain His favor.

“Go forward” should be the Christian’s watchword.

Testimony Treasures, vol. 1, 450–452. **LM**



The Wheat, the Tares, and Uncertain Voices

By Ellen G. White

“ I see perplexities on every side. As character develops man and woman will take their position, for varied circumstances brought to bear upon them will cause them to reveal the spirit which prompts them to action. Every one will reveal the character of the bundle with which he is binding himself. The wheat is being bound up for the heavenly garner. The true people of God are now bound up for the heavenly garner. The true people of God are now pulling apart, and the tares are being bound in bundles ready to burn. Decided positions will be taken. Satan will move upon minds that have been indulged, upon men who have always had their own way, and anything presented to them in counsel or reproof to change

their objectionable traits of character is considered faultfinding, binding them, restraining them, that they cannot have liberty to act themselves. The Lord in great mercy has sent messages of warning to them, but they would not listen to reproof. Like the enemy who rebelled in heaven, they do not like to hear, do not correct the wrong they have done but become accusers, declaring themselves misused and unappreciated. Now is the time of trial, of test, of proving.” *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 995, 996. “Dark hours of trial are before the church because they have not obeyed the warnings and reproofs and counsel of God. What a bewitching power comes upon human minds to do contrary to the oft repeated will of God, and close the eyes

and stop the ears, when Jesus is calling to them to hear His voice. He says, ‘My sheep hear My voice’ (John 10:27).

“That night in that boat was to the disciples a school where they were to receive their education for the great work which was to be done afterwards. The dark hours of trial are to come to every one as a part of his education for higher work, for more devoted, consecrated effort. The storm was not sent upon the disciples to shipwreck them, but to test and prove them individually. Before the great trouble shall come upon the world such as has never been since there was a nation, those who have faltered and who would ignorantly lead in unsafe paths will reveal this before the real vital test, the last proving, comes, so that whatsoever they may say will not be regarded as voicing the True Shepherd. The time of our educating will soon be over. We have no time to lose in walking through clouds of doubt and uncertainty because of uncertain voices.” *Ibid.*, 1002.

(From a letter written by Ellen White to Elder S.N. Haskell, August 22, 1892). [LM](#)

“
*Every one will
reveal the character of
the bundle with which
he is binding himself.*”



*Heavenly Father:
Thank You for the
personalized hands that You
prepared for me and that nobody
can imitate. Help me to realize more
and more how special I am to You and
that I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Help me to reflect Your character every
moment that all minds around me will
be drawn heavenward to You and they
also may see the love You have for
them. Amen.*

YOU!

You are very special! Jesus loves you and He loves me. Jesus died for you and He died for me. When I first began studying the Bible, I would look around and think that if these nice people knew my past they would not be so nice to me. I was wrong to think that, because it is Jesus who died that you and I may have life and have it more abundantly. We are to look up at all times and not around at others. Remember, you are loved by God Himself and He gave His only Son for you.

“In this 23rd Psalm Jesus, the Good Shepherd is doing the anointing. It tells of the high esteem with which He holds you.

- You are ‘the apple of His eye,’
- You are the one for whom He was willing to pay such a price to redeem.

- You are the one to sit down with Him on His throne.
- You are a joint heir with the King of Kings.
- You are greatly beloved!

“Never question it, never doubt it. Think of it often, talk of His love for you. If, as several have said to me, I am concerned that I don’t love Him more. How can I?’ I tell them ‘don’t worry now about your lack of love for Him but think of how much He loves you, and love will in time beget love.’ Though there are over two billion people in the world, He loves you as though you were the only one. You are special to Him.

“A young American college woman was troubled about God being interested in her when there were so many hundreds of millions more important.

She came to her pastor with the query, ‘How can I believe that God is interested in me? There are two billion persons in the world, and He must be far too busy to think of one little atom like me.’ Whereupon the minister asked the girl to extend her hand. ‘Look at your fingers,’ he said, ‘Examine the lines. There are no others like them in all the world. You are handmade. Even your fingertips have had special attention from God.’ As the girl’s mind took hold of the idea, a great peace filled her soul, and, with a radiance in her face that was beautiful to behold, she exclaimed: ‘After this, when I grow doubtful, I will look at my “hand-carved” finger tips. They will prove to me that God is still interested in me, individually and personally.’” *The Lord is My Shepherd*, J.L. Tucker, 32, 33. **LM**

“Dear Steps to Life,
I am really enjoying your Sabbath program on the radio. I’m hooked on Judy, Elder Hoppe, Sabbath School lessons and the Marshall hour. Thank you for your ministry to me.”
—CWS, Florida

“Thank you for your article “The Family of God” in the September 2018 issue of *LandMarks*. I read it to our church as Sabbath School superintendent. The pastor asked me if I would read it again for the church service. Some asked for a copy of the article. It was a real blessing.”
—SB, Montana

January Sermon of the Month

The 70th Week and the Rapture

By Marshall Grosboll

The 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 is the only Bible prophecy pointing forward to Jesus’ baptism and was fulfilled by Him in A.D. 27. It has no application for the end of time.

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

January 2019

Dear Friend,

Sometimes when we think of our assigned mission—to take the three angels messages to all the world—we think of the work that needs to be done in China or India or Africa and people say, well I cannot go there because . . . There are many reasons people cannot go to a foreign country to spread the message. It is the same when we hear of people who do not have food to eat and are starving as a result. It is natural to think, “I cannot feed all of those people.” But, if I cannot be a foreign missionary, is there someone near me that I could witness to? Although I cannot feed the world, could I feed one or two hungry people?

Jesus said concerning Mary, “She has done what she could (Mark 14:8).” Jesus did not expect Mary to do what James or Peter or John were to do, but she did what she could and that was accepted. If you and I do what we can, we will be accepted too, in the day of judgment.

“With the whole world before them in need of the gospel, professed Christians congregate where they themselves can enjoy gospel privileges. They do not feel the necessity of occupying new territory, carrying the message of salvation into regions beyond. They refuse to fulfill Christ’s commission, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature’ (Mark 16:15). Are they less guilty than was the Jewish church? . . .

“There are many whose names are on the church books, but who are not under Christ’s rule. They are not heeding His instruction or doing His work. Therefore they are under the control of the enemy. They are doing no positive good; therefore they are doing incalculable harm. Because their influence is not a savor of life unto life, it is a savor of death unto death.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 303, 304.

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering

Papua New Guinea



Supporting Outreach Efforts

Lay Members Association of Free Seventh Day Adventists



Fields of healthy food grown to support the efforts of the Laymembers Association.

Top Left: Cabbage

Top Right: Sweet potatoes

Bottom: Peanuts

The members of the Lay Members Association of Papua New Guinea receive no regular support from outside sources and therefore have to generate income to sustain their work. Although the members strive to be faithful in tithes and offerings, their average modest income levels fail to provide sufficient funds for the vast amount of outreach work that the organization strives to accomplish.

To supplement the tithes and offerings given by their members, much volunteer labor goes into several farming programs that generate additional income. Members work on borrowed and donated land to raise peanuts, sweet potatoes, cabbage, and rice, among other crops, to create an income stream that will assist in the costs of their work.

These funds are used to hire meeting halls in cities, pay for transportation for their youth to travel to distant areas, purchase supplies for outreach work, and cover other necessary expenses.

While these dedicated souls are working diligently to sustain their outreach efforts, it is difficult to accumulate additional funds for major purchases. During the course of a typical year, the association holds Bible training camps, several camp meetings that are well-attended by both church members and the public, youth training camps, and multiple village outreach evangelistic series.

To assist them in acquiring their own means of transportation, support their efforts in establishing a permanent base from which to operate, and acquire much-needed public address systems, please mark your Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings PNG. [LM](#)



A Multi-faceted Effort

in Papua New Guinea



Lay Members at Work

The Lay Members Association of Papua New Guinea has been spreading the good news of the gospel since 1994, formally organizing in 1996.

There are now over 100 churches, with more than 5000 members served by 64 lay workers and six ordained pastors. They also have five evangelists working to spread the truth throughout the country. In addition there are ten medical missionaries and twenty young workers in training.

These evangelists and youth work together to evangelize primarily through street preaching. These dedicated workers will enter a town, set up a portable public address system on a busy street corner, and start preaching. In no time a crowd will gather to listen to their messages.

Papua New Guinea is an island country consisting of 22 provinces, with approximately 10 million inhabitants. Its citizens speak more than 800 different dialects and languages. There is a diversity of traditions and cultures, some Christian and some not. It is difficult to comprehend how challenging is the task of conveying the three angels' messages to all of these people, in what is considered to be the most culturally diverse country in the world.



Top Left: *Open-air preaching and teaching requires the use of a powerful public address system.*

Top Right: *Street preaching or public evangelism is one of the effective ways of gathering hundreds and thousands who come to listen at the public squares, national parks or lawns.*

Bottom Left: *Over 400 men and women attended the one month training program and were graduated with certificates in the medical and gospel field.*

The portion of the country known as the Eastern Highlands is a stronghold of Adventism. The work that ultimately resulted in the creation of the Lay Members Association of Seventh Day Adventists began here in 1994.

On their 20th anniversary, they held a lay evangelism and health training school. There were 400 inspired students who graduated with certificates of competence. This anniversary celebration was the culmination of many years of faithful work in all parts of the country.

Their goal now is to raise sufficient funds to establish a gospel medical missionary college. They want to erect a classroom for training, a medical health clinic, staff housing, an office complex, dormitories for boys and girls, and a kitchen and laundry block. Although this goal seems quite ambitious, they are determined to continue working to hasten the return of our Lord and Saviour.

Realizing that the establishment of a medical missionary college is a long term goal, they have several more immediate short-term needs.

Since much of this mountainous country is served only by rough dirt roads, almost impassible when the rains hit, they desperately need a sturdy four-wheel drive crew cab truck. Unfortunately, there is a 120% tariff on imported vehicles, making any vehicle quite expensive. Steps to Life is working with a ministry in New Zealand to try to obtain an exemption on the tariff to bring down the overall expense. We ask for your prayers in this endeavor.

There is also a need for a speaker system for the youth. A report in their last newsletter noted that the group was started by Pastor Harold Pieko and his children in 2013. It has grown rapidly from 13 members to 1500, with over 15 youth clubs. They are actively doing

evangelism every weekend in the villages and towns throughout Papua New Guinea, a work that would be made far easier with a reliable vehicle.

A big sound system costs around \$2500 and portable ones cost \$200. They clearly need a big one for their large gatherings, but they also need ten portable ones for their regional work, for a total cost of \$4500.

Through the generosity of one group, Steps to Life has acquired almost half of the funds required for this need. To help us acquire the remainder, please mark your mission field donations PNG. We are collecting funds both for the remainder of the amount needed for the sound system and for the acquisition of a crew cab truck to transport equipment and workers for their outreach efforts.

For the remaining months of this quarter, we will be providing additional information on the efforts of this dedicated group. [LM](#)



The Crow

Crows have proved they are anything but bird-brained on dozens of occasions, but some incredible new research shows that the dark masters of the avian world are perhaps even smarter than we ever realized.

A new study has found that New Caledonian crows (*Corvus moneduloides*) can make their own tools by combining several different independent parts, an ability that's previously only been observed in great apes. Even children can't master this feat for several years of their early life as it requires a fair deal of foresight, brain power, and problem-solving skills.

"The finding is remarkable because the crows received no assistance or training in making these combinations, they figured it out by themselves," Auguste von Bayern, first author of the study from the Max-Planck-Institute for Ornithology and University of Oxford, said in a statement.

As reported in the journal *Scientific Reports*, scientists presented eight of their feathered friends with a see-through box containing a tray of food. To acquire the treat, the crows had to poke a stick through a small hole and push the food over to an opening on the side of the box.

At first, the researchers left sufficiently long sticks laying near the box. Sure enough, the crows quickly learned that they could pick them up, poke them in the hole, and get the treat. Simple. However, they then left smaller pieces, too short to reach the food, which could potentially be combined with each other to make a long-enough stick.

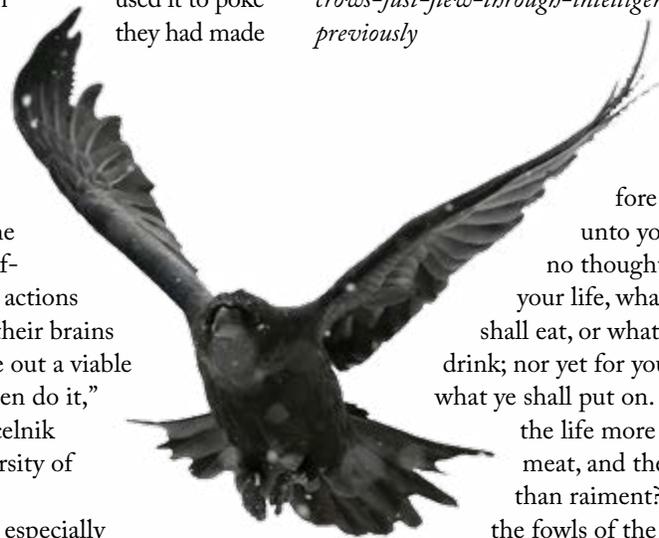
Remarkably, four of the eight crows pieced together the longer stick, then used it to poke out the food – their own tool.

"It is possible that they use some form of virtual simulation of the problem as if different potential actions were played in their brains until they figure out a viable solution, and then do it," added Alex Kacelnik from the University of Oxford.

One crow, an especially smart dude called Mango, was even able to make compound tools out of three and even four parts, creating a super-long stick capable of poking out the food from a considerable distance.

It's widely known that crows are among the few animals that can master the use of tools both in the wild and in captivity. Just recently, another study showed that they can learn new tool-making techniques and apply them from memory in a way never before seen in animals besides ourselves and our ancestors.

www.iflscience.com/plants-and-animals/crows-just-flew-through-intelligence-test-previously



"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they" (Matthew 6:25–26)? [LM](#)



A:

“Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul” (1 Samuel 28:11–12).

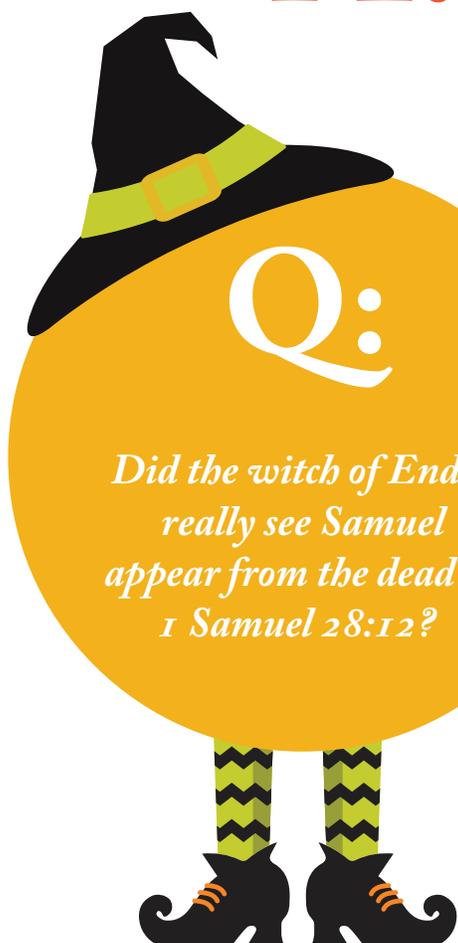
“The Scripture account of Saul’s visit to the woman of Endor has been a source of perplexity to many students of the Bible. There are some who take the position that Samuel was actually present at the interview with Saul, but the Bible itself furnishes sufficient ground for a contrary conclusion. If, as claimed by some, Samuel was in heaven, he must have been summoned thence, either by the power of God or by that of Satan. None can believe for a moment that Satan had power to call the holy prophet of God from heaven to honor the incantations of an abandoned woman. Nor can we conclude that God summoned him to the witch’s cave; for the Lord had already refused to communicate with Saul, by dreams, by Urim, or by prophets

(1 Samuel 28:6). These were God’s own appointed mediums of communication, and He did not pass them by to deliver the message through the agent of Satan.

“The message itself is sufficient evidence of its origin. Its object was not to lead Saul to repentance, but to urge him on to ruin; and this is not the work of God, but of Satan. Furthermore, the act of Saul in consulting a sorceress is cited in Scripture as one reason why he was rejected by God and abandoned to destruction: ‘Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; and inquired not of the Lord: therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse’ (1 Chronicles 10:13, 14). Here it is distinctly stated that Saul inquired of the familiar spirit, not of the Lord. He did not communicate with Samuel, the prophet of God; but through the sorceress he held intercourse with Satan. Satan could not present the real Samuel, but he did present a counterfeit, that served his purpose of deception.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 683. [Emphasis author’s.] **LM**

Q:

Did the witch of Endor really see Samuel appear from the dead in 1 Samuel 28:12?





A Natural Detox Reboot

Herbs for a New Year's Cleanse

After a season of holiday excess, we naturally crave a fresh start in January. For many, this begins with a whole-body detox to reboot and reset for healthier habits, supporting the key eliminatory organs: the liver, kidneys, colon, lymph and skin.

Old-time herbal doctors used the term “alternatives” to refer to herbs that help the body return to a healthier state via the gentle stimulation of our eliminatory channels’ natural function. Liver and lymph “moving” herbs play a key role in this category, though many also stimulate healthy elimination via the colon. We’re not talking about harsh laxatives. Alternatives are herbs that could be taken long-term and encourage the body to resume healthy function on its own. Laxatives like senna, cascara, and aloe latex force the body to purge and quickly become habit-forming.



Bitter Brew Detox Tea

This is a nice coffee substitute with broad detoxifying actions.

1 tsp. burdock root	Simmer herbs in 8-16 ounces of water for 20 minutes; strain. If desired, sweeten with blackstrap molasses and add unsweetened almond or coconut milk.
1 tsp. dandelion root	
1 tsp. roasted chicory root	

Liver Movers (Cholagogues)

Your liver filters toxins and waste from the blood, turning them into bile, which is excreted via the colon. Bile helps digest fats on its way out, and poor fat digestion and skin issues indicate that you might want to try cholagogues. Liver-moving alternatives include dandelion root, artichoke leaf, burdock root, and yellow dock root. Turmeric root, schisandra berry, and milk thistle help protect and heal the liver. You'll find these ingredients in many cleanse kits, tinctures, and detox tea blends. They taste mildly to strongly bitter—a flavor associated with improved liver detoxification, increased digestive function, and stimulation of the wavelike muscle motion that moves food through the gastrointestinal tract (which indirectly encourages bowel movements). Turmeric, burdock, and dandelion also can be incorporated into your culinary repertoire.

Lymph Movers (Lymphagogues)

It's easy to take your lymphatic system for granted. These tiny vessels closely align with your circulatory system, cleaning the fluid around your cells, outside the bloodstream. Lymph vessels also house many of your immune cells. Lymph hubs called nodes clean up debris before the lymph gets dumped into the bloodstream. Lymph has no pump and flows through the body via pressure from your moving body around

the vessels; valves ensure the flow goes in the right direction. Signs of sluggish lymph include skin issues, mild edema (edema can signal more serious issues too), and a sluggish immune system. Regular movement, lymphatic massage, compression stockings, and skin brushing help move it along. You can also add lymphagogues that help thin the lymph and stimulate filtration. Favorites include red clover blossoms, burdock root, red root, schisandra, and calendula blossoms, which can be taken in tea, pills, and liquid extracts.

Colon Movers (Gentle, Indirect Laxatives)

Because the liver's waste (bile) exits via the colon in your feces, it's important to keep things moving along or the result of all your liver's hard work gets reabsorbed into the body. If you tend toward constipation, slow digestion, and/or you have fewer than one bowel movement per day, give your colon some TLC. Many kits go for the blowout laxatives, but I prefer a gentler approach that encourages healthy, regular bowel movements. First steps include bitter-tasting herbs (the cholagogues), proper hydration, and gently increasing fiber via whole foods in the diet and supplements like ground flax, psyllium, or chia seeds. If you need a little more encouragement, both triphala and yellow dock root contain low doses of laxative constituents and also tone the colon.

Magnesium encourages bowel movements by bringing water into the colon.

Kidney Movers (Diuretics)

Like the liver, your kidneys filter your blood. However, the kidneys remove different compounds and excrete them via your urine. If you void infrequently and have dark, strong-smelling urine, consider supporting your kidneys. The three best ways to do this are to drink more water and eat more green vegetables. The safest kidney tonic diuretics include parsley leaf, dandelion leaf, nettle leaf, burdock root, and corn silk. These are best delivered in a water medium like tea or broth, or in food, though they can be added to broader detox formulas in liquid extract or pill form.

Some cautions: Detox herbs to reset and reboot a sluggish system should not be expected to “cure” kidney or liver disease—these require medical attention. Seek professional guidance if you are pregnant, nursing, have heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, or diabetes. Doing a detox and using detoxifying herbs needs to be tailored to your needs. Detoxifying herbs work best with adequate sleep, hydration, a healthy whole foods diet rich in plant foods, regular activity, and avoidance (to the best of your ability) of toxins.

Remedies for Life, Maria Noël Groves, R.H. (AHG), January 2018, 16, 19. **LM**

Meeting the Lord Together

By John J. Grosboll

One of the first letters written by the apostle Paul and recorded in the New Testament gives a straightforward explanation concerning the state of the dead, and of when Christians will be reunited with their loved ones who have died in Christ. Yet many Christians consider this still a mystery.

While Paul was evangelizing in the city of Corinth and making tents with his companions, Aquila and Priscilla, he was comforted by the arrival of two of his working companions. Silas and Timothy had come from Thessalonica and reported to Paul some struggles they were having in the newly formed church. He found out that there were some who had fallen into mistaken ideas concerning those who had died after their conversion. They had believed that they all would live to see the second coming of Christ. However, some of their friends had died and they were upset, thinking that now it would be impossible for them to behold that desirable event—to see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven.

So Paul wrote a letter to the Thessalonian church explaining the true condition of a person in death. He said, “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep [died], lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep (dead). For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

The Thessalonians had eagerly grasped the idea that Jesus was coming to change the faithful, who were alive at that time, but they had forgotten what Paul had taught them about the state of the dead and the fact that there would be a reuniting of those who had fallen asleep in Christ when He returned. For this reason, Paul said they were not to sorrow as others who had no hope. When his letter was received the people were greatly comforted, knowing their loved ones would rise again from their dusty graves waiting for that great reunion when Jesus would receive all the righteous, alive and dead, to make their journey together to the holy city.

Three times in this passage death is referred to as a sleep. The Old Testament also refers to death as a sleep. In fact, David called it “the sleep of death” (Psalm 13:3). This epistle gave great hope and joy to this young church. When accepting the gospel, they learned so many new, strange things that it is not surprising that they forgot some of the things that they had been taught. But no longer was there any darkness that enshrouded the sepulcher of the dead, because they had assurance that their friends who had fallen asleep in Jesus would be resurrected from the grave and also enjoy immortal life in the kingdom of God.

Notice, however, that this passage only talks about the resurrection to immortal life being given to those who have died in Christ. If you are in Christ, whether you live or die, your eternal future is secure. The question is: Have you committed your life to Christ to be your Lord and Saviour? Is it your desire to be like Him in character, or is your experience a mere profession?

Paul also reminded the church concerning events of the last days. “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves



The Old Testament also refers to death as a sleep.

know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief” (1 Thessalonians 5:1–4).

Paul warned that the day of the Lord will come as an overwhelming surprise. But why would that be when there are so many other warnings given in the Bible for us to know when the last days begin? There are many Bible prophecies that point out clearly the exact time, the exact year, when the “last days” would begin, and today we are living in that period of time.

If we have this information, then why is it that the day of the Lord will come as a thief? Paul told the Thessalonians that they were not in darkness, so do not sleep as others. The careless and unbelieving, those who close their eyes to the evidence that the Lord has been pleased to give, seek to quiet themselves from all apprehension. But at the same time, the signs of the times are rapidly fulfilling all over the world today, showing us that the world is rapidly going toward that period of time when the Son of man will

be revealed in the clouds of heaven. If we are not in darkness, what should we be doing?

Notice, Paul said, “You, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us ... be sober” (verses 4–8).

To be sober means that you have not taken any intoxicating alcohol into your body. There are many today, even professing Christians, who see nothing wrong with drinking alcohol in moderation. But that is not what the Bible teaches. Both Paul and Peter clearly teach that Christians who are preparing for the second coming of Christ will not use intoxicating drink. (See Titus 2:11–14; 1 Peter 1:13–16). They will be sober.

It is impossible to be both sober and intoxicated at the same time. By drinking alcohol and becoming partially drunk, you are partially intoxicated and not really sober. We are instructed to be sober, to watch what is taking place in the world, and to prepare for the future,

seeking for purity in our lives. The Bible says, “Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3).

Are you doing all in your power for the cause of God in the world? Christians living in these last days are going to experience severe trials. (See Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21). Paul said, “We urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all” (1 Thessalonians 5:12–15).

Many practical instructions were given at the close of Paul’s letter. He said, “Pray without ceasing” (verse 17). This means to always be in an attitude of prayer. “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies [or prophesying]. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil” (verses 18–22).

O, friend, are you following those injunctions? Are you abstaining from every form of evil? Are you a sober, watchful Christian or among those who make a profession but are drunk in the night? Those who are not watching and not praying will not be ready and the day of the Lord will overtake them

suddenly as a thief. It will come as an overwhelming surprise and it will be too late at that time to be saved. When Jesus comes again in the clouds of heaven with His reward, it is then too late to be saved (see Revelation 22:11, 12). All

decisions will have already been made. Paul told the Corinthians,

“Now is the accepted time; ... now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Now is the time to make that decision to commit your life to

Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour and choose to follow and obey

Him, which will result in eternal life.

The Holy Spirit has been promised to all who seek Jesus. It will transform your life, enabling you to live a completely different life.

Paul’s letter brought wonderful comfort, hope, joy, and excitement to the Thessalonians. However, they were confused when he said, “The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

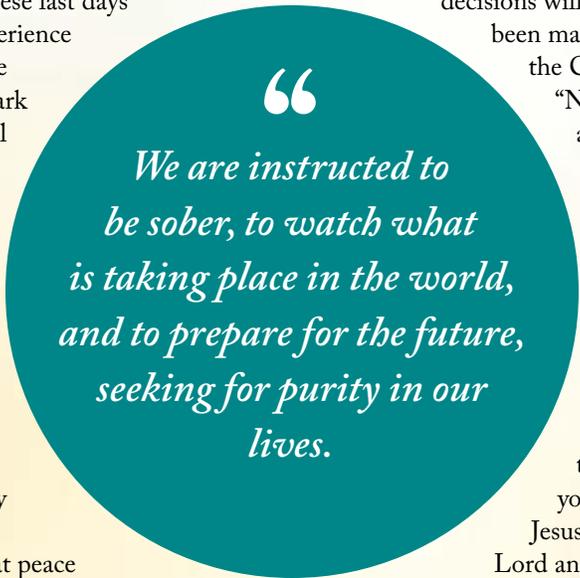
When Paul said “we,” he is referring to the people in the Christian church who are alive when Jesus comes and are ready to meet Him. But some people interpreted that to mean that he was including himself and that he would be one of those who would live until Jesus came. This misunderstanding resulted

in Paul writing his second letter. In fact, there were some people who thought the Lord would return so soon that they decided they did not need to work. This mistake was corrected when Paul wrote, “If anyone does not provide for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel” (1 Timothy 5:8, literal translation).

Even today some people think the apostles expected the Lord to come in their day, in the first century. They did not. In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul sought to correct misapprehensions about when the day of the Lord would come. His letter begins by commending them for their faith, and looking forward to the time when all of their suffering would be over. He said, “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer” (2 Thessalonians 1:3–5).

“Since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed” (verses 6–10).

He then continues to talk to them about the coming of the day of the Lord



when they would receive rest, when all persecutions of the Christians would be at an end. Those who died in Christ would be resurrected and taken with the living to heaven. They would be given immortality (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4). They thought it was going to happen very soon but Paul continued, “Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come” (2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2). It was common then for unscrupulous people to send forged letters in the names of important people, so Paul warned that if they were to receive a letter telling them anything different, to know it is not so. He gave this very emphatic warning not to be troubled or even think that the day of the Lord was at hand, because there were more events to happen before He would return.

Paul wrote, “Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless [until] the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition” (verse 3).

This man of sin is the antichrist. It says in verses 4 and 5, concerning him: “who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God [the church], showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?”

The coming of Christ would not occur until after a great apostasy occurs in the Christian church and the antichrist is revealed. Antichrist does not just mean somebody that is against Christ, but somebody that stands in the place of Christ. The antichrist would arise in the church first. He says, “And now you know what is restraining, that he [antichrist] may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will



Are you a sober, watchful Christian or among those who make a profession but are drunk in the night?

do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one [the anti-christ] will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming” (verses 6–8). That is a very interesting verse.

Some people believe that the anti-christ is going to appear after the Lord comes. But this verse teaches us that when the Lord comes the antichrist will already have been revealed and will be destroyed when He comes. “The coming of the lawless one [antichrist] is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders [miracles], and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (verses 9, 10).

Do you love the truth, friend? If you don't love the truth, you are going to be deceived. It says, “because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie” (verses 10, 11).

God will never force anyone to believe or accept or follow the truth. In God's government, there is freedom and the power of choice. All who are willing to look at the weight of evidence will find plenty of evidence to know truth. But God will never give you so much evi-

dence that you will be forced to accept it against your will.

Paul goes on to say, “For this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (verse 11). The lie is that a person can be saved in his sin.

The truth has always been unattractive to those who have pleasure in unrighteousness. “All unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17). “... sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4 KJV). So to have pleasure in unrighteousness means to have pleasure in sin. Or, to put it even more simply, to enjoy breaking God's law. To choose the pleasures of sin is so temporary. To choose Christ and live for Him is to have eternal life and pleasure forever.

As Joshua said, “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

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

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The Shoemaker of Hackleton

“Willie, we can’t send you to school next year,” said Mr. Carey. “We have your four brothers and sisters to take care of. And since you’re the oldest, you’ll have to find a job and go to work. We need the money you can earn.”

Now, you may think it would be fun not to have to go to school. But Willie loved school. He loved to study and learn new things. He looked up into his father’s face and knew that he had heard right. He would not be able to go back to school the next year! He knew his father wouldn’t change his mind.

Willie glanced down at his shoes. He kicked the dust along the path as he and his father walked along. He pretended to be looking for something over by the edge of the trees along the path. He wanted to hide his tears of disappointment. He was so unhappy he couldn’t think of anything to say.

“You’ll be fourteen years old next week,” Father went on. “I think I can get you a job with the shoemaker in town. You can learn to cut leather and make shoes.”

“I guess I could study in the evenings,” Willie managed to say at last. “There are so many things I want to know! I can borrow books and read and learn things even if I can’t go to school.”

So, Willie went to work for the town shoemaker, a man named Clarke Nichols, in the town of Hackleton. As soon as he walked into the shoe shop on the very first day, Willie knew that he was going to like his new job. He saw a few books on a shelf in one corner of the shop. Willie could hardly wait to read the titles to see what they were about. He didn't have time to look at them all morning, but when lunchtime came and he could stop work for a few minutes, he quickly began to look at the books.

One of the books looked especially interesting. It was about the Bible. It had a lot of strange words in Greek that Willie didn't understand. But they were exciting anyway. They were like a mysterious puzzle just waiting to be solved.

Willie carefully copied the Greek words on a piece of paper. He put the paper in his pocket. At the end of the week, when he went home, he took the paper with him. Then he took the paper with the strange Greek words to a friend who could read Greek. With the help of his friend, Willie slowly learned what each word meant. Then he found some Latin words in the book, and he copied these words, as well. He did the same with some Hebrew words. Willie loved to study, and after a few months, he could read Greek, Latin, and Hebrew!

Willie also enjoyed studying his Bible, and he liked to pray. One day he decided he wanted to be a Christian and give his heart to Jesus. Afterward, he was so happy that he began to tell everyone about Jesus. He wanted to be a preacher, but he had to keep on working making shoes to earn money for food and clothes and to help his family.

One day Willie found a book written by a famous explorer, Captain James Cook, who had traveled to many far-away places around the world. In this book, Willie learned about people who lived in other parts of the world. Then he had an idea.

Willie came to work a few days later carrying a roll of paper under his arm.

He got some tacks and a hammer and carefully unrolled the paper. The other workers in the shoe shop came over to see what Willie was doing with the tacks and the roll of paper.

Willie held up the paper so they could see. It was covered with different colored shapes. "This is a map of the world," he told them. "Now we can see what countries Captain Cook visited during his travels."

One of the workmen helped Willie hold up the map against the wall. Willie tacked it in place so all the workers could see it. Then he got a black pencil and began marking the map. He marked each place Captain Cook had been to. He also wrote down things he had learned about each country—things he had learned from books he had read. But while he was writing, he got another idea. He wondered if the people in these faraway places knew anything about Jesus.

"We should send someone across the ocean to teach these people about Jesus," Willie said to his pastor.

"When God wants them to know about Jesus and the Bible, He will take care of it," the pastor told Willie.

But the pastor didn't forget what Willie had said. He talked to other pastors. A few years later there was a movement to send someone to India. "I'll go," Willie offered. "The people in India may not be happy to see me, and my friends here at home may forget about me, but God will be with me." So, Willie sailed for India.

For more than a year after he left for India, no one heard from Willie at all. Finally, a letter arrived. It was from Wil-

lie to the pastors who had sent him to India. They read it and passed it around to many other people to read. The letter said that Willie was building a church. He needed help. All his friends began collecting money, which they sent to him to help him build the church in that distant land.

Meanwhile, in India, Willie was having trouble. He didn't know how to speak the Bengali language, so he couldn't talk to the people there. But Willie had always enjoyed learning new things. He decided to get a job so he could have some money to pay someone to teach him Bengali. Willie got a job in a factory making indigo. Indigo is a blue dye that is used to make ink.

As soon as he got a job and began earning some money, Willie hired a teacher. He was a good student, and before long he could speak and understand Bengali. Once he knew the language, Willie started to translate the Bible into Bengali. He knew the people in India would want to read the Bible in their own language. But many of the people couldn't read—even in Bengali. So, Willie held classes to teach them to read. It took a long time, but as the people learned to read and as they began reading the Bible, they wanted to learn more about God.

Willie built a church and a school. He helped many, many people in India to love God and have a better life. From the time he was a boy, Willie had worked hard. He worked hard in the shoemaker's shop. And he worked hard in India as a missionary for God. Today, William Carey is known as the "Father of Modern Christian Missions."

Storytime, Character-building Stories for Children, 86–89. **LM**



January 27 – February 2

Developing Character

Key Text

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city” (Proverbs 16:32).

Study Help: *Conflict and Courage*, 168–170; *The Ministry of Healing*, 485–487.

Introduction

“No form of vice has a more baleful effect upon the character than has human passion not under the control of the Holy Spirit. No other victory we can gain will be so precious as the victory gained over self.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 485.

Sunday

RESPECTING THE LORD’S ANOINTED

- a. What kind of reception did David meet at Keilah, Ziph, and Maon? 1 Samuel 23:1, 2, 5, 9–15, 19, 20, 24, 25.

- b. What happened between David and Saul in the cave of Engedi? 1 Samuel 23:29; 24:1–6.

Note: “David had only six hundred men in his company, while Saul advanced against him with an army of three thousand. In a secluded cave the son of Jesse and his men waited for the guidance of God as to what should be done. As Saul was pressing his way up the mountains, he turned aside, and entered, alone, the very cavern in which David and his band were hidden. When David’s men saw this they urged their leader to kill Saul. The fact that the king was now in their power was interpreted by them as certain evidence that God Himself had delivered the enemy into their hand, that they might destroy

him. David was tempted to take this view of the matter; but the voice of conscience spoke to him, saying, ‘Touch not the anointed of the Lord.’

“David’s men were still unwilling to leave Saul in peace, and they reminded their commander of the words of God, ‘Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe privily’ (1 Samuel 24:4). But his conscience smote him afterward, because he had even marred the garment of the king.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 661.

Monday

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

- a. What can we learn from David’s act of merciful restraint toward Saul? Proverbs 16:32; Romans 12:19–21.

Note: “The conduct of David toward Saul has a lesson. By command of God, Saul had been anointed as king over Israel. Because of his disobedience the Lord declared that the kingdom should be taken from him; and yet how tender and courteous and forbearing was the conduct of David toward him!” *The Ministry of Healing*, 484.

“The course of David made it manifest that he had a Ruler whom he obeyed. He could not permit his natural passions to gain the victory over him; for he knew that he that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he who taketh a city. If he had been led and controlled by human feelings, he would have reasoned that the Lord had brought his enemy under his power in order that he might slay him, and take the government of Israel upon himself. Saul’s mind was in such a condition that his authority was not respected, and the people were becoming irreligious and demoralized. Yet the fact that Saul had been divinely chosen king of Israel kept him in safety, for David conscientiously served God, and he would not in any wise harm the anointed of the Lord.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1021.

- b. How did David appeal to the heart of Saul? 1 Samuel 24:7–15.

“

*A consecrated
Christian life is ever
shedding light and comfort
and peace. It is characterized
by purity, tact, simplicity,
and usefulness.*



Tuesday

LESSONS FOR OUR DAY

- a. What should we learn from the caution with which David accepted Saul's apparently warm response to his mercy? 1 Samuel 24:16–22; Matthew 10:16.

Note: “When Saul heard the words of David he was humbled, and could not but admit their truthfulness. His feelings were deeply moved as he realized how completely he had been in the power of the man whose life he sought. ...

“Knowing what he did of Saul's past course, David could put no confidence in the assurances of the king, nor hope that his penitent condition would long continue. So when Saul returned to his home David remained in the strongholds of the mountains.

“The enmity that is cherished toward the servants of God by those who have yielded to the power of Satan changes at times to a feeling of reconciliation and favor, but the change does not always prove to be lasting.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 662.

- b. What occurred at a time when Israel seemed to be most in need of guidance and security? 1 Samuel 25:1, *first part*.

Note: “It was when the nation was racked with internal strife, when the calm, God-fearing counsel of Samuel seemed to be most needed, that God gave His aged servant rest. Bitter were the reflections of the people as they looked upon his quiet resting place, and remembered their folly in rejecting him as their ruler; for he had had so close a connection with Heaven that he seemed to bind all Israel to the throne of Jehovah. It was Samuel who had taught them to love and obey God; but now that he was dead, the people felt that they were left to the mercies of a king who was joined to Satan, and who would divorce the people from God and heaven.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 664.

Wednesday

IN THE WILDERNESS OF PARAN

- a. Where did David flee following the death of Samuel, and what was on his heart there? 1 Samuel 25:1, *last part*; Psalms 120:1, 2; 121:1, 2, 7, 8.

Note: “David took the opportunity to seek a place of greater security; so he fled to the wilderness of Paran. It was here that he composed the one hundred and twentieth and twenty-first psalms.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 664.

b. How was David’s normally kind, gentlemanly spirit put to the test in Paran? 1 Samuel 25:5–12.

Note: “David and his men had been like a wall of protection to the shepherds and flocks of Nabal; and now this rich man was asked to furnish from his abundance some relief to the necessities of those who had done him such valuable service. David and his men might have helped themselves from the flocks and herds, but they did not. They behaved themselves in an honest way. Their kindness, however, was lost upon Nabal.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 665.

Thursday
A SOFTENING INFLUENCE

a. What was David’s reaction to Nabal’s ingratitude? How did Abigail respond? 1 Samuel 25:13–18; 23–28.

Note: “He [David] commanded his men to equip themselves for an encounter; for he had determined to punish the man who had denied him what was his right, and had added insult to injury. This impulsive movement was more in harmony with the character of Saul than with that of David, but the son of Jesse had yet to learn of patience in the school of affliction.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 665.

“The piety of Abigail, like the fragrance of a flower, breathed out all unconsciously in face and word and action. The Spirit of the Son of God was abiding in her soul. Her speech, seasoned with grace, and full of kindness and peace, shed a heavenly influence. Better impulses came to David, and he trembled as he thought what might have been the consequences of his rash purpose. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God’ (Matthew 5:9). Would that there were many more like this woman of Israel, who would soothe the irritated feelings, prevent rash impulses, and quell great evils by words of calm and well-directed wisdom.

“A consecrated Christian life is ever shedding light and comfort and peace. It is characterized by purity, tact, simplicity, and usefulness. It is controlled by that unselfish love that sanctifies the influence. It is full of Christ, and leaves a track of light wherever its possessor may go.” *Ibid.*, 667.

b. What was the effect of Abigail’s response? 1 Samuel 25:32–35, 38–42; Psalm 141:5.

Note: “Abigail was a wise reprover and counselor. David’s passion died away under the power of her influence and reasoning. He was convinced that he had taken an unwise course and had lost control of his own spirit. ...

“There are many who, when they are reproved, think it praiseworthy if they receive the rebuke without becoming impatient; but how few take reproof with gratitude of heart and bless those who seek to save them from pursuing an evil course.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 667.

“David had taken an oath that Nabal and his household should perish; but now he saw that it was not only wrong to make such a vow, but it would be wrong to keep it.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 26, 1888.

“David afterward married Abigail. He was already the husband of one wife, but the custom of the nations of his time had perverted his judgment and influenced his actions. Even great and good men have erred in following the practices of the world. The bitter result of marrying many wives was sorely felt throughout all the life of David.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 668.

Friday
PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How were David’s men tempters to him in the cave of Engedi?
- 2 Knowing that apostate Adventists are soon to become the bitterest enemies of God’s people (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, 463), what should we learn from the noble attitude of David toward Saul?
- 3 What crisis in Adventism occurred at Sister White’s death?
- 4 Contrast the attitude of Nabal with that of his wife.
- 5 Like David, how are we tested in areas in which we may think we are already strong?

February 3 – 9

David and Saul

Key Text

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid” (Psalm 27:1)?

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 661–663; *Ibid.*, 675–689.

Introduction

“There is joy and consolation for the true-hearted, faithful Christian, that the world knows not of. To them it is a mystery.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 354.

Sunday

COMPASSION TOWARD THE ENEMY

- a. What can we all learn from David’s attitude when Saul was asleep? 1 Samuel 26:2, 7–12.

Note: “When Saul was repeatedly placed in his power, and his followers would have killed him, David would not permit them to do so, although he was in continual fear of his own life, and was pursued like a wild beast by Saul.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 91.

- b. How did David put Abner and Saul to shame in the wilderness of Ziph? 1 Samuel 26:13–20.

Monday

AWAKENED YET BLINDED AGAIN

- a. What confession did Saul make? 1 Samuel 26:21. What was the character of Saul’s confession?

Note: “The enmity that is cherished toward the servants of God by those who have yielded to the power of Satan changes at times to a feeling of reconciliation and favor, but the change does not always prove to be lasting. After evil-minded men have engaged in doing and saying wicked things against the Lord’s servants, the conviction that they have been in the wrong sometimes takes deep hold upon their minds. The Spirit of the Lord strives with them, and they humble their hearts before God, and before those whose influence they have sought to destroy, and they may change their course toward them. But as they again open the door to the suggestions of the evil one, the old doubts are revived, the old enmity is awakened, and they return to engage in the same work which they repented of, and for a time abandoned. Again they speak evil, accusing and condemning in the bitterest manner the very ones to whom they made most humble confession. Satan can use such souls with far greater power after such a course has been pursued than he could before, because they have sinned against greater light.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 662, 663.

- b. How did Saul respond to David’s mercy? 1 Samuel 26:23–25.

Note: “The second instance of David’s respect for his sovereign’s life made a still deeper impression upon the mind of Saul and brought from him a more humble acknowledgment of his fault. He was astonished and subdued at the manifestation of such kindness. In parting from David, Saul exclaimed, ‘Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail’ (1 Samuel 26:25). But the son of Jesse had no hope that the king would long continue in this frame of mind.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 671, 672.

“[Saul] listened to every false witness, eagerly receiving anything that was detrimental to the character of David, hoping that he might find an excuse for manifesting his increasing envy and hatred of him who had been anointed to the throne of Israel. Every rumor was credited, no matter how inconsistent and irreconcilable it was with the former character and custom of David.

“Every evidence that the protecting care of God was over David seemed to embitter and deepen his one engrossing and determined purpose. The failure to accomplish his own designs appeared in marked contrast to the success of the fugitive in eluding his search, but it only made the determination of the king the more unrelenting and firm. He was not careful to conceal his designs toward David, nor scrupulous as to what means should be employed in accomplishing his purpose.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1019.

Tuesday

BALEFUL TRAITS

- a. **What was the effect of envy in Saul’s life? Proverbs 14:30, last part; 27:4.**

Note: “It was envy that made Saul miserable and put the humble subject of his throne in jeopardy. What untold mischief has this evil trait of character worked in our world! ... Envy is the offspring of pride, and if it is entertained in the heart, it will lead to hatred, and eventually to revenge and murder. Satan displayed his own character in exciting the fury of Saul against him who had never done him harm.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 651.

- b. **What other character trait was treacherous to Saul and many others? John 12:43.**

Note: “One great defect in the character of Saul was his love of approbation. This trait had had a controlling influence over his actions and thoughts; everything was marked by his desire for

praise and self-exaltation. His standard of right and wrong was the low standard of popular applause. No man is safe who lives that he may please men, and does not seek first for the approbation of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 650.

Wednesday

SPEEDING DOWNHILL

- a. **What warning from Scripture should cause every God-fearing soul to beware? Proverbs 26:24–27.**

Note: “It was not the man David, who had done him no harm, against whom the king was contending. He was in controversy with the King of heaven; for when Satan is permitted to control the mind that will not be ruled by Jehovah, he will lead it according to his will, until the man who is thus in his power becomes an efficient agent to carry out his designs. So bitter is the enmity of the great originator of sin against the purposes of God, so terrible is his power for evil, that when men disconnect from God, Satan influences them, and their minds are brought more and more into subjection, until they cast off the fear of God, and the respect of men, and become bold and avowed enemies of God and of His people.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1019.

- b. **How can bitterness cherished in the heart affect anyone? Psalm 52:2–5; Isaiah 3:12, last part.**

Note: “What an example was Saul giving to the subjects of his kingdom in his desperate, unprovoked persecution of David! What a record he was making to be placed upon the pages of history for future generations! He sought to turn the full tide

of the power of his kingdom into the channel of his own hatred in hunting down an innocent man. All this had a demoralizing influence upon Israel. And while Saul was giving loose reign to his passion, Satan was weaving a snare to compass his ruin, and the ruin of his kingdom. While the king and his councilors were planning for the capture of David, the affairs of the nation were being mismanaged and neglected. While imaginary foes were constantly presented before the minds of the people, the real enemies were strengthening themselves without arousing suspicion or alarm. By following the dictates of Satan, Saul was himself hastening the very result which, with unsanctified ability, he was endeavoring to avert.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, 1019.

Thursday

A MARKED CONTRAST

- a. When Saul was deceived by spiritualism, what message goaded him to final despair? 1 Samuel 28:5–8, 14–20. How is this a warning to any believer or church laced with hypnotism or similar trends?

Note: “All through his course of rebellion Saul had been flattered and deceived by Satan. It is the tempter’s work to belittle sin, to make the path of transgression easy and inviting, to blind the mind to the warnings and threatenings of the Lord. Satan, by his bewitching power, had led Saul to justify himself in defiance of Samuel’s reproofs and warning. But now, in his extremity, he turned upon him, presenting the enormity of his sin and the hopelessness of pardon, that he might goad him to desperation. Nothing could have been better chosen to destroy his courage and confuse his judgment, or to drive him to despair and self-destruction.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 680, 681.

- b. In contrast to Saul, how can we be inspired by the attitude of David in the wilderness, even during his most disheartening times? Psalms 27:1–3; 59:1–3, 17; 142:1–7.



All the paths of life are beset with peril, but we are safe if we follow where the Master leads the way.

Note: “David composed many of the Psalm in the wilderness, to which he was compelled to flee for safety. ... While David was thus passing through severe trials and hardships, he manifested an unwavering trust in God, and was especially imbued with his Spirit, as he composed his songs which recount his dangers and deliverances, ascribing praise and glory to God, his merciful preserver. In these Psalm is seen a spirit of fervor, devotion and holiness.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 93.

“You need not be surprised if everything in the journey heavenward is not pleasant. There is no use in looking to our own defects. Looking unto Jesus, the darkness passes away, and the true light shineth. Go forth daily, expressing the prayer of David, ‘Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not’ (Psalm 17:5). All the paths of life are beset with peril, but we are safe if we follow where the Master leads the way, trusting the One whose voice we hear saying, ‘Follow Me.’” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, 1143.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How did David recompense Saul’s evil with good?
- 2 Explain why envy is such a dangerous trait.
- 3 How can love of self-approbation lead to envy?
- 4 Describe the method Satan used to obliterate any last trace of hope in Saul.
- 5 How can we be encouraged by David’s psalms composed in moments of trial?

February 10 – 16

Danger in Compromise

Key Text

“In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me” (Psalm 56:11).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 672–674; *Ibid.*, 690–694.

Introduction

“David did not renounce his worship of God nor cease his devotion to His cause; but he sacrificed his trust in Him to his personal safety, and thus tarnished the upright and faithful character that God requires His servants to possess.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 673.

Sunday

A LACK OF TRUST

- a. What did David’s plan to free himself from the pressure of Saul demonstrate? 1 Samuel 27:1–4.

Note: “David’s conclusion that Saul would certainly accomplish his murderous purpose was formed without the counsel of God. Even while Saul was plotting and seeking to accomplish his destruction, the Lord was working to secure David the kingdom. God works out His plans, though to human eyes they are veiled in mystery. Men cannot understand the ways of God; and, looking at appearances, they interpret the trials and tests and provings that God permits to come upon them as things that are against them, and that will only work their ruin. Thus David looked on appearances, and not at the promises of God. He doubted that he would ever come to the throne. Long trials had wearied his faith and exhausted his patience.

“The Lord did not send David for protection to the Philistines, the most bitter foes of Israel. This very nation would be among his worst enemies to the last, and yet he had fled to them for help in his time of need. . . . God had appointed him to set up his

standard in the land of Judah, and it was want of faith that led him to forsake his post of duty without a command from the Lord.”

Patriarchs and Prophets, 672

- b. How was David received by Achish, king of Gath?

Note: “God was dishonored by David’s unbelief. The Philistines had feared David more than they had feared Saul and his armies; and by placing himself under the protection of the Philistines, David discovered to them the weakness of his own people. Thus he encouraged these relentless foes to oppress Israel. . . . Furthermore, the impression was received by his brethren that he had gone to the heathen to serve their gods. By this act he gave occasion for misconstruing his motives, and many were led to hold prejudice against him. The very thing that Satan desired to have him do he was led to do; for, in seeking refuge among the Philistines, David caused great exultation to the enemies of God and His people.

“David was cordially received by the king of the Philistines. The warmth of this reception was partly due to the fact that the king admired him and partly to the fact that it was flattering to his vanity to have a Hebrew seek his protection.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 672, 673.

Monday

WRONG PLACE/WRONG SPEECH

- a. What evil resulted from a few misleading words from the mouth of David? 1 Samuel 27:8–12.

Note: “While dwelling in this isolated town David made war upon the Geshurites, the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, and he left none alive to bring tidings to Gath. When he returned from battle he gave Achish to understand that he had been warring against those of his own nation, the men of Judah. By this dissembling he was the means of strengthening the hand of the Philistines. . . . David knew that it was the will of God that those heathen tribes should be destroyed, and he knew

that he was appointed to do this work; but he was not walking in the counsel of God when he practiced deception.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 673.

- b. How did David slip into deeper trouble? 1 Samuel 28:1, 2. What prayer of David indicates that he learned a lesson from his mistakes? Psalm 141:3.

Note: “David had no intention of lifting his hand against his people; but he was not certain as to what course he would pursue, until circumstances should indicate his duty. He answered the king evasively, and said, ‘Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do’ (1 Samuel 28:2). Achish understood these words as a promise of assistance in the approaching war, and pledged his word to bestow upon David great honor, and give him a high position at the Philistine court.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 674.

“Let your life be free from deceitful practices. Let no guile be found in your lips. However, disagreeable it may be to you at the time, let your ways, your words, and your works show uprightness in the sight of a holy God.” *Child Guidance*, 150.

Tuesday

GOD’S DELIVERANCE

- a. Despite David’s weakness, how did the Lord mercifully deliver him out of his predicament? 1 Samuel 29:1–5.

Note: “Far better would it have been for him to find refuge in God’s strong fortresses of the mountains than with the avowed enemies of Jehovah and His people. But the Lord in His great mercy did not punish this error of His servant by leaving him to himself in his distress and perplexity; for though David, losing his grasp on divine power, had faltered and turned aside from the path of strict integrity, it was still the purpose of his heart to be true to God. While Satan and his host were busy helping the adversaries of God and of Israel to plan against a king who had forsaken God, the angels of the Lord were



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in your lips.

working to deliver David from the peril into which he had fallen. Heavenly messengers moved upon the Philistine princes to protest against the presence of David and his force with the army in the approaching conflict.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 690.

- b. What was the attitude of Achish when sending David home? 1 Samuel 29:6–11. What feelings might this have aroused in David?

Note: “The reply of Achish must have sent a thrill of shame and remorse through David’s heart, as he thought how unworthy of a servant of Jehovah were the deceptions to which he had stooped.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 691.

Wednesday

THE ONLY HOPE

- a. What situation faced David back at Ziklag? 1 Samuel 30:1–6, *first part*.

Note: “Here again David was chastened for the lack of faith that had led him to place himself among the Philistines. He had opportunity to see how much safety could be found among the foes of God and His people.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 692.

- b. What did David determine in this hour of crisis?**
 1 Samuel 30:6, *last part*; Psalm 56:1-3, 10-12.

Note: “David seemed to be cut off from every human support. All that he held dear on earth had been swept from him. Saul had driven him from his country; the Philistines had driven him from the camp; the Amalekites had plundered his city; his wives and children had been made prisoners; and his own familiar friends had banded against him, and threatened him even with death. In this hour of utmost extremity David, instead of permitting his mind to dwell upon these painful circumstances, looked earnestly to God for help. He ‘encouraged himself in the Lord’ (1 Samuel 30:6, *last part*). He reviewed his past eventful life. Wherein had the Lord ever forsaken him? His soul was refreshed in recalling the many evidences of God’s favor. The followers of David, by their discontent and impatience, made their affliction doubly grievous; but the man of God, having even greater cause for grief, bore himself with fortitude. ‘What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee’ (Psalm 56:3), was the language of his heart. Though he himself could not discern a way out of the difficulty, God could see it, and would teach him what to do.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 692, 693.

Thursday

OUR BOUNTIFUL PROVIDER

- a. How did the Lord honor David’s prayer? 1 Samuel 30:7-10, 18, 19.

Note: “They [the Amalekites] decided to spare the captives, desiring to heighten the honor of the triumph by leading home a large number of prisoners, and intending afterward to sell them as slaves. Thus, unwittingly, they fulfilled God’s purpose, keeping the prisoners unharmed, to be restored to their husbands and fathers.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 694.

- b. What spiritual lesson is contained for us in David’s decision regarding the bounties reaped from battle?
 1 Samuel 30:21-26; 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7, John 4:36-38.

Note: “The more selfish and unruly of the four hundred urged that those who had had no part in the battle should not share the spoils; that it was enough for them to recover each his wife and children. But David would permit no such arrangement. [1 Samuel 30:23, 24 quoted.] Thus the matter was settled, and it afterward became a statute in Israel that all who were honorably connected with a military campaign should share the spoils equally with those who engaged in actual combat.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 694.

“Today in His great harvest-field God has need of sowers and of reapers. Let those who go forth into the work, some to sow and some to reap, remember that they are never to take to themselves the glory for the success of their work. ...

“‘He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together’ (John 4:36). Read these words carefully. Study their meaning; for they outline God’s plan.” *Gospel Workers*, 409.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we avoid adopting David’s logic in going to Gath?
- 2 Explain the dangers inherent in the worldly style of diplomacy.
- 3 Consider ways in which God delivers sincere souls in trouble.
- 4 Describe the background of Psalm 56.
- 5 What are the rewards of sowing and reaping?

February 17 – 23

The Humble Exalted

Key Text

“For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 14:11).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 695–706; *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 85, 86.

Introduction

“Israel had a king by divine appointment. He who had waited patiently for the Lord, beheld the promise of God fulfilled.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 702.

Sunday

LOVE FOR AN ENEMY

- a. How did David react to the death of Saul? 2 Samuel 1:4, 11, 12, 17–21; Matthew 5:43–45.

Note: “David’s grief at the death of Saul was sincere and deep, evincing the generosity of a noble nature. He did not exult in the fall of his enemy. The obstacle that had barred his access to the throne of Israel was removed, but at this he did not rejoice. Death had obliterated the remembrance of Saul’s distrust and cruelty, and now nothing in his history was thought of but that which was noble and kingly. The name of Saul was linked with that of Jonathan, whose friendship had been so true and so unselfish.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 695, 696.

- b. What were David’s activities following his mourning? 2 Samuel 2:1–7.

Monday

MAGNANIMITY TOWARD ABNER

- a. How did Abner cause problems for David in Judah? 2 Samuel 2:8–11.

Note: “The circumstances under which Abner was placed served to develop his real character and showed him to be ambitious and unprincipled. He had been intimately associated with Saul and had been influenced by the spirit of the king to despise the man whom God had chosen to reign over Israel. His hatred had been increased by the cutting rebuke that David had given him at the time when the cruse of water and the spear of the king had been taken from the side of Saul as he slept in the camp. ... [1 Samuel 26:15, 16 quoted.] This reproof had rankled in his breast, and he determined to carry out his revengeful purpose and create division in Israel, whereby he himself might be exalted. He employed the representative of departed royalty to advance his own selfish ambitions and purposes. He knew that the people loved Jonathan. His memory was cherished, and Saul’s first successful campaigns had not been forgotten by the army. With determination worthy a better cause, this rebellious leader went forward to carry out his plans.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 698, 699.

- b. After malice, ambition, and treachery had led to Abner’s death at the hand of Joab, how did David further demonstrate a noble spirit? 2 Samuel 3:27–39.

Note: “David’s magnanimous recognition of one who had been his bitter enemy won the confidence and admiration of all Israel. ...

“Abner had been sincere in his offers and representations to David, yet his motives were base and selfish. He had persistently opposed the king of God’s appointment, in the expectation of securing honor to himself. It was resentment, wounded pride, and passion that led him to forsake the cause he had so long served; and in deserting to David he hoped to receive the

highest position of honor in his service. Had he succeeded in his purpose, his talents and ambition, his great influence and want of godliness, would have endangered the throne of David and the peace and prosperity of the nation.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 700.

Tuesday

ONLY BY GOD’S PROVIDENCE

- a. How did David react to the treachery employed by some who wished to gain his favor? 2 Samuel 4:5, 6, 9–12.

Note: “David, whose throne God Himself had established, and whom God had delivered from his adversaries, did not desire the aid of treachery to establish his power.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 701.

- b. What principles followed by David won for him the support of all the tribes of Israel? 2 Samuel 5:1–5, 10. What principles should we have in view in the selection of church officers today? 1 Timothy 3:1–12.

Note: “Through the providence of God the way had been opened for him to come to the throne. He had no personal ambition to gratify, for he had not sought the honor to which he had been brought.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 701.

“His (David’s) firmness, humility, love of justice, and decision of character, qualified him to carry out the high purposes of God, to instruct Israel in their devotions, and to rule them as a generous and wise monarch.

“His religious character was sincere and fervent. It was while David was thus true to God, and possessing these exalted traits of character, that God calls him a man after his own heart.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 85, 86.

“The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God’s people in the time of Moses and of

David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 95.

Wednesday

NO EXCUSE FOR PRESUMPTION

- a. How did David plan to officially acknowledge God’s supremacy over Israel? 2 Samuel 6:1, 2.

Note: “Now that David was firmly established upon the throne and free from the invasions of foreign foes, he turned to the accomplishment of a cherished purpose—to bring up the ark of God to Jerusalem. For many years the ark had remained at Kirjath-jearim, nine miles distant; but it was fitting that the capital of the nation should be honored with the token of the divine Presence.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 704.

- b. What happened to Uzzah, and why? 2 Samuel 6:3–7; Deuteronomy 10:8; Numbers 3:29–31; 4:15.

Note: “The fate of Uzzah was a divine judgment upon the violation of a most explicit command. Through Moses the Lord had given special instruction concerning the transportation of the ark. . . . In the bringing of the ark from Kirjath-jearim there had been a direct and inexcusable disregard of the Lord’s directions.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 705.

“Upon Uzzah rested the greater guilt of presumption. Transgression of God’s law had lessened his sense of its sacredness, and with unconfessed sins upon him he had, in face of the divine prohibition, presumed to touch the symbol of God’s presence. God can accept no partial obedience, no lax way of treating His commandments. By the judgment upon Uzzah He designed to impress upon all Israel the importance of giving strict heed to His requirements. Thus the death of that one

man, by leading the people to repentance, might prevent the necessity of inflicting judgments upon thousands.” Ibid., 706.

Thursday

SORROW LEADING TO REPENTANCE

- a. What difference does the Lord make between those who have the light of truth and those who are in ignorance? Luke 12:47, 48.

Note: “David and his people had assembled to perform a sacred work, and they had engaged in it with glad and willing hearts; but the Lord could not accept the service, because it was not performed in accordance with His directions. The Philistines, who had not a knowledge of God’s law, had placed the ark upon a cart when they returned it to Israel, and the Lord accepted the effort which they made. But the Israelites had in their hands a plain statement of the will of God in all these matters, and their neglect of these instructions was dishonoring to God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 705, 706.

“It is not enough to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right or what the minister tells him is right. His soul’s salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. . . . He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything.” *The Great Controversy*, 598.

“Those who claim to know the truth, and yet lay every obstacle in the way so that light shall not come to the people, will have an account to settle with God that they will not be pleased to meet. God manages His own work, and woe to the man who puts his hand to the ark of God.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 114.

- b. What did David, as should each of us learn about the sacredness of the law of God? 2 Samuel 6:8–10. How was Obed-edom exalted? 2 Samuel 6:11.



Those who claim to know the truth, and yet lay every obstacle in the way so that light shall not come to the people, will have an account to settle with God.

Note: “David was astonished and greatly alarmed, and in his heart he questioned the justice of God. He had been seeking to honor the ark as the symbol of the divine presence. Why, then, had that fearful judgment been sent to turn the season of gladness into an occasion of grief and mourning?” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 705.

“Feeling that his own heart was not wholly right with God, David, seeing the stroke upon Uzzah, had feared the ark, lest some sin on his part should bring judgments upon him. But Obed-edom, though he rejoiced with trembling, welcomed the sacred symbol as the pledge of God’s favor to the obedient. The attention of all Israel was now directed to the Gittite and his household; all watched to see how it would fare with them. ‘And the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household’ (2 Samuel 6:11).

“Upon David the divine rebuke accomplished its work. He was led to realize as he had never realized before the sacredness of the law of God and the necessity of strict obedience.” Ibid., 706.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What should we learn from David’s respect for Saul?
- 2 In what ways can we be sure to avoid being Abners who cause problems for church leaders today?
- 3 Just as some tried to enthrone David by wrong methods, how do some today seek to promote church leaders by man’s methods?
- 4 What message does the judgment upon Uzzah bring to us today?
- 5 What must we understand about sincerity and good intentions?

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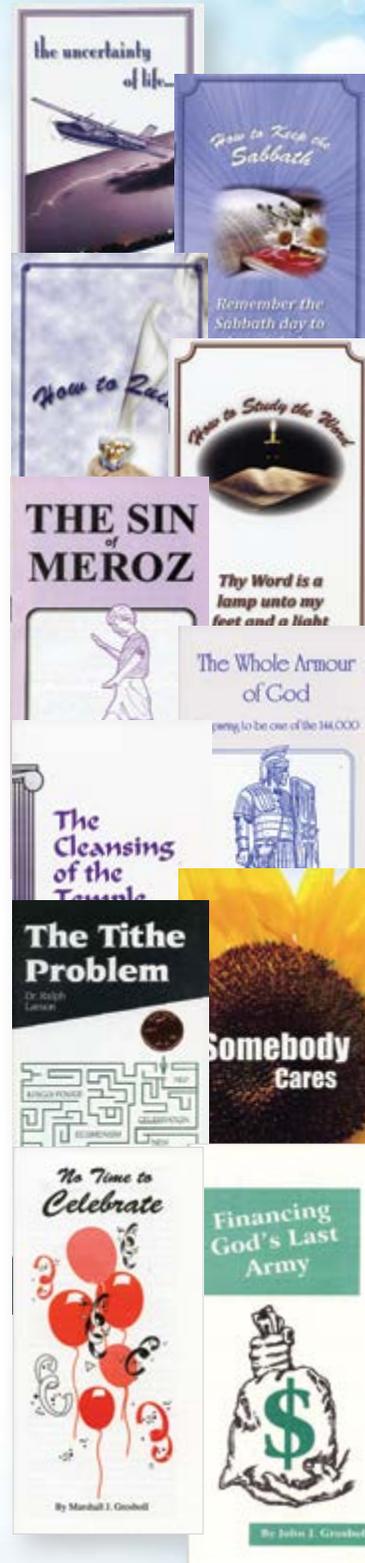
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2018 Clean and Dirty

Food List

One of the most important items in our lives is food. I appreciate, as many of you also, the idea that we are given the freedom to know what may or may not have more pesticide residues. We are given the freedom to choose our foods and to plan how to manage them and to know what vegetables and fruits need extra cleaning and preparation before serving. The EWG (Environmental Working Group) provides a list every year of fruits and vegetables so that you may know what is best for your family.



Environmental Working Group	
2018 – Clean 15	2018 – Dirty 12
1. Avocados	1. Strawberries
2. Sweet Corn	2. Spinach
3. Pineapples	3. Nectarines
4. Cabbages	4. Apples
5. Onions	5. Grapes
6. Sweet Peas	6. Peaches
7. Papayas	7. Cherries
8. Asparagus	8. Pears
9. Mangoes	9. Tomatoes
10. Eggplants	10. Celery
11. Honeydews	11. Potatoes
12. Kiwis	12. Sweet Bell Peppers
13. Cantaloupes	
14. Cauliflower	
15. Broccoli	

www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen.php

This list is good through the 2019 growing season when an updated list will be published.

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



DELICIOUS, SIMPLE, PARMESAN CHEESE

Ingredients

1 cup raw almonds (or cashews)
 ½ cup nutritional yeast
 ¼ Tbsp. Herbamare, (herbed sea salt) more or less or salt-free seasoning if preferred.

Process

Combine all in food processor with “S” blade and process until powdery texture (or blender). Yummy! Use on spaghetti, popcorn, steamed veggies, etc.





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