

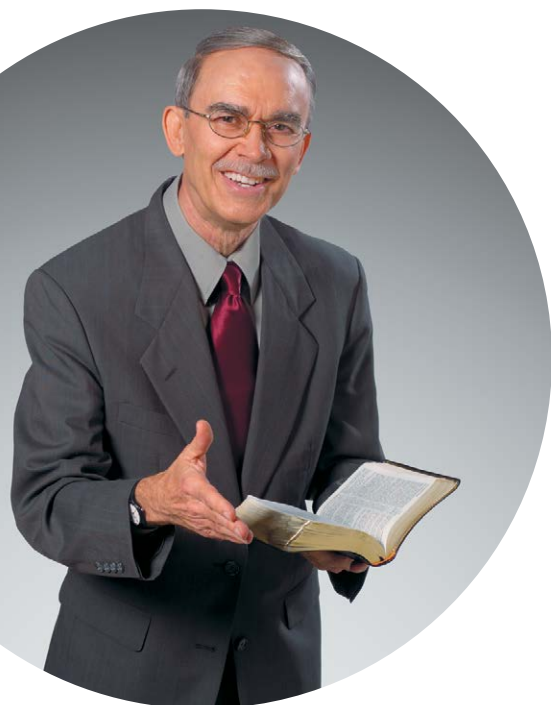
HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM

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the World*

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*Perfection
Fear or Faith*

p. 8



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Conjectures

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Psalms 119:130

We will never know until the day of judgment how many souls will be lost because of the acceptance of conjectures. Eve was first believing the lie of the serpent. Today millions distrust the Bible as a result of a system of conjecturing that was developed in the 17th and 18th centuries called "higher criticism." Higher criticism was first called conjectures by some of its originators and are accepted by millions of people today. As a result, they do not believe the Bible. What is true of the Bible is just as much true of the writings of Ellen White. People have put conjectures on the internet and thousands of people all over the world believe them.

Ellen White wrote the following: "The writer states that portions of my earlier visions, as first printed have been suppressed in the work recently published under the title *Early Writings of Mrs. E. G. White*, and he conjectures as

a reason for such suppression that these passages teach doctrines now repudiated by us as a people." *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 59.

"In another passage ... I speak of scenes upon the new earth, and state that I there saw holy men of old, 'Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Daniel, and many like them.' Because I speak of having seen these men, our opponents *conjecture* that I then believed in the immortality of the soul, and that having since changed my views upon this point I found it necessary to suppress that passage. They are as near the truth here as in other conjectures." Ibid, 64, 65. [Emphasis author's.]

The evidence that the Bible is the word of God is contained within the Bible itself so that it is evident to every diligent searcher. But much more powerful than that evidence is the evidence of a changed, transformed life. **LM**

HISTORIC

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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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Separate from the World

By John J. Grosboll

There is much written about Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam, throughout the Spirit of Prophecy even though he is only mentioned in four places in the Bible.

Ellen White wrote, “Enoch ... represents God’s loyal people in the last days who will be separate from the world. Unrighteousness will prevail to a dreadful extent upon the earth. Men will give themselves up to follow every imagination of their corrupt hearts, and carry out their deceptive philosophy, and rebel against the authority of high Heaven.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 64. Though sparsely mentioned in the Bible, Enoch is famous. We know that he was the first person to be translated. “Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Genesis 5:21–24).



Studying the life of Enoch is a lesson on how to be ready for the end time. Let's look at a few things about him.

Enoch walked with God and spent much time in prayer.

"Enoch devoted time to prayer and communion with God, and this enabled him to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. It was his devotion to God that fitted him for translation." *The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1909.

"When in trouble, when assailed by fierce temptations, they have the privilege of prayer. What an exalted privilege! Finite beings, of dust and ashes, admitted through the mediation of Christ, into the audience-chamber of the Most High. In such exercises the soul is brought into a sacred nearness with God, and is renewed in knowledge, and true holiness, and fortified against the assaults of the enemy." *An Appeal to Mothers*, 24. Daniel also was a man of prayer praying at three specific times daily in a certain place. (See Daniel 6:10.)

God's people everywhere, including people of all ages, are assailed by multiple temptations and by the privilege of a consistent prayer life you will be fortified to deal with each temptation.

"To him [Enoch] prayer was as the breath of the soul. He lived in the atmosphere of heaven." *Gospel Workers*, 52. Enoch had work to do just like everybody else in this world. He was a husband, a father and a citizen, and he had to make a living by the sweat of his face just as was pronounced on Adam (Genesis 3:19) and all of his posterity. In the midst of his responsibilities he communed with God.

"The infinite, unfathomable love of God through Christ, became the subject of his meditations day and night. ...

"In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly

maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers." *Ibid.*, 51, 52.

The apostle Paul describes such communion this way: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the

glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

"It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 91.

Considering the world today and even in the church this could be a subject of terror. Many professing Christians spend much of their time looking at sin, watching it, listening to it. It is the natural progression of things that you will think about what you look at. What is the result? There is an interesting text in Isaiah that tells what the result will be. It says, "Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness" (Isaiah 8:22).

Without exception, you become what you look at and listen to. Enoch took advantage of that natural law and began to commune on the character of God and His love, and the result: "Communing thus with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light, even the light that shineth

in the face of Jesus. As he came forth from these divine communings, even the ungodly beheld with awe the impress of heaven upon his countenance." *Gospel Workers*, 52.

This experience is available to all and in the last days those who seek it will have the same experience as Enoch. "While still on earth, he dwelt by faith in the realms of light. ...

"For three hundred years Enoch had been seeking purity of heart, that he might be in harmony with heaven. ...

"To such communion God is calling us. As was Enoch's, so must be their holiness of character who shall be redeemed from among men at the Lord's second coming." *Ibid.*, 53, 54.

God will demonstrate to the whole universe what He can do in human beings through the power of the Holy Spirit if they will yield totally to Him. And He is going to do it in the last generation of people who are the weakest generation that there has ever been. (See Revelation 14:1-5.)

If we don't have the experience, somebody else will take our place. There is a warning in the book of Revelation that says, "Don't let somebody else take your crown" (Revelation 3:11).

How can we have the same experience as Enoch? "God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with Him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must enquire, What will the Lord have me to do?" *The Review and Herald*, May 30, 1882.

Enoch had many responsibilities, but in the midst of all his work, he talked to the Lord about it and that had an effect on his countenance and on the way he spoke. "The love of Jesus always leads to Christian courtesy, refinement of language, and purity of expression that testify the company we are with—that like Enoch we are walking with God. There is no storming, no harshness, but a sweet fragrance in speech and in spirit." *That I May Know Him*, 198.

“
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In such exercises [prayer] the soul is brought into a sacred nearness with God, and is renewed in knowledge, and true holiness, and fortified against the assaults of the enemy.



Daniel also was a man of prayer praying at three specific times daily.

No one will enter heaven without overcoming the disposition to speak harshly and unkindly. Heaven has already been ruined once, and the angels that ruined it were cast out. God is not going to have heaven polluted again.

In researching the life of Enoch in the Spirit of Prophecy, it was amazing to find all that was written about imagination. In Genesis 6:5, notice what it says: “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

It says in verse 11 that the earth was corrupt and filled with violence, and this was a result of corrupt imaginations. A study on this subject will find that one of the principle ways the devil tempts men and women is through the imagination. Before a person engages in open sin of some kind, it has already been formulated in the imagination. In the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*, in the chapter

Apostasy at the Jordan, Ellen White says that there is a long process, hidden, secret to other human beings, that goes on in the mind, the soul, before a Christian engages in any kind of open sin. It has to do with the imagination.

With regard to the imagination, “They should not venture on forbidden ground, where Satan can claim control over them. If they in humility entreat God for purity of thought and a refined and sanctified imagination, He will hear them, and grant their petitions. God has not left them to perish in their sins, but will help the weak and helpless, if they cast themselves in faith upon Him.” *An Appeal to Mothers*, 22, 23.

No one is going to enter heaven with a defiled, impure imagination. This appears to be one of the bigger problems many Christians have. “It is your duty to control your thoughts. You will have to war against the vain imagination. ... You are responsible to God for the indulgence of vain thoughts.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 82. “In place of permitting the imagination to fill the mind with day-dreams and air-castles, let the soul cultivate the habit of contemplating the world’s Redeemer.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, June 7, 1894.

Controlling the imagination is only possible by cultivating a prayer life as did Enoch. Many believe it impossible to live the Christian life as is described throughout Scripture and it is as impossible in one’s own strength as it was for Peter to walk on water. But, when the Holy Spirit takes control of your life all things are possible. Then you can walk on water!

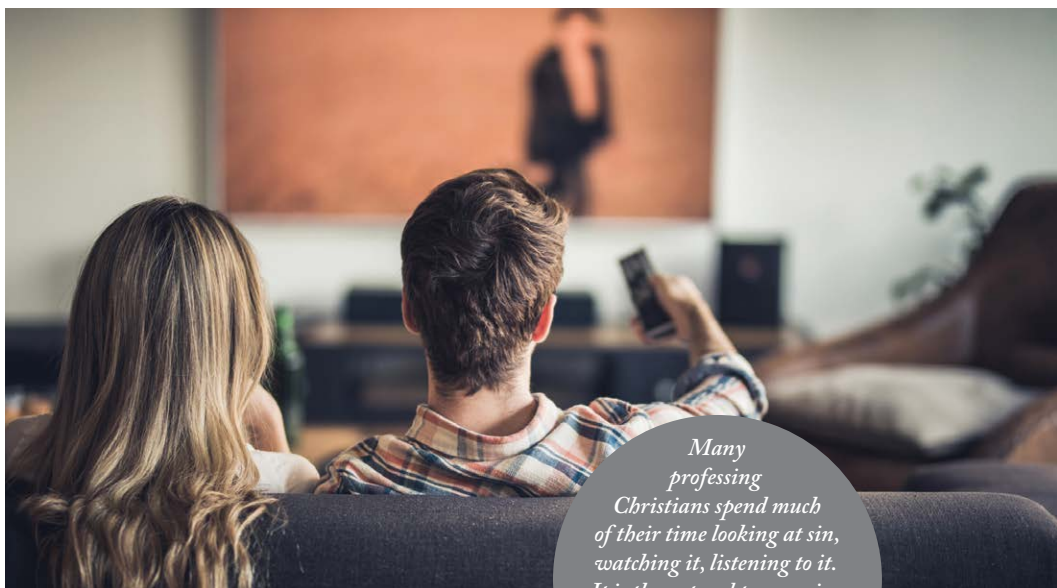
But without the Holy Spirit holding you up, you will sink immediately. “We cannot keep ourselves from sin for one moment.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 180. Enoch understood where to go for help and he communicated with the Lord at all times. Whatever he did, he talked to the Lord about it. The result was that he had power to control his carnal imagination and develop pure thoughts.

Enoch was not a hermit. He did not live in a cave somewhere separate from the rest of the world. But he did live separately from the concentrations of wickedness that were present in the world at that time. I am sure that we are all aware that there are some places that have concentrated wickedness. “A separation from the world is required of us, for we cannot remain free from its pollution unless we follow the example of the faithful Enoch.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 304.

“God’s people will separate themselves from the unrighteous practices of those around them, and will seek for purity of thought, and holy conformity to His will, until His divine image will be reflected in them. Like Enoch, they will be fitting for translation to Heaven.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 20, 1879.

King David learned his lesson the hard way by falling into sin. But notice what He said: “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes” (Psalm 101:3). Why did he say that? Because he knew that if he looked at sin, he would become like that in character. “I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness” (verse 4).

Enoch separated himself from the wickedness around him. “Those who follow the Lord are to be firm and straightforward in obeying His directions. Any deviation to follow human devising or planning disqualifies them for being trustworthy. Even if they have to walk as did Enoch—with God alone—His children must separate from those who do not obey Him, who show that they are not in vital connection with Him.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, April 28, 1898. To follow this counsel, even if they have to walk alone, is one of the great trials that sometimes happens to people who are trying to live for Jesus and be ready for His second coming. These people are scattered all over the world. I often meet people who say to me things like, “My husband or my wife doesn’t believe what



Many professing Christians spend much of their time looking at sin, watching it, listening to it. It is the natural progression of things that you will think about what you look at. What is the result?

I believe.” They are alone at home. “My children, or my parents, or both, don’t believe what I believe ...” so they are completely isolated at home. Others say, “There’s no church anywhere near where I am that is teaching and preaching the Three Angels’ Messages, and I work in a secular workplace, and I am all alone.”

It cannot be explained why God allows different people to go through different trials but God allows people to be in situations where they have to develop a character, often alone. This is not some new experience. Enoch had it, he had to walk all alone, but he decided that even if there was nobody else in the world who believed as he did, he would still believe.

While the Lord has been bringing revival and reformation to the Second Advent Movement, there have been some interesting experiences over the past few years. We have met people in various parts of the world who have been cast out of Adventist churches because they stood up for what they believed was right. They thought they were the only ones in the whole world

trying to do what’s right and we have encouraged them by telling them there are people scattered all over the world in the same situation.

Even if they have to walk as Enoch did, with God alone, His children must separate from those who do not obey Him and show they are not in vital connection with Him. Remaining in a church that is in open sin that will not turn around will cause you to be spiritually anesthetized, leaving you in a much worse condition than you were to start with. Enoch refused to compromise and was willing to walk alone.

No human being enjoys being alone. Even Jesus didn’t enjoy being alone although He had to walk alone His whole life. His mother didn’t understand Him. His earthly father didn’t understand Him. Neither did His brothers who criticized Him making His childhood hard. His disciples didn’t understand Him and even John the Baptist didn’t understand. Nobody on earth understood Him.

Enoch was the first to be translated, but while on earth he had to walk alone. The sacrifice was worth it, for Enoch is

the oldest human being. He is over 5,000 years old right now.

While in vision, Ellen White had a conversation with Enoch. “There I saw good old Enoch, who had been translated. On his right arm he bore a glorious palm, and on each leaf was written ‘Victory.’ Around his head was a dazzling white wreath, and leaves on the wreath, and in the middle of each leaf was written ‘Purity,’ and around the wreath were stones of various colors, that shone brighter than the stars, and cast a reflection upon the letters and magnified them. On the back part of his head was a bow that confined the wreath, and upon the bow was written ‘Holiness.’ Above the wreath was a lovely crown that shone brighter than the sun. I asked him if this was the place he was taken to from the earth. He said, ‘It is not; the city is my home, and I have come to visit this place.’ He moved about the place as if perfectly at home.” *Early Writings*. 40.

Enoch has access to anywhere in the universe. How exciting it would be to join him in some of those travels some day. When you struggle standing alone and it seems like nobody understands, it will not be forever. Enoch is no longer alone. He has far more friends than any wicked man has ever had or will have.

In regard to Enoch, Ellen White wrote in *The Paulson Collection*, 178, “We want every one of us, to have an amiable disposition, and unless you have a sanctified, amiable disposition, you will lose heaven entirely.”

A person with an amiable disposition is someone who is easy to get along with. There will not be anybody in heaven that is hard to get along with. “We do not glorify our Redeemer when we complain of the difficulties of the way, and murmur at the providences of God.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 3, 1888.

Enoch was involved in evangelism. He did not have a lot of success as far as converts were concerned, but he was still involved in it. Wherever he could find two or three people willing to listen to the word of God, he would teach them. He had very small congregations of two or three. “Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him’” (Jude 14, 15).

Enoch gave warning to people who were living in sin. Some listened to the warning and renounced their sins, but the multitudes mocked and made fun of him. “The servants of God are to bear a similar message to the world in the last days, and it also will be received by the majority with unbelief and mockery. ...

“Enoch, the witness of faith, held on his way, warning, pleading, and teaching, striving to turn back the tide of guilt and to stay the bolts of vengeance.” *Gospel Workers* 53.

God revealed to Enoch that the wickedness on the earth was so great, that a flood was coming. Because he knew what was coming even though it was still several hundred years away, he tried to help the people get ready so that they wouldn’t have to drown. His son, Methuselah also warned the people of the coming judgment.

“By faith Enoch was translated so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5, literal translation). What a testimony of this faithful man!

“It is our privilege to carry with us the credentials of our faith—love, joy, and peace. When we do this, we shall be able to present the mighty arguments of the cross of Christ. When we learn to walk by faith and not by feeling, we shall have help from God just when we need it, and His peace will come into our hearts. It was this simple life of obedience and trust that Enoch lived. If we

300
years

*Enoch had been seeking purity
of heart, that he might be in
harmony with heaven.*

learn this lesson of simple trust, ours may be the testimony that he received, that he pleased God. Then instead of mourning and bitter repining, we shall make melody in our hearts to the Lord.” *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 133.

If we live a life of simple obedience and trust in the Lord, we can do the same.

“We are required to improve every day. Even in this world of sin and sorrow, we may, by earnest, persevering effort, rise to the highest spiritual efficiency. ... We are to please God. This we may do; for Enoch pleased God, though living in a degenerate age. And there are Enochs in this our day.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 314.

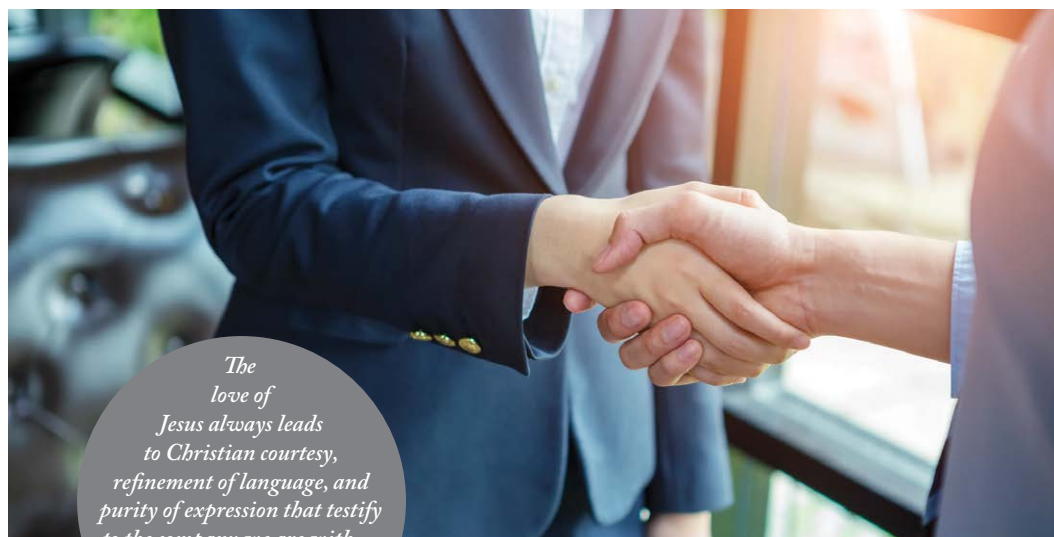
“Enoch walked with God and ‘had the testimony that his ways pleased God.’ This is the privilege of every believer today. It is man dwelling with God, and God taking up His abode with man. ‘I in them, and thou in Me’ (John 17:21–23).” *The Upward Look*, 228.

“In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, ‘What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him, who has given His life a ransom for me?’ Thus we may walk with God as did Enoch of old.” *Our High Calling*, 61.

We can have that same experience today. In Ellen White’s day the world in general was optimistic. Because theologians and Christians are influenced by the world in which they live, they had theories of perfectionism and believed that you could just come to Christ and be perfect instantly. Perfectionism was a very popular teaching 150 years ago but Ellen White said it was a fallacy.

Today, after two world wars, a big depression and all kinds of trouble worldwide that is increasing, everything has flipped. We are now living in a pessimistic age where people say nobody is perfect and they do not believe anybody can be.

Christian perfection is a Biblical doctrine all through the New Testa-



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ment, even though it is a very unpopular one in our time. Jesus mentioned it in Matthew 5:48 and Paul talks about it in almost every single epistle he wrote and also James and John make mention.

“We have fixed our minds upon the exceeding great and precious reward; and, in order to obtain it, we must have a perfect character. ... Angels of God are weighing moral worth; and we are to obtain a fitness here to join the society of sinless angels. Do you expect that when Christ comes He will give you that fitness? Not at all. You must be found of Him without spot, without blemish, or wrinkle, or anything like it (Ephesians 5:25; 2 Peter 3:14). Now is the watching and trying time. Now it is the time to obtain a preparation to abide the day of His coming, and to stand when He appeareth. Do you say that you cannot do it because around you are so much sin and iniquity and corruption? I refer you to Enoch.” *The Review and Herald*, April 19, 1870.

Enoch did it. If we follow the same principles and the same way of life that he followed, we will have the same results. Remember his prayer life, his meditations, his evangelistic efforts, his

disposition, his imagination, and the fact that he separated himself from the wickedness in the world, walking with God by living a life of simple obedience and trust.

When Jesus comes there will be a people who have the experience of Enoch and they will be translated. We have been given the Spirit of Prophecy so we can have explicit instruction and know how to order our lives and be ready for Jesus to come. The Holy Spirit earnestly waits to purify your imagination and give you the power to live the Christian life. You can become Christ-like.

The apostle John says that when Jesus comes we will be like Him (1 John 3:2). May the Lord help us to have that experience.

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

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Perfection

Doubt and Fear *or* *Courage and Faith*

By Brenda Douay

We live in an epoch of time in which the prevailing belief, thought, teaching, is that it is impossible to overcome sin in this life and that this blessed gift will not be fulfilled to the saints until Jesus comes. Is this true, or is it a dangerous, and in fact fatal deception which the father of lies has fabricated, just for this time when it is so essential to have that pure “faith which works by love and purifies the heart.” *The Sanctified Life*, 83.

“

And this creation was perfect. Nothing marred the workmanship of anything God had created.



"By
the word of the
LORD were the heavens
made; and all the host of
them by the breath of His
mouth. For He spake, and it
was done; He commanded,
and it stood fast."

Psalm 33:6, 9

There is a statement from Inspiration that introduces a subject which I believe is at the core of our "fear," our perceived sense of powerlessness and hopelessness in regard to overcoming sin. On the surface this statement may seem to be totally disconnected from the subject at hand, but we will see in this study an integral connection.

"It is impossible to estimate the evil results of removing one of the landmarks fixed by the word of God." *The Great Controversy*, 525. If that be the case then what are the landmarks? If it is not known what they are, it would be possible to avoid removing one, or more. In fact, as Adventists, we have not only removed just one, but I have come to the realization that we have lost, or at the very least seriously minimized every one of the "landmarks fixed by the word of God"! I believe this is at the core of our weakness.

One of these pillars is Creation as presented by inspired writers (*The Great Controversy*, 582, 583.) It is mind blowing to study the great facts of creation and the God of creation, the significance of who He is, what He has done, and what He is to the sinner. The following are words inspired by this God:

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them

by the breath of His mouth. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6, 9). In six days this earth was created *out of nothing*, by the breath of His mouth! That is power.

"The theory that God did not create matter when He brought the world into existence is without foundation. In the formation of our world, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter. On the contrary, all things, material or spiritual, stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, are not only the work of His hand; they came into existence by the breath of His mouth." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 258, 259.

In addition to physical matter all other things are of His creation. "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him" (Colossians 1:16). All thought, all law, all principle, all language, was brought into existence by our Creator. And this creation was perfect. Nothing marred the workmanship of anything God had created. But when we turn to

the study of the creation of man, there are new thoughts to contemplate.

When man was created, he was created in the image of a perfect God. "Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is 'the express image' (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 45. These are marvelous truths.

But then man sinned (the fall of man—another landmark that is little understood) and as a result no longer bore the image of the Creator. But, the divine God of love had created a plan whereby man could be restored to His perfect image. Who created or made this plan? It was the God of creation, this same God of power!

So, you might ask, what does this have to do with perfection of character?

Inspiration goes on to say, "The creative energy that called the world into existence is in the word of God. This

Word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and recreates the soul in the image of God.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 11, 1906.

If God could create man “in His image” with a nature “in harmony with the will of God,” with a mind “capable of comprehending divine things,” with pure affections, with “appetites and passions under the control of reason,” and “holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will” does He not have the power to re-create us in His image—in *His own timing*? If He can do this when He comes, is it not possible He has the power to do this before the close of probation?

Inspiration is very clear that our characters must be made perfect before the close of probation. The following are just a small sample of statements that show this to be true. “Through the grace of

God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in Heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God’s people upon earth.” *The Great Controversy*, 425.

“By the king’s examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming

of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, ‘to give every man according as his work shall be’ (Revelation 22:12). Before His coming, then, the character of every man’s work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ’s followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.

“It is while men are still dwelling upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in review before God. All are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 310.

For many people this belief or teaching that we must be perfect and stand “in the sight of a holy God without a mediator” causes a panic, fear, and sometimes despair. Why should this cause such hopelessness? Are not the promises of our God as sure as His admonitions and warnings? Why believe the admonitions and warnings and cast off the promises?

“The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life [eternal life]. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God.” *Education*, 126. This is a divine promise from the very God that sent His Only Begotten Son, “at the risk of failure and eternal loss” (*The Desire of Ages*, 49 and 131) to this world to provide for us His power “which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57). These are powerful words!

“Now we have opportunity to prepare for the solemn scenes before us. We may be converted to God, and have a change of character; but when Christ shall come there will be no time for this. The change then will be with our bodies. ‘This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality’ (1 Corinthians 15:53).” *The Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1889.

“When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our

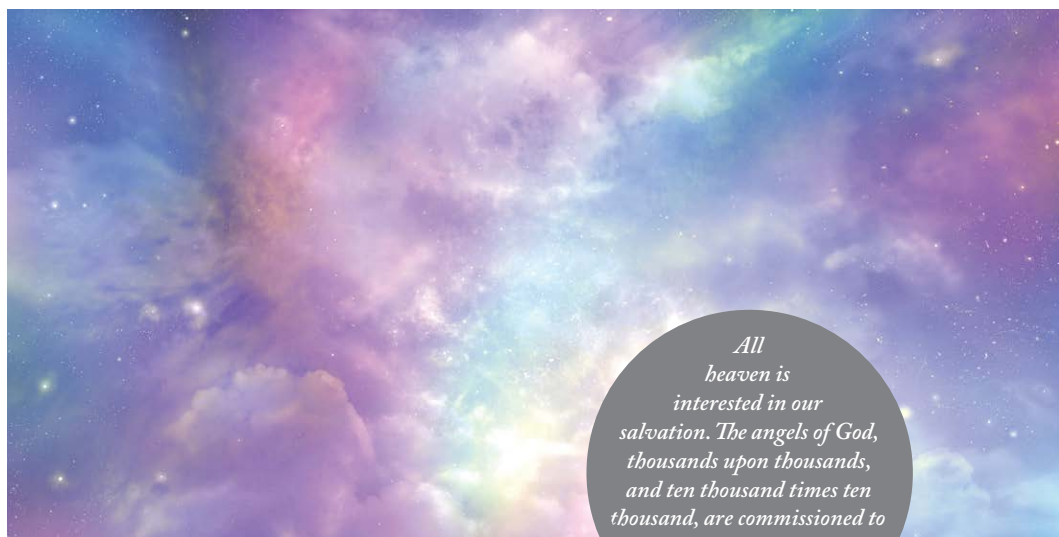
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It is only the blessed and holy who will be ready for the first resurrection; for when Christ comes, he will not change the character.

characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.”

Testimonies, vol. 2, 355.

“I will never advocate the popular theory that it does not matter what doctrine men espouse, if they only have faith. ‘Faith without works is dead, being alone.’ Genuine faith will be expressed by good works. We are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We may not be living when Christ shall come in power and great glory, for all are subject to death at any time, but if we are righteous, in harmony with the law of God, we shall respond to the voice that will call the people of God from their graves, and shall come forth to receive immortality. It is only the blessed and holy who will be ready for the first resurrection; for *when Christ comes, he will not change the character*. The change that will take place will be that change spoken of by Paul when he says: ‘... we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality’ (1 Corinthians 15:51–53). The word of God declares that we must be found blameless, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Now we are to learn



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obedience, submission to the divine will, that God may work in us to will and to do of His good-pleasure, and that we may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. But our own efforts are of no avail to atone for sin or to renew the heart. Only the blood of Christ can atone for us; His grace alone can create in us a clean heart, and enable us to obey God’s law. In Him is our only hope.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 9, 1891. [Emphasis supplied.]

Do we believe what God says? Do we really believe in the God of creation, “who spoke ... and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:9)? Do we have that “faith which works by love, and purifies the soul?”

Christ, Himself, when He walked the paths of earth once posed a significant, and plaintive question. “When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:8)? He was looking down the long years to the time just before He would return to this earth. He saw the skepticism, the lack of belief in His mighty power. If we read and understand aright the words of Holy Writ, we find that Christ had to leave whole towns with little healing. Why? Because of their unbelief! If we do not believe, we will not receive the blessing.

“Where is the faith of those who claim to be the people of God? Shall they also be included among that number of whom Christ questioned, ‘When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth’ (Luke 18:8)? Jesus died to redeem us from the curse of sin and from sin itself, and shall we render Him only a feeble half of those powers which He has paid such an infinite price to ransom from the hands of the enemy of our souls?” *The Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895.

“Will we put forth most earnest efforts to form this alliance with Christ, through which alone these blessings are attained? Will we break off our sins by righteousness and our iniquities by turning unto the Lord? Skepticism and infidelity are widespread. Christ asked the question: ‘When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth’ (Luke 18:8)? We must cherish a living, active faith. The permanence of our faith is the condition of our union.

“A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this

union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols.

“After the union with Christ has been formed, it can be preserved only by earnest prayer and untiring effort. We must resist, we must deny, we must conquer self. Through the grace of Christ, by courage, by faith, by watchfulness, we may gain the victory.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 231. This is a promise, an infallible promise by the God of the universe.

Here are just a few more mighty and powerful promises from our God that should inspire hope, courage, love kindling within us that “faith which works by love, and purifies the soul.”

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). He in whom ‘dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily’ (Colossians 2:9) descended

to our world, humiliated Himself by clothing His divinity with humanity, that through humanity He might reach the human family. While He embraces the human race with His human arm, He grasps the throne of God with His divine arm, thus uniting humanity to divinity. The Majesty of heaven, the

King of glory, descended the path of humiliation step by step until He reached the lowest point possible for humanity to experience; and why? That He might be able to reach even the lowest of mankind, sunken in the very depths of degradation though they be, that He might be able to elevate them

to the heights of heaven. He has promised, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Revelation 3:21). Wonder of wonders! Man, a creature of the earth; dust, elevated to the throne of the King of the universe! Marvelous love! inexpressible, incomprehensible love!” *The Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD’s hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether My word shall come to pass unto thee or not” (Numbers 11:23).

“Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver” (Isaiah 50:2)?

“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear” (Isaiah 59:1).

“The life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea, and raised the dead; and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the Word. When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the Word must be their source of power. Like their Master, they were to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God’ (Matthew 4:4).” *The Desire of Ages*, 390.

Oh, if we only understood the spiritual significance of these words! “Healing disease!” As with all words of Inspiration, this paragraph has deep spiritual meaning. “Healing disease,” that is, the dread and fatal leprosy of sin! He can heal it! “Stilled the sea,” that is, the raging human heart of passion and pride—He can still it! “Raise the dead” that is, the heart “dead in trespasses and sin”—He can raise the spiritually dead! And the power for this is “in His word.” Just as the power of creation was “by the breath of His mouth.” Oh, the beauty of Inspiration. The chapter in *The Desire of Ages*, “Thou Canst Make Me Clean” has such hope, power and beauty.

Often, when our Saviour healed disease He bade the restored soul, “Go, and sin no more” (John 8:11). Are these idle, empty words, words that Christ did not mean to be taken literally? By no means. This is where true faith comes in, that faith that “works by love and purifies the soul.”

“Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Through faith the Holy Spirit finds access to the heart, and creates holiness therein. Man cannot become an agent to work the works of Christ unless he is in communion with God through the Holy Spirit. We can be fitted for heaven only through a transformation of character;

“

*Christ first chose us,
paying an infinite price for
our redemption; and the true
believer chooses Christ as
first and last and best in
everything.*



The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

we must have Christ's righteousness as our credentials, if we would find access to the Father. We must be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We must daily be transformed by the influence of the Holy Spirit; for it is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man, by presenting to the soul the matchless charms of Jesus." *The Bible Echo*, February 15, 1893.

"All heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God, thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, are commissioned to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They guard us against evil and press back the powers of darkness that are seeking our destruction. Have we not reason to be thankful every moment, thankful even when there are apparent difficulties in our pathway?" *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 63.

"The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In His life and character He not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man. He was the representative of God and the exemplar of humanity. He presented to the world what humanity might become when united by faith with divinity. The only-begotten Son of

God took upon Him the nature of man, and established His cross between earth and heaven. Through the cross, man was drawn to God, and God to man. Justice moved from its high and awful position, and the heavenly hosts, the armies of holiness, drew near to the cross, bowing with reverence; for at the cross justice was satisfied. Through the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, 'It was my sins that crucified the Son of God.' At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ his character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the sinner looks upon the Redeemer, he finds hope, assurance, and joy. Faith takes hold of Christ in love. 'Faith works by love, and purifies the soul.'" *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 349.

Promise after promise, after promise. How can we doubt? Do we have this faith? Are we strong in the Lord and of a good courage, not doubting His word who created the entire universe "by the word of His mouth?" Again I pose the question. Are not the promises of our God as sure as His admonitions and warnings? Why believe the admonitions and warnings and cast off the promises?

It is the pillar of creation, rightly understood that gives the assurance that what our God says He can do, He can indeed do. There is no need for doubt or skepticism. It is essential that we understand the great pillar of creation and know the power of the God of creation as penned by the inspired writers. This pillar, creation, is one of the mighty saving truths of our God to protect us from the skepticism and doubt of this time. It is one of the powerful truths which constitute the "faith of Jesus" and which characterize "the saints" that "keep the commandments." This pillar, rightly understood, will keep us from the doubt and fear that will lead to defeat and give us the courage and faith to overcome, "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dear friends, will you doubt the Lord of Glory with such promises set before us by the very One with the creative power that "He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:9)? [LM](#)

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The Church, a Living Temple

By John J. Grosboll

In ancient times God had the children of Israel build for Him a temple in their capital city, Jerusalem. However, the apostle Paul says that the Christian has no continuing city in this world. Nevertheless, the Christian does have an altar to which others have no right.

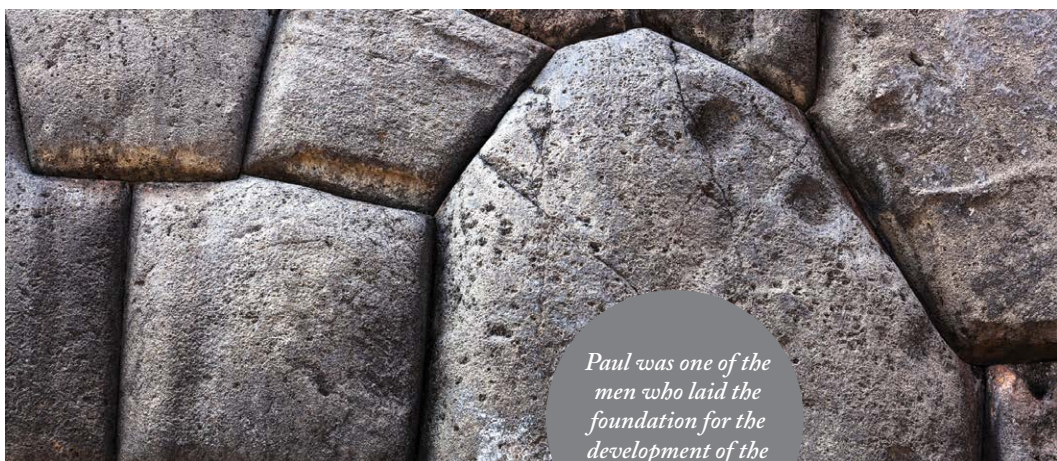
Many times in Scripture, in both in the Old and the New Testaments, the building of the Christian church is likened to the building of a temple. The apostle Paul uses this description in writing to the church at Corinth. He said, “According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus” (1 Corinthians 3:10).



Paul was a champion of the Christian faith. He was one of the main men who laid the foundation for the development of the Christian church. However, although he said that God had made him a wise master builder, he did not exalt himself, but stated that he was just a co-laborer with God, as were the Corinthians also to be co-laborers with God. He said, "For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). Often the prophets and the apostles likened the Christian church to a temple, a building which is to be a habitation for God Himself. A temple is a house or a building for a deity, someone who is worshiped. In explaining this to the Corinthians, Paul communicated lessons which were to apply to all times, all places, and all people.

The Lord gave him the wisdom of a skillful architect that he might lay the foundation of the church of Christ. This figure of the erection of a temple is frequently repeated in the Scriptures, illustrating the building up of the true Christian church. Zechariah writes, "Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the LORD' " (Zechariah 6:12). Not only was He to build the temple of the Lord, but there would be many Gentiles, many people who were not Jews, who would come and help in this building. It says in verse 15, "Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."

Just as was told by prophecy hundreds of years before the foundation of the Christian church was laid, Paul worked in the Gentile quarry of the world to bring out valuable stones to lay upon the foundation, which was Jesus Christ. By coming in contact with that Living



Paul was one of the men who laid the foundation for the development of the Christian church.

Stone we also might become living stones. Then Peter describes it in very similar language when he said, "Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house [this is the temple, the church], a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.' Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, 'the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,' and 'a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed" (1 Peter 2:4-8).

Just as Paul described it, Peter described it; the church is composed of human beings that are described as living stones who are built upon the foundation of that Rock, Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, Jehovah is described as that Eternal Rock that is a refuge and a fortress for His people. Paul used the same terminology in writing to the church in Ephesus. He said, "Now, therefore, you [that is, the Gentiles in Ephesus] are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow

citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22, literal translation).

So, the church is described by both Paul and Peter as a spiritual temple, a spiritual building where God Himself dwells. To the Thessalonians Paul said that in the future the antichrist would come and sit in the church that is in God's own temple. (See 2 Thessalonians 2.) In his letter to the Corinthians Paul uses this description tactfully, but yet as a severe warning.

He said, "Other foundations can no man lay except that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he

Continued on page 30

Jericho

Clues – Joshua 2 & 6 KJV

Across:

| | | |
|-----|--|----------|
| B8 | Rahab admitted to the spies that this was on all her people | 2:9 |
| B15 | This day they did like the first | 6:14 |
| C1 | What the wall did on the seventh day | 6:20 |
| D5 | Rahab was known to be this | 2:1 |
| D14 | On the seventh day they compassed the city _____ times | 6:15 |
| E18 | The Israelites were to take or keep no accursed _____ from Jericho | 6:17, 18 |
| F1 | The priests were to go _____ the ark | 6:6 |
| F10 | Their trumpets were made from ram's _____ | 6:4 |
| H4 | Since Rahab had shown this she wanted it in return | 2:12 |
| H13 | Rahab and her household were saved because she had hidden God's _____ | 6:17 |
| J4 | These were to carry the ark around the city (singular) | 6:6 |
| K11 | The spies' promise to Rahab: If any harm comes to whomever is in your house their blood will be on _____ (two words) | 2:19 |
| K19 | God's instructions were to _____ the trumpets as they encircled Jericho | 6:4 |
| L1 | Rahab told the king's men to do this to the spies | 2:5 |
| L8 | What they did to the city of Jericho | 6:24 |
| M12 | All precious metals and vessels were put into this | 6:24 |
| N3 | The spies gave him a full report | 2:23 |
| O17 | What age were the spies? | 6:23 |
| P1 | After the spies had left Rahab tied the scarlet line to this | 2:21 |
| P8 | He heard that spies had come to see Rahab | 2:2, 3 |
| Q12 | Seven priests each had one of these | 6:8 |
| R5 | Rahab let the spies down the wall by this | 2:15 |
| S2 | Rahab asked for this token of assurance | 2:12 |
| S9 | The spies promised to deal _____ and truly with Rahab | 2:14 |
| S16 | God instructed the people to make a great _____ when they heard the long blast | 6:5 |

Down:

| | | |
|-----|--|------|
| A8 | Rahab hid the spies with these on the roof | 2:6 |
| A16 | Rahab told the spies: your God is the God of all _____ | 2:11 |
| A18 | Rahab told the spies to hide here | 2:16 |
| B2 | When safe the spies did this from the mountain | 2:23 |
| B12 | Rahab had laid the flax on her roof in this | 2:6 |
| C6 | After the conquest of Jericho Joshua's _____ spread everywhere | 6:27 |
| D14 | Rahab asked the spies to also spare these relatives (singular) | 2:13 |
| D20 | All this was consecrated to God | 6:19 |
| E4 | After the walls fell down the Israelites did this to the city | 6:20 |
| G9 | For fear of the Israelites no one _____ from Jericho (two words) | 6:1 |
| H6 | Joshua told the people to make none of this _____ until told to do so | 6:10 |
| H11 | Rahab knew that this king had been utterly destroyed | 2:10 |
| J16 | Rahab told the spies to hide for three _____ | 2:16 |
| J21 | Rahab admitted to the spies that they had lost all this | 2:11 |
| K12 | The spies would be free from their oath if she did this about their business | 2:20 |

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

- L4 All people and animals of Jericho were killed with this 6:21
 M19 The spies to Rahab: Our life for _____ 2:14
 N8 Some of the armed men marched in front of and some behind this 6:9
 N10 The spies told Rahab to tie a scarlet _____ to the window they had gone out by 2:18
 O2 God promised Joshua the _____ men of valor of Jericho 6:2
 O15 After marching around the city they returned to this 6:14
 P5 God said to compass Jericho how many times for six days? 6:3
 P13 Spies to Joshua: “_____ the Lord had delivered into our hands all the land” 2:24
 Q18 How many men did Joshua send on a secret mission? 2:1

Answer Key:

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| R | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X |
| Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L |
| P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K |
| O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J |
| N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
| M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
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| K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F |
| J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E |
| I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D |
| H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C |
| G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B |
| F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A |
| E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y |
| C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X |
| B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W |
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The Uglies

Mother stood in the doorway of the living room. “What are you looking at, children?” she asked. “What kind of book do you have there?”

Linda jumped up from the footstool and began to leaf through her school reader that lay on the couch. But Betty Lou and Eddie did not look up. “Oh, come and see these funny pictures!” they said. “Look at this man with the big hands and feet and the crooked nose.”

“Where did you get that book?” asked Mother, taking one glance at the floor, where Eddie lay stretched out on the rug, chin in hands, while Betty Lou turned the pages.

“Under the chair cushion, where we were looking for a lost pencil.”

Mother took another look and then said, “Linda, please go into the garden and bring me the most beautiful flower you can find.”

Then to the younger ones she added, “Let us put the book away and look at something pretty for a while.”

Harold came into the room in time to see Linda bring in a beautiful chrysanthemum. At the same moment his quick eye caught sight of the comic book which Mother had laid on the mantelpiece. At sight of the book and the upturned chair cushion his face turned red, but Mother pretended not to see it.

She held up the chrysanthemum and said, “I want you to look at this lovely flower. Now shut your eyes. Can you still remember what it looks like with your eyes closed?”

Yes, they all agreed they could.

“Our minds make a picture of the things we look at,” continued Mother, “so that we remember them when we can no longer see. If our minds are full of beautiful pictures, our faces will show it. Little by little we become like the things we think about and the pictures we see. Of course we cannot change the shape of our noses or the color of our eyes or hair by looking at pretty things. But kind deeds, sweet thoughts, and beautiful pictures in our minds do make beautiful faces—faces full of sweetness and love.

“God made man in His own image, after His likeness. Do you think He is pleased when people make ugly pictures of what He has created? Do you think He is pleased when we look at these ugly pictures?”

Most of these comic books show pictured stories of crime and sin that get us to thinking wrong. That is why Daddy and I haven’t bought them for you children. What do you think we should do with this one?” The look on Mother’s face was serious.

“Let’s burn it, like all the rest of the rubbish,” volunteered Harold, who felt ashamed of himself for bringing the book into the house. As he spoke he

tore the book in two and flung it into the fireplace.

“Who’ll strike the match?” asked Mother.

“I will! I will!” said Eddie in his shrill, eager voice. Linda held the matchbox while Eddie struck the match. Betty Lou wanted to help too; so Mother let her set fire to the other half of the book.

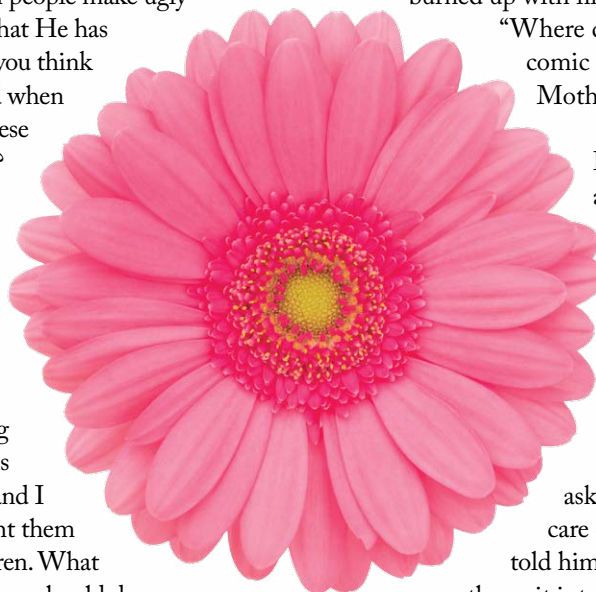
As they watched its pages shrivel in the flames and saw the smoke curl up toward the chimney, Mother said, “That is what God will do someday with all the ugly, wicked things in the world. They will be burned up with fire.

“Where did you get that comic book, Harold?” Mother asked.

“At school,” was Harold’s frank answer. “One of the boys brought it and hid it in the basement by the furnace. He was afraid the teacher would find it, so he asked me to take care of it. I wish I had told him right then to throw it into the furnace!”

“That would have been a good idea,” said Mother, as she laid a hand on Harold’s shoulder.

Happy Home Stories by Ella M. Robinson, TEACH Services, Inc., 2005, pages 107–111. **LM**





"Which Loved Mother Best?"

"I love you, Mother,"
said little John,
Then, forgetting work,
his cap went on,
And he was off
to the garden swing,
Leaving his mother
the wood to bring.

"I love you, Mother,"
said Rosy Nell;
"I love you better
than tongue can tell."
Then she teased and pouted
full half the day,
Till her mother rejoiced
when she went to play.

"I love you, Mother,"
said little Fan;
"Today I will help you
all I can.

"How glad I am
that school doesn't keep!"
And she rocked the baby
till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly,
she brought the broom,
And swept the floor,
and tidied the room;
Busy and happy
all day was she,
Helpful and cheerful
as child could be.

"I love you, Mother,"
again they said—
Three little children
going to bed.
How do you think
that mother guessed
Which of them really
loved her best?



Perilous Times

The unbelieving world will soon have something to think of beside their dress and appearance; and as their minds are torn from these things by distress and perplexity, they have nothing to turn to. They are not prisoners of hope, and therefore do not turn to the Strong Hold. Their hearts will fail them for repining and fear. They have not made God their refuge, and He will not be their consolation then, but will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. They have despised and trampled upon the truths of God's word. They have indulged in extravagant dress, and have spent their lives in hilarity and glee. They have sown to the wind, they must reap the whirlwind.

In the time of distress and perplexity of nations there will be many who have not given themselves wholly to the corrupting influences of the world and the service of Satan, who will humble themselves before God, and turn to Him

with their whole heart and find acceptance and pardon.

Those among Sabbath-keepers who have been unwilling to make any sacrifice, but have yielded to the influence of the world, are to be tested and proved. The perils of the last days are upon us, and a trial is before the young which they have not anticipated. They are to be brought into most distressing perplexity. The genuineness of their faith will be proved. They profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man, yet some of them have been miserable examples to unbelievers. They have not been willing to give up the world, but have united with them, have attended picnics, and other gatherings of pleasure, flattering themselves that they were engaging in innocent amusement. Yet I was shown that it was just such indulgences that separate them from God, and make them children of the world. God owns not the pleasure, or amusement-seeker

as His follower. He has given us no such example. Those only who are self-denying, and who live a life of sobriety, humility and holiness, are true followers of Jesus; and such cannot engage in, and enjoy the frivolous, empty conversation of the lovers of the world.

Isaiah 3, was presented before me. I was shown that this prophecy has its application to these last days; and the reproofs are given to the daughters of Zion who have thought only of appearance and display. Read verse 25: "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war." I was shown that this scripture will be strictly fulfilled. Young men and women professing to be Christians, yet having no Christian experience, and having borne no burdens, and felt no individual responsibility, are to be proved. They will be brought low in the dust, and long for an experience in the things of God, which they failed to obtain.

Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4b, 62, 63. **LM**

God or Satan



As I was perusing through one of Emilio Knechtle's old books, I came across a list of questions which I had not heard in a long time. I realized that these questions may help to stimulate our thinking on some of the issues of the great controversy. He asks:

- Who is the liar and who is the murderer of man? God or Satan?
- Who brought illness, sin, and death into this world? God or Satan?
- Who plans to ruin mankind? God or Satan?
- Who loves man and wishes to make him happy forever? God or Satan?
- Has God the right to forgive our sins, to grant mercy to sinners who were once the slaves of sin and Satan?
- Do sinners who accept the righteousness of Jesus Christ have the right to enter heaven?
- Is it possible for men other than Jesus Christ to be righteous, to desire to keep God's commandments,

and to possess the same faith that Jesus had?

- Can man keep God's moral law?

Other questions of the controversy:

- Who is the Redeemer of mankind? Christ or the antichrist?
- Whose righteousness shall man accept? The righteousness of Christ obtained by faith or man's own righteousness acquired by good works?
- Whose laws shall prevail and be obeyed? The laws of God or the laws of man? *Christ's Message to the Last Generation*, by Emilio B. Knechtle and Charles Sohlmann, 20, 21.

We are living in very controversial times and we need to take a stand on the Lord's side. Joshua said: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15, *last part*). A battle is raging in this world! On which side are you standing? Pray that your eyes will be opened as you consider the answer to these questions, for time is running out. **LM**

*Heavenly Father:
Thank You again for
the warnings and for
reminding us that there
is a great controversy
going on around us and
that we need Your word
and Your Holy Spirit to
guide us. Open our eyes
Lord! Lead us in Thy
righteousness moment
by moment. Amen.*

"I am writing to thank you for sending me your wonderful magazine for these past few years. It has been a tremendous blessing for me and my fellow Adventist brothers here. Everything in your magazine is true to the early Adventist beliefs and is scripturally sound, unlike some other SDA magazines that I have read. ...

"My prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless your ministry and its many out-reaches so that many will be led into His kingdom through your efforts. Thank you and may God bless you all there at Steps to Life."

—DM, Maine

"Thank you so much for the articles 'Today Is the Day' and 'Spiritual Blindness.' Both were a blessing. Keep 'em coming!"

—DC, Alabama

May Sermon of the Month

Five Groups

By John J. Grosboll

Church members will fall into one of five categories when probation closes. Where will you be?

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

May 2019

Dear Friend,

Our commission is to raise up memorials for the Lord in every city and village. That is why we blanket areas with literature and go to state fairs and preach on television and radio. However, no part of the work is more important than the distribution of literature.

Ellen White wrote, "I went to sleep again, and I seemed to be in a large gathering. One of authority was addressing the company, before whom was spread out a map of the world. He said that the map pictured God's vineyard, which must be cultivated. As light from heaven shone upon anyone, that one was to reflect the light to others. Lights were to be kindled in many places, and from these lights still other lights were to be kindled.

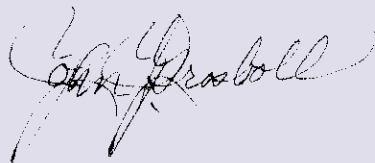
"The words were repeated: 'Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' (Matthew 5:13-16).

"I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God's word was obeyed, and as a result there were memorials for Him in every city and village. ...

"Then this map was removed and another put in its place. On it light was shining from a few places only. The rest of the world was in darkness, with only a glimmer of light here and there. Our Instructor said: 'This darkness is the result of men's following their own course. ... Their hearts are not right with God. They have hidden their light under a bushel.'

"If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman on the walls of Zion had given the trumpet a certain sound, the world might ere this [1909] have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. While men have slept, Satan has stolen a march upon us." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 28, 29.

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath *Offering*

Baptisms in Bolivia



By Pastor Domingo Nunez



Five years ago on my first visit to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, I came across a group of people who requested Bible studies.

The group was composed of Pentecostal evangelicals and Catholics. Their sincerity and desire to learn the present truth of the three angels' messages was very impressive.

Since that first visit, several other trips have been made to help these seekers become acquainted with the Seventh-day Adventist message, the three angels' messages, and the Spirit of Prophecy.

In addition to teaching Bible doctrine, a greater understanding of New Testament gospel order, church organization, and church leadership has been provided. Though there have been challenges, by God's grace all of the group has been baptized and now there are leaders who will become trained through the training program for ministers and church leaders.

During the most recent visit, I presented to the congregation a dedicated group of men who will now serve according to 1 Timothy 3 as the lay pastor, deacons, and elders, two of whom have already completed the training program. Over the next few months these men will be observed and hope to eventually ordain them to become the leaders of this congregation.

We praise God for His mercy and grace and for your prayers and support that have enabled this wonderful development in the Lord's vineyard. [LM](#)

from the
Mission Fields



Manila, the capital city of the Philippines, a country of 105 million inhabitants.

Progress, Slow but Sure

in the Philippines

By John R. Pearson

Philippines Facts:



*105
million
inhabitants*



*80%
Roman
Catholic*



*23
median
age*



Top Left: *Early stage of church construction, summer of 2018.*

Top Right: *The church doors have been installed.*

Bottom Right: *Now that the building is closed in, Bible studies are being conducted in their new facility.*



Work is progressing well in the Philippines, although a lack of funds has hindered the speed at which it is occurring.

Last August, we began an appeal for support for the Bayambang Free Seventh-day Adventist Church. With funds we received from that appeal, work was started on a church to serve as the focal point of worship for that group.

In December, we reported on the progress they had made with funds provided both by church members and by *LandMarks* readers. These funds have been used solely to purchase building materials, as all labor for construction has

been donated by church members. How encouraging it is to see people so sincerely committed to the establishment of a congregation of worshipers!

The accompanying photos show how work has progressed on the church over time. Although much work is still needed to complete the building, it is now closed in. The congregation has begun conducting Bible studies with new interests and worship services in their new “home.”

Please join us as we continue to encourage the worshipers in Bayambang by assisting them in putting the finishing touches on their church.

Darlingtonia

There are about 650 species of carnivorous plants throughout the world. The only places they are not found are the poles and the deserts.

The most fascinating and spectacular of all carnivorous plants is the Darlingtonia, also called the Cobra Lily. This plant's bulbous, hollow, pitcher-shaped leaves resemble rearing to strike cobra heads bearing purple-red-yellow pointed appendages that look similar to a snake's forked tongue or set of fangs.

An insect is drawn to the mouth of the pitcher by scent, color, and an offering of sugary nectar on its long leafy "tongue." Climbing up the length of the tongue it comes to a hole underneath the dome. The dome top is set with countless glassy windows, lighting up its interior making it most appealing. These false windows, or fenestrations, are visual illusions created by thinning sections of membrane in the hood that lose their chlorophyll and become transparent, serving to disorient the insect. The windows in the leaf tissue look skyward, so the insect tends to fly upward believing that the light shows it the way out and for hours it will buzz around within the chamber, repeatedly slamming into the fenestrations.

The tiny exit hole is carefully hidden from the trapped insect by curling it underneath and offering multiple translucent false exits. It is fooled in determining the exit that is actually under its feet. Escape is prevented by slippery waxy walls and thousands of sharp downwardly-pointing hairs. Eventually it tires of the effort and the exhausted prey succumbs and falls to the bottom of the pitcher where the plant slowly digests and absorbs it.

The soft parts of the insects are digested and turned into nitrogen compounds that are used by the plant. Darlingtonia, like other carnivorous plants, grow in water that is poor in nitrogen, and the soft parts of insects are rich in nitrogen supplying that

nutritional need to the plant. The hard surfaces of insects cannot be digested and remain in the leaf.

The attraction of insects to this potentially deadly encounter is the abundant nectar the plant produces. Lured by sweet nectar, fooled by false illusive windows, entrapped by a tiny, well-hidden hole escape is futile.

"'Satan's power is increasing, he is terribly in earnest, knowing that his time is short, he is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.' Those who would escape his wiles must be vigilant and determined. If we would meet the demands for this time, we must put on the whole armor, and go forth with energy, perseverance, and unswerving faith. In God alone is our strength." *The Signs of the Times*, May 5, 1881.

"The forces of Satan are marshaled against us, and we have to meet a diligent foe; but if we take heed to the admonition of Christ, we shall be safe." *Ye Shall Receive Power*, 371. **LM**



"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water."

John 19:34

Q:

What does Jesus' blood and water represent?

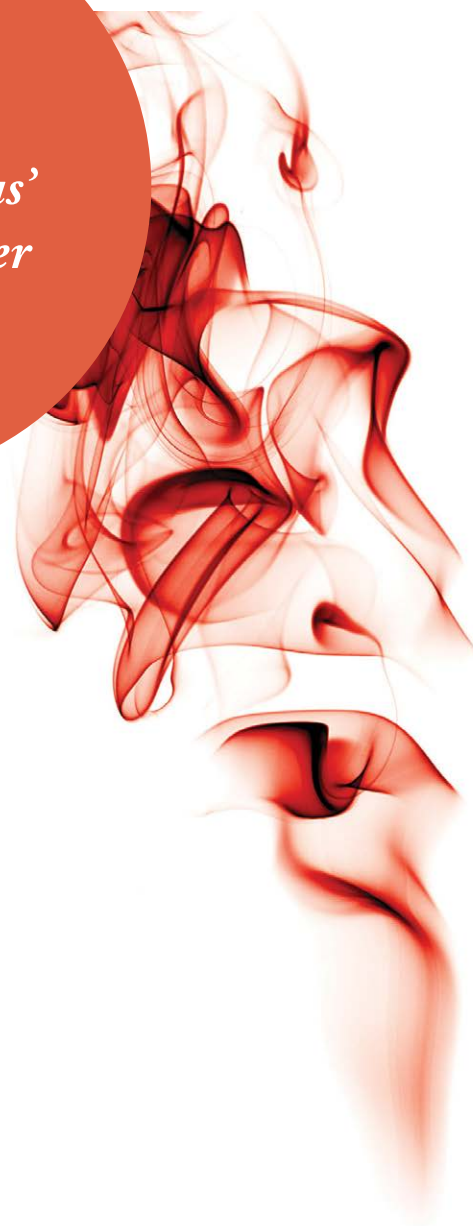
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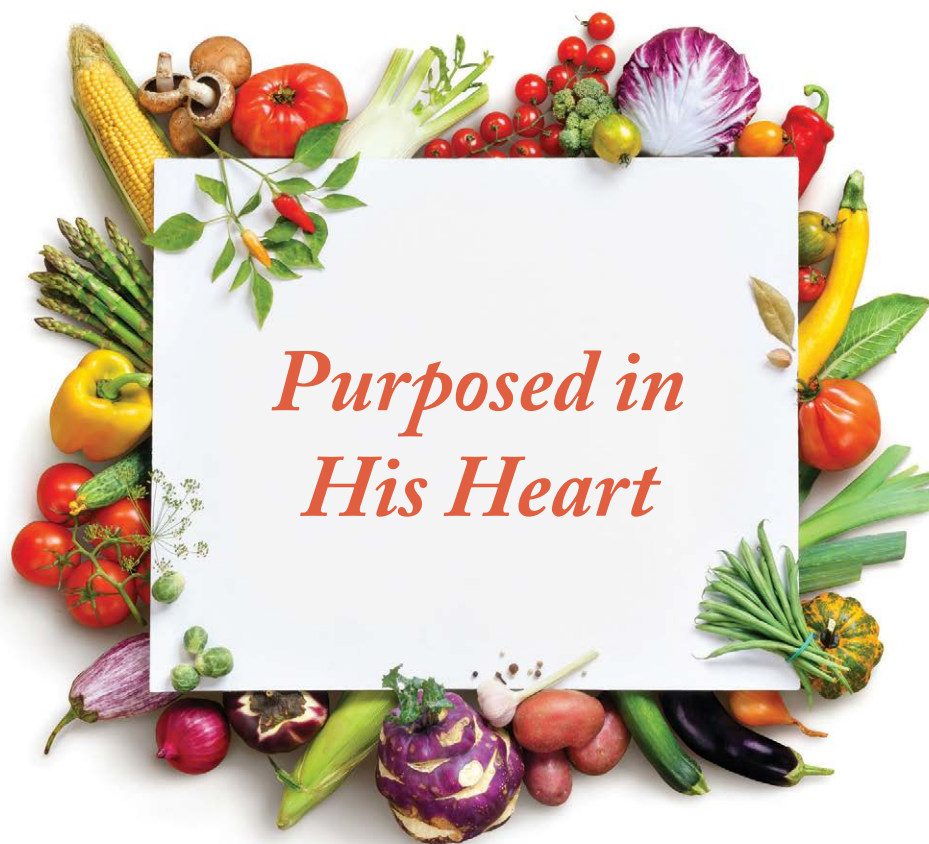
"While Jesus hung upon the cross, as the soldier pierced His side with a spear, there came out blood and water, in two distinct streams, one of blood, the other of clear water. The blood was to wash away the sins of those who should believe in His name. The water represents that living water which is obtained from Jesus to give life to the believer." *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, 102, 103.

"But it was not the spear thrust, it was not the pain of the cross, that caused the death of Jesus. That cry, uttered "with a loud voice" (Matthew 27:50; Luke 23:46), at the moment of death, the stream of blood and water that flowed from His side, declared that He died of a broken heart. His heart was broken by mental anguish. He was slain by the sin of the world." *The Desire of Ages*, 772.

"After the resurrection, the priests and rulers caused the report to be circulated that Jesus did not die upon the cross, that He merely fainted and was afterward resuscitated. Another lying report affirmed that it was not a real body of flesh and bone but the likeness of a body that was laid in the tomb. But the testimony of John concerning the pierced side of the Saviour, and the blood and water that flowed from the wound, refutes these falsehoods that were brought into existence by the unscrupulous Jews." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 172.

"When the spear was thrust into His side, there flowed forth blood and water. His heart was broken by His mental agony. And the hearts of all who seek the Lord and find Him will be broken as they see the result of sin." *The Signs of the Times*, April 14, 1898. [LM](#)





Purposed in His Heart

Sometimes we make our life so complicated, even though God wants to make life simple. “And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible” (1 Corinthians 9:25).

Daniel and his three friends stand out as a Biblical example of the benefits of a temperate, healthful, flesh-free diet.

What about today? As in the human race, disease in animals is increasing. Diseased meat and other animal products are a common source of

food-borne illness. "Disease in cattle is making meat eating a dangerous matter. The Lord's curse is upon the earth, upon man, upon beasts, upon the fish in the sea; and as transgression becomes almost universal, the curse will be permitted to become as broad and as deep as the transgression. Disease is contracted by the use of meat. ...

"In a short time it will not be safe to use anything that comes from the animal creation." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 411.

"Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. ...

"Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it." *Ibid.*, 380, 381.

"Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet." *Ibid.*, 313.

"Instructions on Eating: The disease and suffering that prevail everywhere are largely due to popular errors in diet. By carefully following the instructions in the table, one may avoid many diseases.

"Skip one to four meals periodical-ly. Fasting is an aid to educating the appetite and a rehearsal for self-control. Fasting is the best remedy for many illnesses, especially for people who do not do much physical labor." *God's Healing Way*, Mary Ann McNeilus, M.D.

Will you purpose in your heart to begin right now implementing these suggestions into your lifestyle if you are not already doing so? May God bless your efforts to retain or restore the gift of health in you.

- **Eat largely of fruits and vegetables** prepared in a natural yet tasty way.
- **Vary your diet** from meal to meal, but do not eat too many varieties at any one meal. Keep both the meals and the dishes simple.
- **Use more of the whole grains** such as whole wheat bread and brown rice. Use less food prepared from refined white flour and white rice.
- **Limit the rich foods.** Eat less sugar, salt, and oils. Avoid spices, grease (especially lard), baking powder, baking soda, and vinegar.
- **Eat at the same mealtime daily** and allow at least 5 hours from the end of one meal to the beginning of the next meal. The digestive system works most efficiently when kept on a regular schedule.
- **Do not eat between meals.** Eating between meals slows stomach emptying and gives time for the partially digested food already in the stomach to ferment.
- **Eat a good breakfast.** This should be the largest meal of the day. If eaten at all, supper should be the smallest meal of the day. Eat supper at least 2 to 3 hours before bedtime.
- Eat all you need to maintain health and enjoy your food, but **do not overeat**. Too much food dulls the mind, causes tiredness, increases disease, and shortens life.
- **Eating slowly** and chewing your food thoroughly will increase the enjoyment and the nutritional benefits of food. Mealtime should be pleasant and unhurried.
- **Drink enough water daily** to keep the urine pale, but do not drink with your meals or just before or after meals. **LM**



Continued from page 15

himself will be saved, yet so as through fire” (1 Corinthians 3:11–15, literal translation).

Then he said, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (verses 16, 17, literal translation).

The foundation has been laid. By the Christian experience that you develop, you are building on the foundation. Are you advancing? Is your character being built with material that will stand the day that will reveal your character? When the day of judgment comes and all characters are revealed, will it be seen that you have built on the rock using building materials of gold, or silver, or precious stones? Or will it be seen that you have built on the sand and retained a carnal heart, an unsanctified character that has been whitewashed with a thin profession of righteousness and Christianity—an unsanctified character that cannot be readily detected by the eye of man, but will be detected in the day of God when all characters are revealed.

The precious stones represent those Christians who have been refined and polished by the grace of God. Many times both Paul and Peter said, “We are to grow in grace” (2 Peter 3:18). You are to grow in your Christian experience. Paul talked about the necessity of growing up into Christ. In 1 Corinthians 1:4–8 he said, “I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is God’s will for each one of His children to be blameless in the day of Christ when Jesus comes again in the clouds of heaven.

During the probationary time in this world we are all given opportunity to not only accept Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour from sin, but also to receive the Holy Spirit and grow up into His image. Paul wrote about how there were some people who were like little children being pushed back and forth with every wind of doctrine. He admonished them that they needed to grow up so that would no longer be the case. In Ephesians the 4th chapter it says, “He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (verses 11–15, literal translation).

Since the time of the apostles, Paul’s epistles helped lay the foundation for building the church of God. Paul brought each person who was willing to accept the gospel to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to a connection with the living cornerstone. Slowly, there ascended the temple, the church of the living God, which is to be completed before Jesus returns in the clouds of heaven. Paul said, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17).

The Jews made the work of Paul exceedingly difficult, claiming that they were the only true children of Abraham and therefore they were the only ones who could

“

The church is composed of human beings that are described as living stones who are built upon the foundation of that Rock, Jesus Christ.

be part of God's house. However, the apostles had received a commission from God Himself that the gospel was to go to every nation, to every tribe, to every nationality, to every group of people and to every language (Revelation 14:6). They had to contend with the bigotry, prejudice, and the violence of men who wanted the gospel to be restricted. One after another the noble builders fell at their posts of duty by the hand of the enemy. Stephen was stoned. James was slain with the sword. Paul was beheaded. Peter was crucified. John was exiled, but in spite of the fact that it appeared that all the leaders would be killed off, the church of God still slowly ascended by men who were willing to endure terrible persecutions.

New workers eagerly took the place of those who had fallen, and these faithful laborers down through the ages have brought precious material to the living foundation. Paul told Timothy, "Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:16). Although they are dead now, the righteous of all ages testify by the record of their words and deeds to the truth of God. The names of all the martyrs of the Christian faith for Christ's sake are immortalized among the angels in heaven, and a bright reward awaits them when the Lifegiver shall come back to this world and call them from their graves.

This light of truth that has been ascending in our world has always been exceedingly annoying to those joined to the world because the truth exposes the darkness of error. There is a contrast between righteousness and sin. Those who refuse to obey the truth themselves are unwilling that others should obey it. For that reason, the course of the faithful is a continual reproof; their very presence is a reproof to those who do not believe and are disobedient. Carnal minds wrest the word of God to make it pander to their follies and superstitions, but that unerring Word, which is the rule that will test every stone that



Will you be found to have a Christian character that is likened to gold, and precious stones, and pearls, or will your character be represented by wood, hay, and stubble?

is brought to God's temple, will be the record in the judgment to which your life will be compared.

How will it be with you in that final day of judgment when Paul says God is going to "bring every secret thing to light" (Ecclesiastes 12:14)? He said, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts" (1 Corinthians 4:5).

O friend, think of the consequences of that day of judgment. How will it be with you? Will you be found connected to the living stone, the living foundation? Will you be found to have a Christian character that is likened to gold, and precious stones, and pearls, or will your character be represented by wood, hay, and stubble? Remember what Paul said to the Corinthians that, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive the things that we have done in the body, whether it is good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10, literal translation).

The leaders of this world, both church leaders and secular leaders, have sought to defile and destroy this temple by sacrilegious idolatry and persecution of the faithful. But God's eye has never for a moment

left the building that He is erecting in this world. In the face of gaping prisons and torture, and flames, the work of the Christian church has grown under the hands of faithful men. The workmen were at times almost blinded by the mists of superstition that settled as dense darkness on this world. They seemed to be beaten back and destroyed by the violence of their opponents. But in spite of all that, the work of building the church, has gone forward and will continue to go forward in the face of the persecution that we are continuing to face until Jesus returns again. Paul said, "Where are you going to be in the day when God reveals the nature of character that you have been building?" Characters are being built for eternity, either for everlasting life or everlasting destruction. What is going to be your destiny?

Jesus said that your character determines your destiny. (See the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5; Matthew 25; and John 17.) Paul taught that principle to the Corinthians who had fallen into apostasy and the sins of idolatry and paganism that surrounded them. Attempting to draw them back he asked, "Are you going to be a Christian in truth as well as in name or not?" Then he gave them an illustration of something that

they could clearly understand being used to seeing these things in their city.

There were people who lived in the first century, just as there are people today, who wanted a religion where all they had to do was simply believe, and that was all.

They sought a profession of faith and wanted assurance of salvation without having to change their lifestyle.

So today, there are many people who live like the devil thinking that they are Christians and that they are going to heaven, but this is not the religion that was preached by the apostles. This is not the religion described in the New Testament.

In writing to the Corinthians who were in a terrible state of apostasy practicing open sins among themselves, Paul talks to them as a father instructs his children. Paul wants to describe to them the necessity of firm self-control and strict temperance. He did this by comparing it with the games that were celebrated near Corinth and were always attended by a multitude of spectators. This illustration was calculated to make a vivid impression upon the minds of those he addressed because it referred to something with which they were intimately acquainted. There were various games that had been instituted among the Greeks and Romans, not only for the purpose of amusement, but also to train young men for personal vigor and activity, and prepare them to be qualified to be excellent soldiers in warfare.

The most famous of all these games, the most ancient and the most highly esteemed, were the foot races. They were held at stated times and places with great pomp and were patronized by kings, nobles, statesmen, and very wealthy people. These contests were governed by strict regulations from which

there were no exceptions. Before the names of the candidates could be entered upon the list as competitors for the prize, they were required to undergo a severe preparatory training. Every indulgence of appetite or other gratification which could in the least affect their mental or physical vigor was strictly forbidden.

Paul speaks of these games to help the believers understand what is necessary for the Christian who is preparing to leave this world to go to a different place. The Christian is also running a race, the race of life. Paul said, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate [that is, practices self-control] in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run like thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

O friend, have you ever thought that through? We should ask ourselves, if it was possible for the apostle Paul, who had faithfully preached the gospel all over the world to become disqualified from receiving the prize of eternal life because of lack of self-control, what about me? O friend, do not fall for the idea that the Christian religion is just a shallow assent to saying, "I believe," and then it is all over—you are saved! No, the Christian religion involves running a race, one in which you practice strict self-control in all things, so that you might be ready for the coming of Christ and your character is such that you are safe to take to heaven.

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

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By the Christian experience that you develop, you are building on the foundation. Are you advancing?

May 26 – June 1

Weakness Into Strength

Key Text

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 563–568.

Introduction

“Physically he [Samson] was the strongest man upon the earth; but in self-control, integrity, and firmness, he was the weakest of men.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 13, 1881.

Sunday

REAPING WHAT WAS SOWN

- a. What bitter fruit immediately occurred in Samson’s marriage with an unbeliever? Judges 14:7, 10, 20.

Note: “He [Samson] did not ask whether he could better glorify God when united with the object of his choice, or whether he was placing himself in a position where he could not fulfill the purpose to be accomplished by his life. To all who seek first to honor Him, God has promised wisdom; but there is no promise to those who are bent upon self-pleasing. ...

“At his marriage feast Samson was brought into familiar association with those who hated the God of Israel. Whoever voluntarily enters into such relations will feel it necessary to conform, to some degree, to the habits and customs of his companions. The time thus spent is worse than wasted. Thoughts are entertained and words are spoken that tend to break down the strongholds of principle and to weaken the citadel of the soul.

“The wife, to obtain whom Samson had transgressed the command of God, proved treacherous to her husband before the close of the marriage feast. Incensed at her perfidy, Samson forsook her for the time, and went alone to his home at Zorah.

When, afterward relenting, he returned for his bride, he found her the wife of another.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 563.

Monday

HUMANITY RESISTING GOD’S GRACE

- a. How did Samson’s revenge on the Philistines show a sample of the unique strength God gave him for Israel’s deliverance? Judges 15:4–8, 13–15.

- b. How long did Samson rule as a judge in Israel? Judges 15:20. How did the people show how human nature often hinders God’s plans?

Note: “Had the Israelites been ready to unite with Samson and follow up the victory, they might at this time have freed themselves from the power of their oppressors. But they had become dispirited and cowardly. They had neglected the work which God commanded them to perform, in dispossessing the heathen, and had united with them in their degrading practices, tolerating their cruelty, and, so long as it was not directed against themselves, even countenancing their injustice. When themselves brought under the power of the oppressor, they tamely submitted to the degradation which they might have escaped, had they only obeyed God. Even when the Lord raised up a deliverer for them, they would, not infrequently, desert him and unite with their enemies.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 564.

- c. Despite Samson’s apostasy, how did God show him mercy? Judges 16:1–3.

Note: “Samson had transgressed the command of God by taking a wife from the Philistines, and again he ventured among them—now his deadly enemies—in the indulgence of unlawful passion. Trusting to his great strength, which had inspired the Philistines with such terror, he went boldly to Gaza, to visit a harlot of that place. The inhabitants of the city learned of his presence, and they were eager for revenge. Their enemy was shut safely within the walls of the most strongly fortified of all their cities; they felt sure of their prey, and only waited till the morning to complete their triumph. At midnight Samson was aroused. The accusing voice of conscience filled him with remorse, as he remembered that he had broken his vow as a Nazarite. But notwithstanding his sin, God’s mercy had not forsaken him. His prodigious strength again served to deliver him.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 565.

Tuesday

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

- a. In what sin was Samson becoming entangled? Judges 16:4–6; Galatians 6:8. How did this sin work his ruin?

Note: “He [Samson] did not again venture among the Philistines, but he continued to seek those sensuous pleasures that were luring him to ruin. ... The vale of Sorek was celebrated for its vineyards; these also had a temptation for the wavering Nazarite, who had already indulged in the use of wine, thus breaking another tie that bound him to purity and to God. The Philistines kept a vigilant watch over the movements of their enemy, and when he degraded himself by this new attachment, they determined, through Delilah, to accomplish his ruin.

“A deputation consisting of one leading man from each of the Philistine provinces was sent to the vale of Sorek. They dared not attempt to seize him while in possession of his great strength, but it was their purpose to learn, if possible, the secret of his power. They therefore bribed Delilah to discover and reveal it.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 565.

- b. What warnings should we heed from the downward spiral into which Samson was falling? Proverbs 5:21, 22; 7:10, 22, 23; Romans 13:14.

Note: “Samson’s infatuation seems almost incredible. At first he was not so wholly enthralled as to reveal the secret; but he had deliberately walked into the net of the betrayer of souls, and its meshes were drawing closer about him at every step.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 13, 1881.

“In the society of this enchantress, the judge of Israel squandered precious hours that should have been sacredly devoted to the welfare of his people. But the blinding passions which make even the strongest weak, had gained control of reason and of conscience.” Ibid.

“Samson in his peril had the same source of strength as had Joseph. He could choose the right or wrong as he pleased. But instead of taking hold of the strength of God, he permitted the wild passions of his nature to have full sway. The reasoning powers were perverted, the morals corrupted. God had called Samson to a position of great responsibility, honor, and usefulness; but he must first learn to govern by first learning to obey the laws of God.” Ibid.

Wednesday

THE BOTTOM OF THE PIT

- a. What bitter results followed Samson’s spiritual weakness? Judges 16:15–21.

Note: “When he had been shaven, Delilah began to annoy him and cause him pain, thus making a trial of his strength; for the Philistines dared not approach him till fully convinced that his power was gone. Then they seized him and, having put out both his eyes, they took him to Gaza. Here he was bound with fetters in their prison house and confined to hard labor.

“What a change to him who had been the judge and champion of Israel!—now weak, blind, imprisoned, degraded to the most menial service! Little by little he had violated the conditions of his sacred calling. God had borne long with him; but when he had so yielded himself to the power of sin as to betray his secret, the Lord departed from him. There was no virtue in his long hair merely, but it was a token of his loyalty to God; and when the symbol was sacrificed in the indulgence of passion, the blessings of which it was a token were also forfeited.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 566.

- b. What words of Jesus bring hope to each one of us? Luke 5:32.
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Note: “In suffering and humiliation, a sport for the Philistines, Samson learned more of his own weakness than he had ever known before; and his afflictions led him to repentance.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 566.

- c. What began to happen to Samson physically, showing God’s amazing mercy toward sinners? Judges 16:22. What attitude was beginning to take hold of Samson? Mark 9:24.
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Note: “His [Samson’s] hair began gradually to grow, indicating the return of his extraordinary powers.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 13, 1881.

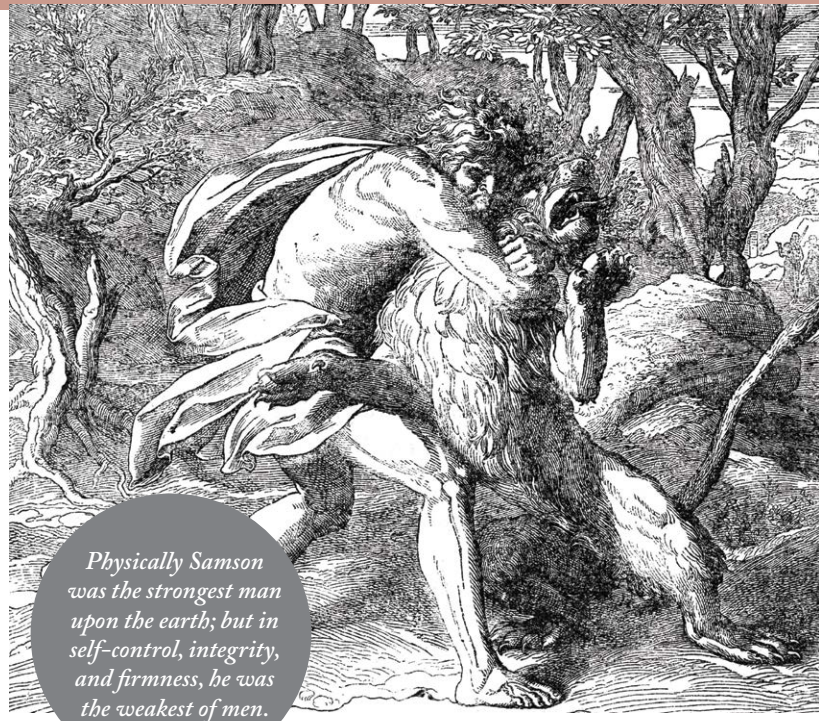
Thursday

THE TRIUMPH OF GOD’S MERCY

- a. How and why did Satan mock at the disgraceful condition of God’s broken deliverer? Judges 16:23–25.
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Note: “As the Philistines exulted over their great victory, they ascribed the honor to their gods, praising them as superior to the God of Israel. The contest, instead of being between Samson and the Philistines, was now between Jehovah and Dagon.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 13, 1881.

- b. What deliberate request did Samson make to the one leading him by the hand? What prayer did Samson breathe to God? Judges 16:26–28.
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Physically Samson was the strongest man upon the earth; but in self-control, integrity, and firmness, he was the weakest of men.

Note: “After a time, as if weary, Samson asked permission to rest against the two central pillars which supported the temple roof. Then he silently uttered the prayer, ‘O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines’ (Judges 16:28).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 567.

- c. What did God use to impart saving faith to Samson? In what “hall of fame” is this frail man included? Judges 16:30; Hebrews 11:32, 33.
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Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why should the outcome of Samson’s marriage be no surprise?
- 2 To what spiritual path did the marriage lead Samson?
- 3 How is the history of Samson and Delilah repeated in various ways today?
- 4 What change did Samson make after the loss of his eyes?
- 5 How and why did God bless Samson’s prayer at the end of his life?

June 2 – 8

Asked of the Lord

Key Text

“Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD” (1 Samuel 1:20).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 569–574.

Introduction

“The mother’s daily influence upon her children is preparing them for everlasting life or eternal death. She exercises in her home a power more decisive than the minister in the desk, or even the king upon his throne. The day of God will reveal how much the world owes to godly mothers for men who have been unflinching advocates of truth and reform.” *Reflecting Christ*, 195.

Sunday

BARREN AND BETRAYED

- a. What brought sadness to Hannah, the wife of Elkanah? 1 Samuel 1:1, 2.

Note: “Elkanah’s love for his chosen companion was deep and unchanging; yet a cloud shadowed their domestic happiness. The home was not made joyful by the voice of childhood. At length the strong desire to perpetuate his name led the husband, as it had led many others, to adopt a course which God did not sanction—that of introducing into the family a second wife, to be subordinate to the first. This act was prompted by a lack of faith in God, and was attended with evil results. The peace of the hitherto united and harmonious family was broken. Upon Hannah the blow fell with crushing weight. All happiness seemed forever swept away from her life. She bore her trials uncomplainingly, yet her grief was none the less keen and bitter.

“Penninah, the new wife, was a woman of inferior mind, and of envious and jealous disposition. As the years passed on, and sons and daughters were added to the household, she became

proud and self-important, and treated her rival with contempt and insolence.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

Monday

MISJUDGED AND MISUNDERSTOOD

- a. At the time of worship at Shiloh, how did Elkanah relate to his two wives? 1 Samuel 1:3–5.

Note: “Even amid the sacred festivities connected with the worship of God, the evil spirit that had cursed his [Elkanah’s] home intruded. After the other sacrifices had been made, it was customary for the peace-offering to be presented. A specified portion of this was given to the priest, and then the offerer, after distributing to each member of his family a share of the remainder, united with them in a solemn yet joyous feast. Upon these occasions Elkanah gave the mother of his children a portion for herself and for each of her sons and daughters, and then as a token of regard for Hannah, his first and best-loved wife, he gave her a double portion. This excited the envy and jealousy of the second wife, and she boldly asserted her claims to superiority as one highly favored of God; and she tauntingly pointed to the fact that Hannah had no children, as proof of the Lord’s displeasure toward her.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

- b. What was the bitter extent of Hannah’s suffering? 1 Samuel 1:6, 7.

Note: “This scene was enacted again and again, not only at the yearly gatherings, but whenever circumstances furnished an opportunity for Peninnah to exalt herself at the expense of her rival. The course of this woman seemed to Hannah, a trial almost beyond endurance. Satan employed her as his agent to harass, and if possible exasperate and destroy one of God’s faithful children. At last, as her enemy’s taunts were repeated at one of the yearly feasts, Hannah’s courage and fortitude gave way. Unable longer to conceal her feelings, she wept without restraint. The expressions of joy on every hand seemed mockery to her. She could not partake of the feast.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

- c. How did Elkanah try to comfort his dear wife, but in vain? 1 Samuel 1:8.
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Note: “It was impossible for Elkanah fully to understand her [Hannah’s] feelings or to appreciate the cause.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

Tuesday

FAITHFUL AND GRACIOUS

- a. What was Hannah’s solution to the problem that confronted her? 1 Samuel 1:9–11; Psalm 50:15.
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Note: “Humility, conscientiousness, and a firm reliance upon God, were ruling traits in her [Hannah’s] character.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

“Hannah brought no reproach against her husband for his unwise marriage. The grief which she could share with no earthly friend, she carried to her Heavenly Father, and sought consolation from Him alone. ... There is a mighty power in prayer. Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God. An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings.

“Hannah’s prayer was unheard by mortal ear, but entered the ear of the Lord of hosts.” Ibid.

- b. After being misjudged through the malice of her rival, how was Hannah now misjudged by the high priest in the house of God? 1 Samuel 1:12–14.
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Note: “Feasting revelry had well-nigh supplanted true godliness among the people of Israel. Instances of intemperance, even among women, were of frequent occurrence, and now Eli determined to administer what he considered a deserved rebuke.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.



The mother's daily influence upon her children is preparing them for everlasting life or eternal death.

- c. How does Hannah’s noble response reveal the abundant grace of a Christlike character? 1 Samuel 1:15, 16.
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Note: “Hannah had been communing with God. She believed that her prayer had been heard, and the peace of Christ filled her heart. Hers was a gentle, sensitive nature, yet she yielded neither to grief nor to indignation at the unjust charge of drunkenness in the house of God. With due reverence for the anointed of the Lord, she calmly repelled the accusation and stated the cause of her emotion.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

Wednesday

SAMUEL’S FIRST THREE YEARS

- a. What miracle did the Lord grant in answer to Hannah’s prayer? 1 Samuel 1:17–20.
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- b. What should we learn from the thoroughness of Hannah's instruction of young Samuel? Proverbs 22:6.

Note: "During the first three years of the life of Samuel the prophet, his mother carefully taught him to distinguish between good and evil. By every familiar object surrounding him she sought to lead his thoughts up to the Creator." *Child Guidance*, 197.

"The first three years is the time in which to bend the tiny twig. Mothers should understand the importance attaching to this period. It is then that the foundation is laid." *Ibid.*, 194.

"It was Hannah, the woman of prayer and self-sacrifice and heavenly inspiration, who gave birth to Samuel, the heaven-instructed child, the incorruptible judge, the founder of Israel's sacred schools." *The Ministry of Healing*, 372.

- c. What should we learn from Hannah about the seriousness of vows made to God? 1 Samuel 1:11, 21-28; Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5.

Note: "As soon as the little one was old enough to be separated from his mother, she fulfilled her vow. She loved her child with all the devotion of a mother's heart; day by day, as she watched his expanding powers and listened to his childish prattle, her affections entwined about him more closely. He was her only son, the special gift of Heaven; but she had received him as a treasure consecrated to God, and she would not withhold from the Giver His own.

"Once more Hannah journeyed with her husband to Shiloh and presented to the priest, in the name of God, her precious gift." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 570, 571.

Thursday

A SONG OF PRAISE AND PROPHECY

- a. What was Hannah led to publicly declare with power? 1 Samuel 2:1.

Note: "She [Hannah] felt that she could do no less in token of her gratitude than to make a public acknowledgment of the divine mercy and loving-kindness. The spirit of inspiration came upon her, and although a retiring and timid woman, her voice was now heard in the assembly of the people, sounding forth the praise of God. ...

"The horn is in some animals the weapon of attack and defense; by the use of this figure, Hannah would acknowledge that her deliverance had come from God. In her exultation, there is no vain triumph of self. She rejoices not in Samuel, not in her own prosperity, but in the Lord." *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

- b. How do Hannah's words bring us comfort and wisdom? 1 Samuel 2:2-10.

Note: "[1 Samuel 2:3 quoted.] While here referring to Peninnah's boastful and insolent conduct, Hannah seems also to speak to all the enemies of true godliness, who glory in themselves, and insult and despise the children of faith. Pride and boasting cannot deceive God. He is acquainted with the hearts and the lives of all. By Him actions are weighed. He distinguishes men's characters, and weighs their motives in the balance. When He sees that it will be for the good of man and for His own glory, He will interpose in behalf of His people. In due time He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked." *The Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1881.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How do many too often repeat the same type of mistake as Elkanah did?
- 2 What should we do about the "Penninah's" in our life?
- 3 In what ways might I be guilty of misjudging someone I know?
- 4 Explain the work of parents during the first three years of a child's life.
- 5 What prompted Hannah to make the public declaration that she did?

June 9 – 15

A Consecrated Child

Key Text

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right” (Proverbs 20:11).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 575–580.

Introduction

“The Lord accepted Samuel from his very childhood, because his heart was pure. He was given to God, a consecrated offering, and the Lord made him a channel of light.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 537.

Sunday

CALLED TO SERVICE

- a. What did Samuel do in his new life in the temple? 1 Samuel 2:11, 18. What did Hannah do for Samuel, and how did God bless Hannah? 1 Samuel 2:19–21.

Note: “It was not customary for the Levites to enter upon their peculiar services until they were twenty-five years of age, but Samuel had been an exception to this rule. Every year saw more important trusts committed to him; and while he was yet a child, a linen ephod was placed upon him as a token of his consecration to the work of the sanctuary. Young as he was when brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity. These were at first very humble, and not always pleasant; but they were performed to the best of his ability, and with a willing heart.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 573.

“When separated from her child, the faithful mother’s solicitude did not cease. He was the subject of her prayers. Every year she made him a little coat, and when she came with her husband to the yearly sacrifice, she presented it to the child as a token of her love. With every stitch of that coat she had breathed a prayer that he might be pure, noble, and true. She did not ask that he might be great, but earnestly pleaded that he might be good.” *The Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1881.

Monday

WITH ELI AND HIS FAMILY

- a. What is written about Samuel in his youth? 1 Samuel 2:26. What was the relationship between the child Samuel and Eli, the high priest?

Note: “Samuel had been placed under the care of Eli, and the loveliness of his character drew forth the warm affection of the aged priest. He was kind, generous, obedient, and respectful. Eli, pained by the waywardness of his own sons, found rest and comfort and blessing in the presence of his charge. Samuel was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his child more tenderly than did Eli this youth. It was a singular thing that between the chief magistrate of the nation and the simple child so warm an affection should exist. As the infirmities of age came upon Eli, and he was filled with anxiety and remorse by the profligate course of his own sons, he turned to Samuel for comfort.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 573.

- b. Although young Samuel was living on the premises of the high priest, what should we realize about the environment there? What serious warning was given to Eli? 1 Samuel 2:12, 22, 27–31.

Note: “Samuel’s youth was passed in the tabernacle solemnly devoted to the worship of God; yet even here he was not free from evil influences or sinful example. The sons of Eli are described in the sacred word as ‘sons of Belial.’ They feared not God, nor honored their father; but Samuel did not seek their company nor follow their evil ways. It was his constant effort to make himself what God would have him to become. This is the privilege of every youth. God is pleased when even little children devote themselves to His service; they should not be discouraged in their efforts to become Christians. ...

“The youngest child that loves and fears God, is greater in His sight than the most talented and learned man who neglects the great salvation.” *The Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1881.

“Despite the many sovereigns to whom men profess allegiance, all mankind are serving one of two masters—the Prince of light or the Prince of darkness. Samuel served the former, the sons of Eli the latter.” *Ibid*.

Tuesday

OBEDIENCE AS A MERE OPTION?

- a. What was the problem of Eli and how might we be guilty of repeating the same mistake today? 1 Samuel 2:22–25; Isaiah 3:12, *first part*.

Note: “Eli was quick to see and rebuke the sins and errors of the people, sometimes, as in the case of Hannah, even administering unjust reproof; but the sins of his own sons seemed to him less offensive than the sins of others. In his undue affection he was ever ready to find excuses for their perverse course.” *The Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1881.

“Eli had instructed his children in the law of God, and had given them a good example in his own life; but this was not his whole duty. God required him, both as a father and as a priest, to restrain them from following their own perverse will. This he had failed to do.” *Ibid.*, November 10, 1881.

“The father [Eli] did not enforce obedience.” *The Review and Herald*, August 30, 1881.

- b. What do we need to realize when we see spiritual weakness in our children? Proverbs 26:2; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

Note: “In every earnest Christian heart the question rises, ‘Why, oh, why, in a land of Bibles and Christian teaching, can the adversary of souls exert over our youth a power so mighty, so unrestrained?’ The reason is apparent. Parents are neglecting their solemn responsibility. They are not earnest, persevering, and faithful in the work of training their children for God, restraining their evil desires and enforcing obedience to parental authority, even in infancy.” *The Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1881.

“The mother should not allow her child to gain an advantage over her in a single instance; and, in order to maintain this authority, it is not necessary to resort to harsh measures; a firm, steady hand and a kindness which convinces the child of your love will accomplish the purpose. ...

“Never should they [the children] be allowed to show their parents disrespect. Self-will should never be permitted to go unrebuked. The future well-being of the child requires kindly, loving, but firm discipline.” *Child Guidance*, 83.

Wednesday

WORTHY OF A HIGH CALLING

- a. In contrast to Eli’s sons, what can every child learn from the experience of little Samuel at the temple? Proverbs 20:11; Psalm 71:17.

Note: “If children were taught to regard the humble round of everyday duties as the course marked out for them by the Lord, as a school in which they were to be trained to render faithful and efficient service, how much more pleasant and honorable would their work appear. To perform every duty as unto the Lord, throws a charm around the humblest employment and links the workers on earth with the holy beings who do God’s will in heaven.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 574.

- b. How was Samuel a tremendous witness to the aged Eli, and how only was this possible? 2 Corinthians 2:14–17.

Note: “While Eli’s heart was filled with anxiety and remorse by the evil course of his sons, he found relief and comfort in the integrity and devotion of the youthful Samuel. His ready helpfulness and unvarying fidelity lightened the burdens of the careworn priest. Eli loved Samuel; for he saw that the grace and love of God rested upon him. ...

“As Samuel grew older, the anxiety of his parents in his behalf became more intense. Many were the petitions offered that he might not be contaminated by the wickedness reported concerning the sons of Eli.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1881.



The mother should not allow her child to gain an advantage over her in a single instance.

- c. Relate the amazing story of God's call to Samuel.
1 Samuel 3:1–10.

Note: “When but twelve years old, the son of Hannah received his special commission from the Most High. ... Three times Samuel was called, and thrice he responded in like manner; and then Eli was convinced that the mysterious call was the voice of God. What feelings must have stirred the heart of the high priest at that hour! God had passed by his chosen servant, the man of hoary hairs, to commune with a child.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1881.

Thursday

A MESSAGE TO MAKE EARS TINGLE

- a. What message did God give to Samuel and how did the boy feel about delivering it? 1 Samuel 3:12–15.

Note: “Samuel had not been ignorant of the wicked course pursued by the sons of Eli, but he was filled with fear and amazement that the Lord should commit to him so terrible a message. He arose in the morning and went about his duties as usual, but with a heavy burden on his young heart. How earnestly did he long for the sympathy and counsel of his parents in that trying hour! The Lord had not

commanded him to reveal the fearful denunciation to the priest or to his sons; hence he remained silent, avoiding as far as possible the presence of Eli. He trembled, lest some question would compel him to declare the divine judgments against one whom he so loved and revered.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1881.

- b. Respectful and obedient as ever, what did Samuel soon have to do? What should we consider as we reflect on the message given? 1 Samuel 3:18.

Note: “In every age, God's judgments have been visited upon the earth because men transgressed His law. What, then, have we to expect as we behold the wickedness which prevails at the present day? ... Many of the acknowledged leaders in the church and in the nation, break, and teach others to break that law, as sacred to God as His own throne and name. It is time for the Lord Himself to assert His authority in the earth. ... He removes His protecting, providential care, and visits His judgments upon the children of men.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1881.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Although left alone at the temple without his parents, why was Samuel safe?
- 2 Why was Eli able to appreciate Samuel so much?
- 3 How can parents be like Eli today?
- 4 Name some of the keys to Samuel's purity in the corrupt temple court.
- 5 What shows the accountability that God expects in all ages?

June 16 – 22

From Ichabod to Ebenezer

Key Text

“Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him” (1 Samuel 7:9, *last part*).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 581, 591; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 516, 517.

Introduction

“Samuel endeavored to impress upon Israel the fact that they themselves had something to do to secure the divine favor. They must repent of their sins, and put away their idols.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 26, 1882.

Sunday

IMPENDING WOE UPON THE NATION

- a. For what gift did faithful Samuel become renowned? 1 Samuel 3:19, 21.

- b. Meanwhile, although Eli had bowed in humble submission to the rebuke against his household, how did God view the situation? Ecclesiastes 8:11.

Note: “Eli did not manifest the fruits of true repentance. He confessed his guilt, but failed to renounce the sin. Year after year the Lord delayed His threatened judgments. Much might

have been done in those years to redeem the failures of the past, but the aged priest took no effective measures to correct the evils that were polluting the sanctuary of the Lord. ... The warnings were disregarded by the people, as they had been by the priests. The people of surrounding nations also, who were not ignorant of the iniquities openly practiced in Israel, became still bolder in their idolatry and crime. They felt no sense of guilt for their sins, as they would have felt had the Israelites preserved their integrity. But a day of retribution was approaching. God’s authority had been set aside, and His worship neglected and despised, and it became necessary for Him to interpose, that the honor of His name might be maintained.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 582, 583.

Monday

SUMMONING A SYMBOL

- a. What foolish decision did Israel make when in a weak spiritual state, and who was responsible for this decision? 1 Samuel 4:2, 4.

Note: “This expedition [of going out against the Philistines to battle] was undertaken by the Israelites without counsel from God, without the concurrence of high priest or prophet. [1 Samuel 4:2 quoted.] As the shattered and disheartened force returned to their encampment, ‘the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before the Philistines?’ (1 Samuel 4:3). The nation was ripe for the judgment of God, yet they did not see that their own sins had been the cause of this terrible disaster.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 583.

“Instead of confessing and forsaking the sins that had brought defeat upon them [the Israelites], they now set about devising some other means by which to obtain the victory. Then they thought of the ark of God. What wonders had been wrought when the priests bore it before the people into Jordan! How its waters parted, leaving a safe path for that vast company! They remembered also how it was borne about the city of Jericho seven days in solemn silence, and then as the trumpets pealed, and the people gave a great shout, the massive walls fell flat upon the earth.

“The recollection of these glorious triumphs inspired all Israel with fresh hope and courage.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 22, 1881.

- b. What shows the misunderstanding the people had about the ark, and how might we fall into the same trap today? 1 Samuel 4:5.

Note: “They [Israel] did not consider that it was the law of God which alone gave to the ark its sacredness, and that its presence would bring them prosperity only as they obeyed that law. ...

“Yet we see a similar blindness and inattention on the part of many at the present day. ... God has given to modern Israel warnings, counsel, and reproof, to bring them to repentance and reformation of life. But too often these produce but a momentary impression. The persons warned soon return to their own ways. ... It is one thing to acknowledge the claims of God’s law, and quite another thing to render faithful and willing obedience to all its requirements.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 22, 1881.

Tuesday

MISGUIDED CONFIDENCE

- a. With what regard did the Philistines hold the ark? What was the outcome of the battle? 1 Samuel 4:6, 10. Why did the ark not help Israel?

Note: “They [Israel] overlooked the distinction between the divine presence vouchsafed to an obedient and believing people, and the ark, which was but a symbol of that presence. Hence they confidently looked to the ark for those blessings which God alone could bestow. They saw not the wide contrast between the condition of Israel when the Lord wrought so mightily in their behalf, and their present state.

“They were then walking in obedience to God. The ark was borne by holy men in accordance with His express command, and the Captain of the Lord’s host went before the repository

of His law. Then His arm brought deliverance for them. But they were now following their own plans, in opposition to the divine counsel and authority. The ark was borne by sons of Belial who were doomed to destruction. Yet the people were so infatuated by Satan as to imagine they could induce God to fight for them, when the law under the mercy-seat condemned them to defeat, disaster, and death!” *The Signs of the Times*, December 22, 1881.

“God permitted His ark to be taken by their enemies to show Israel how vain it was to trust in the ark, the symbol of His presence, while they were profaning the commandments contained in the ark. God would humble them by removing from them that sacred ark, their boasted strength and confidence.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, 106.

- b. What tragedies highlighted the woe of this defeat? 1 Samuel 4:11, 15–22.

Note: “The Lord sorely chastised His people Israel, revealing their hypocrisy and rebuking their presumption, and thus left upon the pages of history the testimony for all future ages, that the iniquities of His professed people will not go unpunished. The greater the knowledge of God’s will, the greater the sin of those who disregard it. God is not dependent upon men to cause His name to be feared and honored in the earth. He accepts the labors of those who walk in faithfulness and humility before Him, but He will reject all who profess to serve Him, and yet follow in the course of the unrighteous.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 22, 1881.

Wednesday

ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE GOD

- a. In the judgment that befell the house of Eli, what solemn warning should we heed from the way history repeats itself? Matthew 7:19, 23; Isaiah 58:1.

Note: “Eli was gentle, loving, and kind, and had a true interest in the service of God and the prosperity of His cause. He was a man who had power in prayer. He never rose up in rebellion against the words of God. But he was wanting; he did not have firmness of character to reprove sin and execute justice against the sinner so that God could depend upon him to keep Israel pure. He did not add to his faith the courage and power to say No at the right time and in the right place. Sin is sin; righteousness is righteousness. The trumpet note of warning must be sounded. We are living in a fearfully wicked age. The worship of God will become corrupted unless there are wide-awake men at every post of duty. It is no time now for any to be absorbed in selfish ease. Not one of the words which God has spoken must be allowed to fall to the ground.

“While some in Battle Creek have professedly believed the *Testimonies*, they have been trampling them under their feet. But few have read them with interest; but few have heeded them. The indulgence of self, pride, fashion, and display are mingled with the worship of God. He wants brave men for action, who will not regard the setting up of idols and the coming in of abominations without lifting up the voice like a trumpet, showing the people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 517.

“Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists because their lives are more blameworthy than are the lives of professed Christians of the nominal churches, nor because their example or their acts are worse than those of the Adventists who will not yield obedience to the claims of God’s law, but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God’s special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts.” *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 452.

- b. As the Philistines were cursed by stealing the symbol of a God they did not worship, how long was it before they returned the ark? How long was it before Israel would value again the sacred symbol? 1 Samuel 6:1; 7:1, 2.
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Thursday

A MIRACLE OF MERCY

- a. What earnest appeal did Samuel bring to the people of Israel and with what beautiful results? 1 Samuel 7:3, 6.
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Note: “As soon as Samuel began to judge Israel, even in his youth, he called an assembly of the people for fasting and prayer, and deep humiliation before God. He bore his solemn testimony from the mouth of God. The people then began to learn where their strength was.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 517.

- b. What should we learn from how God was gracious to humbled Israel? Why should we search our hearts as they did? 1 Samuel 7:7, 10, 12.
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Note: “The condition of God’s people at the present day is similar to that of idolatrous Israel. Many who bear the name of Christians are serving other gods besides the Lord. Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. Anything which tends to abate our love for God, or to interfere with the service due Him, becomes thereby an idol. With some their lands, their houses, their merchandize [sic], are the idols. Business enterprises are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. Family worship is neglected, secret prayer forgotten. Many claim to deal justly with their fellow-men, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the decalogue. We are to love the Lord our God with all the heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept—nothing less than supreme love to God as well as equal love to our fellow-men—can satisfy the claims of the divine law.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 26, 1882.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is it not enough to submit to reproof?
- 2 Why wasn’t the presence of the ark helpful on the battlefield?
- 3 What was the significance of the word “Ichabod” in Israel’s history?
- 4 Eli was a man of prayer, but what was lacking in his spirituality?
- 5 How are we—like Israel—in need of a “Mizpeh” experience today?

June 23 – 29

The Last Judge of Israel

Key Text

“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).

Study Help: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 592, 615.

Introduction

“Samuel ... wielded a more powerful influence than he [Saul], because his record was one of faithfulness, obedience, and devotion.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 663.

Sunday

SECRETS FOR VICTORY

- a. What insights can we learn from Israel’s experience during the time that Samuel judged the nation?
1 Samuel 7:12, 17.

Note: “There is need today of such a revival of true heart-religion as was experienced by ancient Israel. We need, like them, to bring forth fruit meet for repentance—to put away our sins, cleansing the defiled temple of the heart that Jesus may reign within. ...

“Repentance is the first step which must be taken by all who would return to God. No one can do this work for us. We must individually humble our souls before God, and put away our idols. When we have done all that we can do, the Lord will manifest to us His salvation.

“And when the light of Heaven dispels our darkness, let us, like Samuel, evince our gratitude by making a memorial to God.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 26, 1882.

- b. Why must there be earnest appeals to God’s professed people until the end of time? Isaiah 2:17–22.

Monday

AN ESSENTIAL STEP

- a. What caused the downfall of God’s people? Hosea 4:6. What did Samuel do to bring about enduring spiritual growth among the people?

Note: “Provision was made for the instruction of the young, by the establishment of the schools of the prophets. If a youth desired to search deeper into the truths of the word of God and to seek wisdom from above, that he might become a teacher in Israel, these schools were open to him. The schools of the prophets were founded by Samuel to serve as a barrier against the widespread corruption, to provide for the moral and spiritual welfare of the youth, and to promote the future prosperity of the nation by furnishing it with men qualified to act in the fear of God as leaders and counselors. In the accomplishment of this object Samuel gathered companies of young men who were pious, intelligent, and studious. These were called the sons of the prophets. As they communed with God and studied His word and His works, wisdom from above was added to their natural endowments. The instructors were men not only well versed in divine truth, but those who had themselves enjoyed communion with God and had received the special endowment of His Spirit. They enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people, both for learning and piety.

“In Samuel’s day there were two of these schools—one at Ramah, the home of the prophet, and the other at Kirjath-jearim, where the ark then was. Others were established in later times.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 593.

Tuesday

SAMUEL DISAPPOINTED

- a. What disappointment did Samuel face in his old age? 1 Samuel 8:1–3. To some extent, how was he treated a bit unfairly?

Note: “Divinely invested with the threefold office of judge, prophet, and priest, he [Samuel] had labored with untiring and disinterested zeal for the welfare of his people, and the nation had prospered under his wise control. Order had been restored, and godliness promoted, and the spirit of discontent was checked for the time. But with advancing years the prophet was forced to share with others the cares of government, and he appointed his two sons to act as his assistants. While Samuel continued the duties of his office at Ramah, the young men were stationed at Beersheba, to administer justice among the people near the southern border of the land.

“It was with the full assent of the nation that Samuel had appointed his sons to office.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 604.

“The people saw that his [Samuel’s] sons did not follow his footsteps. Although they were not vile, like the children of Eli, yet they were dishonest and double-minded. While they aided their father in his laborious work, their love of reward led them to favor the cause of the unrighteous.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 353.

“The cases of abuse among the people had not been referred to Samuel. Had the evil course of his sons been known to him, he would have removed them without delay; but this was not what the petitioners desired. Samuel saw that their real motive was discontent and pride.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 604.

- b. Instead of requesting for the wrongs to be corrected, what did the people demand from Samuel? What did he do in response? 1 Samuel 8:4–6.

Note: “The aged prophet looked upon the request as a censure upon himself, and a direct effort to set him aside. He did not, however, reveal his feelings; he uttered no reproach, but carried the matter to the Lord in prayer and sought counsel from Him alone.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 604, 605.

Wednesday

WHO IS TO BE OUR KING?

- a. How did the Lord bid Samuel respond to the people’s demand for a king? Why? 1 Samuel 8:7, 18.

Note: “Those who despise and reject the faithful servant of God show contempt, not merely for the man, but for the Master who sent him. It is God’s words, His reproofs and counsel, that are set at nought; it is His authority that is rejected.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 605.

- b. What timeless principle does God want us to glean from this experience, as explained through later prophets? Hosea 13:11; Ezekiel 14:3, 8.

Note: “The Lord had, through His prophets, foretold that Israel would be governed by a king; but it does not follow that this form of government was best for them or according to His will. ... When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, or in opposition to His revealed will, He often grants their desires, in order that, through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires contrary to the will of God will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 605, 606.

- c. After Saul, the first king, was instated, how did God mercifully seek to make the best of the situation? 1 Samuel 10:1, 6, 9; 15:17.



Human pride
and wisdom
will prove
a dangerous
guide.

- d. What was God finally constrained to do to the first king? Why? 1 Samuel 13:14; 15:22, 23; Acts 13:20, 22. How does He govern His people today? Ephesians 4:11, 16.

Note: “God has not set any kingly power in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to control the whole body or to control any branch of the work. He has not provided that the burden of leadership shall rest upon a few men. Responsibilities are distributed among a large number of competent men.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 236.

Thursday

A GODLY LEGACY

- a. Name one of the saddest days in the history of Israel and why it was so heartrending. 1 Samuel 25:1; Psalm 116:15.

Note: “The death of Samuel was regarded as an irreparable loss by the nation of Israel. A great and good prophet and an eminent judge had fallen in death, and the grief of the people was deep and heartfelt. ...

“As the people contrasted the course of Saul with that of Samuel, they saw what a mistake they had made in desiring a king that they might not be different from the nations around them. Many looked with alarm at the condition of society, fast becoming leavened with irreligion and godlessness. ...

“The nation had lost the founder and president of its sacred schools, but that was not all. It had lost him to whom the people had been accustomed to go with their great troubles—lost one who had constantly interceded with God in behalf of the best interests of its people. The intercession of Samuel had given a feeling of security; for ‘the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James 5:16). ...

“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.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 663, 664.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How did Samuel wisely begin his period as judge of Israel?
- 2 What revealed his foresight to brighten the future of God’s nation?
- 3 Both Eli and Samuel had troublesome sons, but what was the difference?
- 4 Why is it so important to fully surrender to God’s will when we pray?
- 5 Why should we have a deeper appreciation for leaders like Samuel?

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Kiwifruit

I love kiwifruit. They are so delicious, and I discovered recently that the peelings are also nutritious. Though not yet courageous enough to eat the peelings because of their texture, I do put the whole fruit into my smoothies.

“A study conducted at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, evaluated the nutritional value of twenty-seven different fruits to determine, ounce for ounce, which provides the most nutrition. The results? Kiwifruit, with an index of 16, was found to be the most nutrient dense of all fruits. (Second place was papaya at 14, and third place was a tie between mango and

orange, which both scored 11.) Kiwi has the highest level of vitamin C, almost twice that of an orange, and is also a decent source of magnesium. Two medium kiwifruits have almost 5 g of fiber. And kiwi—along with papaya and apricot—outranked bananas and oranges as the top low-sodium, high-potassium food!

“Another study in the *Journal of Medicinal Food* examined nine different fruits and fruit juices and reported that eight of them—including kiwi—exhibited significant ability to reduce oxidative stress (damage from free radicals) in human plasma. This ability of kiwi to protect against cellular damage was

confirmed in yet another study in *Carcinogenesis* that was even more promising: In the carcinogenesis study, not only did the kiwifruit limit the amount of oxidative damage to DNA, but it also stimulated cellular repair of the damage that did occur! Even better, the effect of kiwifruit on DNA damage and repair was seen when it was simply added to a normal diet, and the effects were seen across a whole group of volunteers and in a very short time!

The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth, Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., pages 122, 123.

If you like raw crunchies in the morning you will like the cereal recipe below.

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



SUNFLOWER-ALMOND CEREAL

Ingredients

Soak overnight:

2 Tbsp. raw almonds,
2 Tbsp. raw sunflower seeds
1 Tbsp. raw walnuts or
pecans (optional)

½ cup fruit of your choice:

apple, banana, kiwifruit,
berries, mango, peach, etc.

Process

Strain the first three ingredients and then add ½ cup of your favorite, chopped or sliced, fresh fruit. Add your favorite milk (almond, rice or soy) and enjoy!

OR, you can add all to a bowl of hot cereal!





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A fruit diet for a few days has often brought great relief to brain workers. Many times a short period of entire abstinence from food, followed by simple, moderate eating, has led to recovery through nature's own recuperative effort.

Ellen White

